

**Conflict of Identities Among Immigrants: A Study of Jamaica Kincaid's
Lucy and Hassan Blasim's Nightmares of Carlos Fuentes
Sabah Salim Jabbar University of Baghdad, College of
Languages, Department of English Language, Iraq, Baghdad
sabahjabar@colang.uobaghdad.edu.iq
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3626-3617>**

صراع الهويات بين المهاجرين : دراسة في قصة لوسي لجامايا كينكايد وقصة حسن بلاسم كوابيس كارلوس

فوينتس

صباح سالم جبار جامعة بغداد، كلية اللغات، قسم اللغة الانكليزية، العراق، بغداد

المخلص

يعد الصراع بين هويتين موضوعاً حساساً في كل انحاء العالم. إذ ان بعض الناس يسافرون خارج بلدانهم سعياً وراء الحصول على هوية جديدة بعد صراعات واجهوها في بلدانهم. وقد يهاجرون ويعتقون هوية جديدة لاسباب عدة. ويجدون انفسهم في صراع داخلي وهم يعيشون حالة من الضغوطات بين هويتهم الجديدة التي تبناها وتلك القديمة. ويبقى الفرد مسكوناً ومنهكاً بتجاربه السابقة. يستكشف البحث عالمية وكونية هذا الموضوع عبر مناقشة الدوافع التي دفعتهم لتبني هوية جديدة في سياقات مكانية وزمنية متعددة. ويتناول البحث الرواية القصيرة لوسي (١٩٩٠) للروائية جامايا كينكايد وقصة حسن بلاسم كوابيس كارلوس فوينتس (٢٠١٤). إذ تعيش بطلة رواية القاصة كينكايد في صراع داخلي وهي تجد نفسها في شوق للحياة التي عاشتها مع عائلتها، في الوقت الذي تحاول فيه ايضاً ان تؤسس لنفسها هوية جديدة في الولايات المتحدة. في حين ان قصة بلاسم تتمحور حول الشخصية الرئيسية التي تمر بتجارب كثيرة من الصراع الداخلي الذي يتجلى بالكوابيس التي تذكره بجذوره العراقية. يدرس هذا البحث موضوع الصراع الداخلي من منظور نفسي ومنظور نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار. الكلمات المفتاحية: بلاسم، حلم، صراع، كابوس، كينكايد، الهوية

Abstract

The struggle between two identities is a crucial subject everywhere. Some people travel abroad in quest of a new identity after struggling at home. People migrate and embrace a new identity for different reasons. They find themselves in a state of internal conflict as they navigate the tension between their newly adopted identities and their old ones. The individual is haunted and overwhelmed by their previous experiences. This research explores the universality of the subject matter by examining the motivations underlying the adoption of a new identity in a distinct geographical and temporal context. This paper examines the literary works of Kincaid's Lucy (1990) and Blasim's "The Nightmares of Carlos Fuentes" (2014). Kincaid's protagonist lives an internal conflict as she yearns for the life she once lived with her family, while also attempting to establish a new identity in the United States. Blasim's narrative centers around a protagonist who experiences a profound internal conflict manifested via recurring nightmares pertaining to his Iraqi ethnicity. This study examines the subject matter via the lenses of psychology and postcolonial theory. Keywords: Kincaid, Blasim, conflict, nightmare, dream, identity

Introduction

The topic of identity has been a longstanding theme throughout human history. Certain individuals encounter significant challenges in their countries of origin, prompting them to pursue asylum in alternative nations and assume a new identity. The ramifications of this topic are substantial, as individuals experience a significant internal conflict between their recently acquired identity and their previous one. Despite residing in a very impoverished state that surpasses their former circumstances, individuals embark on a journey, traversing many locations with the aspiration of rediscovering their lost sense of self in a state of exile, ultimately becoming immigrants who establish residence in a foreign nation. Individuals undergo physical displacement and are compelled to alter their identities due to their unfortunate status as subjects of racial, socioeconomic, and gender-

based segregation, further compounded by the consequences of colonialism or occupation. Individuals who have a sense of helplessness in their nation of origin may adopt a new identity in order to adapt to the customs and culture of their new host country. Within the context of diaspora, individuals often encounter a sense of being inundated by their historical experiences and the aspects of their identity that they have relinquished. The individuals persist in experiencing vivid dreams concerning the distressing events they have observed. The individual's previous and inherent persona persistently troubles their subconscious mind, manifesting as distressing nocturnal visions. The concept of identity refers to both the individual identity of a person and the collective identity of a group of individuals (Musir, 2018). Individuals possess the inherent ability to construct and mold their own identities in accordance with the prevailing societal circumstances in which they are situated or the specific social collectives to which they are affiliated. According to Musir, individuals have the capacity to develop two unique identities, specifically a positive identity and a negative one. Individuals who endeavor to foster a favorable sense of self actively participate in the practice of recognizing shared characteristics with others, with the objective of visualizing or constructing a personal and communal sense of consciousness. Fundamentally, humans strive to identify and connect with persons who share similar beliefs or values, in order to facilitate the interchange of comparable ideas or behaviors. On the other hand, the notion of negative identity can give rise to a range of investigations into the human psyche and generate a deep sense of distinction from one's peers (Musir 2018). Immigrants frequently encounter a condition of conflict when assimilating into a foreign culture, as they grapple with the inherent contradictions between their newly adopted cultural norms and their original ones. The fusion of various cultural influences results in a state of perplexity among individuals. The probable outcome of this phenomena is the potential deprivation of an individual's personal identity, resulting in the occurrence of a psychological conflict (Abdullah and Fayadh 2020). Marandi (2019) asserts that authors frequently examine the subject of diaspora, focusing on issues associated with adverse cultural and psychological complexes, with the loss of self-identity. According to Marandi, the diaspora can be defined as the dispersal of persons from a single geographical region to several destinations. The relationship with the West and US invasion to Iraq in 2003 are two instances that raise questions about identity. Due to these aforementioned reasons, a considerable number of Iraqi individuals sought refuge in Western European countries and the Western hemisphere. Conflicts and challenges emerged as a result of the juxtaposition between their newly adopted identity and their preexisting original one. According to Tyson (2015), individuals have the ability to employ defense mechanisms as a means of preventing feelings of nervousness and the occurrence of flashbacks related to traumatic situations. These defense mechanisms serve to distance individuals from the painful experiences that are stored in their unconscious mind. Dreams persist in acting as a medium via which individuals establish a connection with their unconscious mind, irrespective of the specific form of creative pursuit or activity they engage in. In this context, individuals are either deeply affected by recollections of their own country or find these memories to be a poignant reflection of their fundamental identity. From a psychological perspective, those who frequently have dreams generally encounter folks they are familiar with and have personal connections to, or individuals they have previously interacted with while awake. The individuals shown in dreams exhibit a range of psychological experiences, which are then reenacted within the world of the dream. Dreams frequently exhibit diverse interpretations. The dream interpreter has the ability to convey the existence of a subconscious perception in order to notify the dreamer that their personal identity is being utilized or put at risk (Tyson 2015). Individuals may have core issues that have a substantial impact on how their identity is formed. An instance of an insecure or unstable sense of self can be described as the inability to sustain a constant perception of one's personal identity, leading to a reduced capacity for self-awareness. This issue has a substantial influence on persons' self-perception. Many individuals frequently undergo a significant alteration in their subjective understanding of self, resulting in a perception of a comprehensive metamorphosis of their personal identity. As a result, individuals often have a propensity to interact with a wide range of individuals or collectives, actively pursuing novel social connections and associations (Tyson 2015). By defining the concept of identity, Norman Holland (1975) calls the pattern of our coping methods and psychological concerns as our identity theme. As per his perspective, individuals consistently attribute their identification themes onto the circumstances they encounter in their everyday life, resulting in their perception of the external world being influenced by their prior psychological experiences. This particular topic facilitates individuals in comprehending the notion of the "mingling of self and other" (Holland 1975, 132). The topic of identity assumes prominence in the discourse of numerous critics and theoretical frameworks. Colonized countries have the potential for development. The impact of colonization persisted in these nations for an extended period subsequent to their departure. The scope

of this impact encompasses various domains, such as governmental affairs, the educational sector, commercial activities, the use of the English language, and cultural norms. The individuals who were subjected to colonization experienced a lasting psychological impact characterized by a detrimental self-perception and a sense of detachment from their native cultures (Tyson 2015). From the perspective of postcolonial criticism, individuals who have assumed the role of colonizers may potentially cultivate a postcolonial identity as a result of their underlying ideology. The colonized population may develop a sense of identity characterized by resistance to the ideologies imposed by the invaders. A fundamental aspect of this ideology entails the perception held by colonizers of their own superiority and higher level of civilization, juxtaposed with the colonized being regarded as uncivilized and inferior in their eyes. The colonized individuals are characterized as "savage, backward, and underdeveloped" (Tyson 2015, 400). In contrast, the colonists held the assumption that their civilization possessed a greater degree of advancement (Tyson 2015, 400). Goleš (2020) argues that most of writers who adopt writing about postcolonial subjects become themselves displaced and live in different cultures and influences: Their (postcolonial writers) cultural identity is realized through historical, racial, metaphysical diversity and for this purpose they have developed a search for roots, origins, myths, and ancestors. In their writing history has been reconstructed through collage, fragments, memory, and myth. Home, belonging, spiritual possession of a landscape in which the postcolonial writers were or even imagined to be were being sought. The difficulties encountered in the process of creating new roots are often overcome by rooting in the process of writing which becomes home, and self-determination. Writing becomes their identity. (p.92) Goleš (2020) also argues that there is a conflict between "the world of migrants and the world of national affiliation" and it is very difficult for anyone to choose the right side. It remains something controversial and problematic since there is a comparison between the "Other" world and the "original" one.

Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy* and the quest of identity

Jamaica Kincaid's birth took place in Antigua on May 25, 1949. She has positioned herself as a significant figure among the contemporary anglophone writers in the Americas. Kincaid's literary works explore the experiences of those living in the diaspora, delving into complex themes of self-identity, national affiliation, and racial dynamics. The author's initial compilation of short stories was released in 1983, subsequently followed by a series of novels including *Annie John* (1985), *Lucy* (1990), *The Autobiography of My Mother* (1996), and *Mr. Potter* (2002) (Brazel 2009). The novella titled *Lucy* serves as an autobiographical account, documenting the author's experiences and existence on an island situated in the eastern Caribbean region. Simmons asserts that the narrative is derived from the individual journey of a young woman who originated from the little island of Antigua, displaying a profound admiration for her Dominican mother, who possessed notable physical stature, aesthetic appeal, and intellectual acumen (Simmons as cited in Youssef, 2017). Lucy departed from her homeland due to the loss of her mother's affection, with the intention of relocating to the United States and assuming the position of a "au pair" inside an American household. The concept of freedom within the context of New York City captivated her, leading her to undergo a transformative process in which she assumed the identity of the esteemed writer Jamaica Kincaid (Simmons as cited in Youssef, 2017). The narrative commences with the central character situated aboard an aircraft, making necessary arrangements for the impending landing at an airport within the territorial boundaries of the United States. The protagonist Lucy characterizes her initial evening in the United States as "a gray-black and cold night" (6). The individual's visual perception is limited, although there is a presence of lights in her surroundings. Upon her arrival, she recollects her reverie concerning these locations and the manner in which she perceives them as "lifeboats" for her "small drowning soul" (6). On the contrary, they "looked ordinary, dirty, worn down by so many people entering and leaving them in real life, and it occurred to me that I could not be the only person in the world for whom they were a fixture of fantasy" (6). Jana Evans Brazel (2009) provides an analysis of Kincaid's portrayal of Antigua and New York, highlighting the stark spatial and chronological contrasts. Antigua is depicted as the ancestral homeland, representing the past and maternal connections, while New York symbolizes a surrogate environment, representing the diaspora and future prospects. I apologize, but it seems that you have not provided any text for me to rewrite. The comparison shown in this context is evident. Lucy's perception of what she believed to be an idyllic realm has transformed into a desolate and dilapidated landscape, diverging significantly from its initial fantastical nature. The individual expresses profound disillusionment with the current state of affairs, drawing a stark contrast between the vibrant and sunny atmosphere of Antigua and the somber and obscure ambiance of the North American city in question. If Antigua represents brilliance and clarity, then the diasporic city might be characterized as darkness and opacity, albeit with the capacity for perception and discernment (Brazel 2009). Lucy has made a recent purchase

of clothing in preparation for the upcoming voyage. As she occupies a seat within the car, her gaze fixated upon the surrounding scenery, she experiences a poignant recollection of the uncomfortable nature that often accompanies new experiences (6). Acquiring a new place of residence can be likened to acquiring new clothing, necessitating a period of adjustment in order to become adjusted to the new surroundings. The somber and obscure evening is mirrored by Lucy's reveries, which serve as poignant reminders of the previous experiences she has abandoned. She expresses her intention to convey that her existence in the present foreign nation is characterized by a greater degree of desolation and melancholy as compared to her native land. Lucy perceives her birthplace as a visually vibrant environment characterized by an abundance of colors such as "green" and "pink," leading her to conclude that her place of origin possesses a heightened level of aesthetic appeal: I lay down on my bed and dreamt I was eating a bowl of pink mullet and green figs cooked in coconut milk, and it had been cooked by my grandmother, which was why the taste of it pleased me so, for she was the person I liked best in all the world, and those were the things I liked best to eat also. (Kincaid 1990, 8) The vivid depiction of her own land occupies a prominent place in her thoughts, evoking recollections of narratives detailing the experiences of those who venture abroad and grapple with feelings of longing for home. Lucy recollects expressing disapproval towards those individuals who had this sentiment and expresses a desire to journey to an alternative location. Upon embarking on her journey and arriving in the unfamiliar territory, she experiences a desire to return to her place of origin. Consequently, the protagonist has gained an understanding of the emotions experienced by others whom she previously criticized. She expresses her astonishment at the unexpected realization that she wants to return to her place of origin and sleep in a bed that no longer accommodated her (7) Lucy provides a detailed description of the living place she currently occupies alongside her newly acquainted family. The designated space is sometimes referred to as "the maid's room." The object in question is like "a box in which cargo traveling a long way" (8). She characterizes herself as "an unhappy young woman living in a maid's room". She envisions nightgowns adorned with imagery depicting beautiful children engaged in festive activities amidst Christmas ornaments. When she perceives the sound of joyful children's laughter, she endeavors to ascertain the origin of the nightgowns being produced. Upon examination of the label affixed to their posterior, she ascertains that they are "Made in Australia" (9). Upon awakening, the protagonist recollects the historical fact that Australia was initially established as a penal colony for those deemed unfit for incarceration within their respective home nations due to the severity of their transgressions (9). She exhibits unfavorable behavior as a detainee within a foreign jurisdiction to which she lacks citizenship. In her correspondence with her family, Lucy consistently portrays her surroundings as idyllic and aesthetically pleasing, evoking imagery reminiscent of a picturesque greeting card adorned with vibrant hues and blooming roses. Upon receiving responses to her correspondence, everyone in the family expresses longing for her presence, so indicating their anticipation for positive updates and eagerly awaiting her return. Dreams assume a significant role in her life. The individual in question consistently experiences nightmares wherein the individuals encountered hold significant personal value. During a particular instance, while in the company of her newly acquainted American family, she discloses that she had encountered them within the realm of her dreams. During this dream sequence, Lewis engaged in pursuit of her within the confines of their residential dwelling, while his wife Mariah urging him to "Catch her". A profound silence permeated the family seated at the table, who collectively addressed Lucy as "Dr. Freud" (12). She lacks an understanding of Freud's concept yet possesses an internal desire to convey the significance of a dream whereby she expresses affection towards others, perceiving them as akin to her own family. This sentiment arises from the belief that only individuals of importance manifest within her dreams. From a psychoanalytic perspective, dreams possess symbolic elements that might be subject to interpretation as alternative symbols. The meanings of symbols in dreams might vary among individuals, even when those individuals share the same cultural background. These distinctions are indicative of our subconscious encounters within our dreams (Tyson 2015). Dreamers, individuals who experience dreams, often encounter multiple personalities within their dreams. These characters serve as individuals with whom we engage in psychological experiences (Tyson (2015) Initially, Lucy expresses reluctance to join Mariah in her visit to her residence situated on the Great Lake. Lucy is received a letter from her mother, wherein she is apprised of recent occurrences subsequent to her departure. There has been a complete absence of rain for a duration of one year. Lucy exhibits a lack of concern towards the aforementioned news and articulates her current objective as the deliberate endeavor to create a substantial physical and emotional separation from the events alluded to in the letter: her goal is to "put as much distance between myself and the events mentioned in her letter as I could manage" (20). During mealtime on the train, certain individuals choose to partake in their meals while seated, exhibiting a

resemblance to Mariah's family members (21). Simultaneously, there exist those who are poised to provide their assistance, bearing a striking resemblance to individuals closely related to Lucy. Martin (2014) highlights that Lucy's analysis encompasses not only racial disparities but also considerations of social class, since she observes that Black individuals resembling her are in service positions to White individuals resembling Mariah (37). During the same evening, Lucy experiences a distressing nightmare while aboard a train. In this dream, she recounts a recurring pattern wherein her attempts to attain slumber are abruptly interrupted by a vivid perception of being pursued by a multitude of equestrians, each brandishing a cutlass with the intention of dismembering her: "Every time I tried to sleep, just as it seemed that I had finally done so, I would wake up sure that thousands of people on horseback were following me, chasing me, each of them carrying a cutlass to cut me up into small pieces" (34). This nightmare serves as an indication that Lucy is being pursued by her past, and she is unable to alter her personal history or elude its grasp. Lucy discovers in Mariah a substitute for her maternal figure. Lucy recollects her familial ties and the prevailing patriarchal power wielded by her mother, a force from which she yearns to liberate herself and forge her own distinct sense of self. In her analysis, Irlene François explores the concept of the mother figure and its symbolic representation of the values and structures of the city, as well as the feminine ideals associated with the Victorian cult of femininity. François further highlights the daughter's profound desire to emancipate herself from these societal expectations (80). In her analysis, Adrienne Rich characterizes the dynamic between mothers and daughters as "Matrophobia," a term denoting the apprehension of inheriting one's mother's identity. Daughters perceive their mothers as having imparted a sense of self-rejection and as having perpetuated the limitations and humiliations associated with being female (Bloom 2008). Matrophobia can be seen as a psychological phenomenon characterized by a division inside oneself, driven by a strong want to liberate oneself entirely from the emotional constraints imposed by one's mother. This division is motivated by a deep desire to establish one's own identity and attain personal autonomy (Bloom 2008). Therefore, Lucy encounters difficulties in discovering her personal identity and striving to establish herself as an autonomous individual, unencumbered by any limitations or constraints. The animosity that Lucy harbors towards her mother can be traced back to a period several years ago, when Lucy was nine years old. During this time, Lucy's parents expressed their contentment with their male offspring and their aspirations for them to achieve prestigious professions such as doctors, lawyers, or individuals in positions of power. Unfortunately, Lucy's mother failed to acknowledge her existence during this period. During the course of her dinner engagement with Mariah's family, Lucy observes that the family members engage in polite discourse and the children exhibit a notable degree of contentment. Lucy exhibits laughter in the company of others, while simultaneously recollecting her parents' disapproval towards expressions of kindness. She reflects upon her past commitment to ensure that, if she were to have offspring, their initial verbalizations would be characterized by severity. As she traverses her surroundings, she has a sensation akin to the letters from her family and friends "scorching" her chest, as she secures them within her bra, carrying them in close proximity. This act is not driven by affection and yearning, but rather by a sentiment of animosity. Every letter is derived from those that she holds dear. The coexistence of love and hate is a peculiar phenomenon. Lucy experiences a sense of ambivalence as she composes a sincerely pleasant letter to her mother, recounting her initial experience riding the subway train. Her mother responds with a letter including distressing anecdotes pertaining to incidents commonly reported on subterranean railway systems (Kincaid 1990). She has a profound sense of terror, rendering her unable to direct her eyes' gaze towards the door due to an overwhelming fear. On a subsequent occasion, the mother of the protagonist composes a written correspondence detailing the unfortunate incident involving a young female immigrant who suffered a severe cut of her throat. Upon Lucy's observation of Mariah's desire for her to emulate her own lifestyle, akin to treating her as a surrogate child, she reflects upon her mother's similar inclination to mold her into a mere replica of herself. Lucy articulates her sentiment, expressing that she had developed a perception that her mother's affection was primarily intended to transform her into a mere reflection of her own identity. Intriguingly, Lucy experiences an inexplicable aversion towards this prospect, asserting her preference for death over assuming the role of a mere mimicry of another individual (Kincaid 1990). These considerations compel Lucy to relocate to a distant location from her nation of birth, with a woman who shares the desire for Lucy to assimilate into her own societal sphere. Mariah demonstrates kindness for Lucy and refrains from treating her in a subservient manner. She endeavors to satisfy Lucy's desires and motivates her to partake in their realm during the season of spring. This entails traversing a garden adorned with daffodil blooms. Additionally, they engage in an overnight journey aboard a train and share a morning meal while the train traverses' picturesque fields. Alternatively, they may opt to visit the individual's childhood residence situated

near the Great Lakes. Lucy acknowledges that Mariah assumes responsibility for her well-being, demonstrating this by considering Lucy's needs and purchasing items for her when visiting a store, in parallel with her own purchases. The remuneration provided to Lucy exceeds the previously established agreement. Mariah demonstrates concern for Lucy's well-being as well. Mariah's given name endows her with the qualities of a mythical being known as a fairy godmother, an individual who bestows blessings and grants wishes. Additionally, her name suggests the role of an adoptive mother, someone who nurtures and cares for a child not biologically her own. Lastly, her name evokes the image of a sainted Mother, a figure revered for her virtuous and selfless nature. Lucy draws a discernible parallel between Mariah and her mother, asserting that Mariah surpasses her mother due to her mother's neglect of her needs. Despite Lucy's belief that Mariah is the epitome of kindness, she ultimately chooses to go from Mariah's residence due to the inadvertent reminders of both her own mother and the all-encompassing cultural norms associated with her country of origin, which Lucy is actively trying to avoid (Bloom 2008). According to Snodgrass (2008), Lucy has a significant level of disaffection towards maternal figures, resulting in her self-imposed alienation from Mariah (Snodgrass, as cited by Youssef in 2017). Lucy perceives Mariah's acts of compassion as an unwelcome incursion into her own sphere (Youssef (2017). Hence, Mariah symbolizes the "narcissistic power against whom Lucy must fight if she is to forge a separate identity" (Snodgrass as cited in Youssef 2017, 56). Lucy's affection for Mariah transformed into animosity due to Mariah's representation as a symbol of Western hegemony, evoking the actions of the British colonizer within her Eurocentric community (Youssef 2017). The pursuit of self-identity by Lucy throughout her period of exile, within a societal context that exhibits a lack of acceptance towards her, possesses a symbolic significance. The pursuit of independence becomes a central objective. Lucy has had challenges in the process of building her personal identity inside her native country, mostly due to her mother's authoritative influence and the pervasive impact and repercussions of British colonization. In her essay titled "Double Identity in Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*" (2014), Janelle Martin asserts that Lucy experiences a state of both mental and physical subjugation due to the societal expectations and standards forced upon her based on her gender. The individual experiences a sense of being influenced and characterized by external individuals (36). Kincaid articulates the experience of being subjected to control by asserting: " I do come from this tradition of possessing and claiming yourself because if you don't possess and claim yourself, someone else will " (Kincaid as stated in Martin, 2014, p. 36). Lucy's quest for liberation and personal transformation in a foreign land represents her exploration of self-identity. During an interview, Kincaid expresses that her characters endeavor to create their independence, as she states, " This search my characters undertake is not a search for identity but a search for autonomy, personal autonomy " (Kincaid as cited in Youssef, 2017, 58). Therefore, Lucy actively seeks an opportunity to develop the sense of autonomy that she discovers through the act of movement. Nevertheless, Lucy encounters challenges in establishing her identity within the diaspora and navigating life in the United States of America. Lucy experiences a sense of alienation as she navigates her existence in a state of exile, a circumstance she consciously chooses over residing under the authority of her authoritarian and oppressive mother. However, she does not have an immediate sensation of liberation or autonomy upon arriving in the United States. Instead, she encounters a perplexing feeling of alienation (Edwards 2007). The concept of Satan, his defiance against God, and his refusal to accept Adam, opting instead to reside in Hell rather than Heaven to gratify his pride and sense of superiority over Adam, is reflected in *Lucy* and numerous other works by Kincaid. The readers are informed that the name 'Lucy' is a diminutive form of the name 'Lucifer.' When Lucy's mother elucidates the etymology of her name, attributing it to Satan, Lucy does not experience remorse, since she perceives herself as having " fallen away from a relationship with a kind of god" (Youssef 2017, 56). In the course of the narrative, Lucy perceives her mother as a godlike entity. Kincaid elucidates the connection between her protagonists and their moms as a metaphorical representation of Eden, symbolizing a state of blissful harmony that they have irrevocably departed from (Bloom 2008). Lucy, a girl's name for Lucifer. That my mother would have found me devil-like did not surprise me, for I often thought of her as god-like, and are not the children of gods devils? I did not grow to like the name Lucy—I would have much preferred to be called Lucifer outright—but whenever I saw my name, I always reached out to give it a strong embrace. (85) The migration she undertook also had a symbolic significance. Lucy's decision to dedicate herself to labor and service in the United States rather than indulging in a leisurely existence in Antigua can be interpreted as an act of rebellion (Youssef 2017). The action performed by Lucy evokes thoughts of Satan and his defiance against God, as famously expressed in John Milton's work, where he declares that it is preferable to rule in Hell rather than serve in Heaven (as cited in Youssef, 2017, p. 56). Jana Evan Brazier (2009) finds out the existence of a connection between

Kincaid and Milton's poem. This connection has been commonly recognized by scholars, who have identified "Paradise Lost" as a significant literary influence on Kincaid's "Lucy." In John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*, the character Lucifer constructs a bridge spanning the expanse of Chaos in order to reach Earth. Braziel further asserts that Lucy exhibits a close proximity to Milton's Lucifer. According to Milton, Lucifer continues to serve as an active catalyst for malevolence, interfering in earthly matters and human affairs (Braziel 2009). The concept of *Paradise Lost* held important significance in her formative years. She has received instruction in the reading of religious texts such as the Bible, as well as literary works including *Paradise Lost* and selected some plays by William Shakespeare. The individual had a habit of committing sections of *Paradise Lost* to memory. Lucy declared that "the stories of the fallen were well known to me, but I had not known that my own situation could even distantly be related to them." (85) Lucy can also be seen via the lens of postcolonial theory. The individual experiences a dichotomy between her historical experiences of colonialism, which embody her original identity, and her current acquired identity in the United States of America. Lucy harbors aversion towards her personal history due to her strong disdain for any form of authority or subjugation, including instances where her own mother holds power over her. Lucy perceives her mother as a figure of authority who seeks to exert control and dominance over her. According to Almutairi (2018), the action performed by Lucy can be interpreted as a kind of resistance against authority and control, specifically in the context of colonization (128). The visit to the daffodil field serves as a significant illustration of Lucy's emancipation from postcolonial identity. Mariah believes that she has the ability to satisfy Lucy within the confines of this aesthetically pleasing and remarkable location. Paradoxically, rather of expressing admiration towards Lucy, the flowers serve as a reminder of the colonizer. Rather than serving as a representation of affection, these objects elicit inside Lucy a profound feeling of animosity. She articulates her aim to eradicate these flowers as they serve as a poignant reminder of the atrocities she has endured at the hands of the colonial authority (Almutairi, 2018). Mariah took me to a garden, a place she described among her favorites in the world. She covered my eyes with a handkerchief, and then, holding me by the hand, she walked me to a spot in a clearing. Then she removed the handkerchief and said, "Now, look at this..." along the paths and underneath the trees were many, many yellow flowers... I did not know what these flowers were, and so it was a mystery to me why I wanted to kill them... Maria said, "These are daffodils". Mariah, mistaking what was happening to me for joy at seeing daffodils for the first time, reached out to hug me, but I moved away. (Kincaid, 1990, pp. 29-30) Postcolonial theory is applied by Almutairi (2018) to analyze this occurrence with the daffodils. The flowers serve as a manifestation of the divergent interests between the colonizer and the colonized. The individuals perceive the daffodils in distinct manners. In alternative terms, they possess a distinct perspective on the world (127). Lucy describes this scene as "a scene of conquered and conquests" (30). Lucy informs Mariah that her first encounter with a flower did not occur until she reached the age of nineteen. According to Almutairi (2018), the daffodils symbolize a cultural divide that Lucy was unable to overcome, accept, or harmonize with (127). The daffodils possess a notable characteristic of being yellow, which Lucy establishes as a connection to the colonizer, so it has a symbolic connotation of subjugation. In his work, Francoir (2008) examines the significance of the yellow color in the novel *Lucy* as a representation of the colonizer. He argues that this motif is consistently present and holds a recurring thematic focus throughout the entirety of the narrative (cited in Almutairi, 127) Lucy's dreams are replete with the yellow color. In one instance, the individual envisions a scenario whereby she is pursued along a confined, cobblestone pathway by numerous clusters of the daffodils that she had previously resolved to disregard. Eventually succumbing to fatigue, she collapses, prompting the daffodils to amass over her until she becomes entirely submerged beneath their weight, ultimately disappearing from sight (Kincaid, 25). The train journey undertaken by Mariah as she accompanies Lucy to the Great Lake serves as a prominent illustration of postcolonial identity. Within the dining car of the train, a group of individuals resembling Mariah's relatives can be observed partaking in their meals, while another group, resembling Lucy's relatives, can be seen awaiting the opportunity to serve them. One perspective is that a favorable position for those of African descent is to fulfill roles that include serving the individuals who are white.

Hassan Blasim's "The Nightmare of Carlos Fuentes"

In countries such as Iraq, plagued by dictatorship, war, invasion, brutality, sectarian conflict, and indiscriminate killings, some individuals feel powerless to reside in their homeland. They seek peaceful nations to settle in, where some get new nationalities and identities to take advantage of the benefits and hope to find peace and escape violence. They choose to reside in exile rather than remain in their nation. While they may find solace in the nations they visit, they are unable to fully abandon their culture. It resides in their psyche, soul, and dreams.

Hassan Blasim is an Iraqi polymath, excelling in poetry, fiction writing, and filmmaking. He was born in Baghdad in 1973. In 1998, he left Iraq and became a refugee in Europe in 2000 after creating a video called "The Wounded Camera," depicting Iraqis migrating from the North of Iraq following the Iraqi army's arrival. (Fox, 2022) He acquired residence in Finland in 2004. He released multiple short story collections, including "The Madman of Freedom Square" (Comma Press, 2009) and "The Iraqi Christ" (Comma Press, 2013), which earned the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize in 2014. His collection *Corpse Exhibition* was published in 2014. His debut novel, *Allah99*, was published in 2020. Olli Löytty authored a study paper titled "Welcome to Finnish Literature! Hassan Blasim and the Politics of Belonging" concludes that Blasim's stories has a global charm that connects with readers worldwide. Despite frequently being categorized within genres like "magical realism and absurdism" (Löytty 2017, 68), his narratives consistently explore concrete, tangible themes. The narratives are set in several historical periods in Iraq, such as the conflict with Iran, the aftermath of the Gulf conflict, the atrocities following the last U.S. invasion, and the experiences of Iraqi exiles. However, these stories mostly emphasize the psychological effects of war on people rather than only showing the actual events. The characters in his stories feel disconnected and lost in terms of their existence. He concentrated on emotionally processing the psychological trauma caused by military combat (Löytty, 2017) Rachel Gregory Fox (2022) states that Blasim utilized the Gothic genre to depict and recount the harrowing experiences of Iraqis under the oppressive regime from the 1980s to the 1990s, the US occupation of Iraq in 2003, and the sectarian conflicts that led to mass migration from Iraq. Blasim uses the Gothic genre to create a unique story structure that successfully portrays the intense physical and psychological suffering experienced by Iraqis. The depiction of the refugee plays a crucial role in his story (Fox, 2022). Blasim moves away from Edward Said's idea of exile as a driving force for intellectual and creative inspiration in his work. Blasim incorporates Gothic elements in his writing to create a new literary style that allows for the exploration of Arab displacement in the context of globalization and forced migration in modern times. Blasim utilizes a Gothic style and presents his idea of abjection. Applying this concept in a Postcolonial Gothic framework exposes the fundamental weaknesses in colonial ideologies, political structures, and economic systems. The Gothic genre is well-equipped to delve into the concealed and unexpressed elements of culture, making it ideal for conveying the undisclosed stories of colonial encounters. This genre, known for its emphasis on reason and humanism, was traditionally used to promote the "civilizing" agenda linked to colonialism (Fox, 2022) The study analyzes Hassan Blasim's short story "The Nightmares of Carlos Fuentes" from the collection "The Corpse Exhibition" (2014). This collection illustrates the influence of US occupation on Iraq and its impact on the psychological identity of Iraqi individuals. Thus, it may be analyzed from both a postcolonial and psychological perspective. Blasim provides a testimonial about the devastating impact of violence and trauma that became widespread in Iraq following the US invasion in 2003. He presents the horrific ordeals endured by the Iraqi populace and the harrowing experiences witnessed by over a generation (Hadla 2020, 136). These experiences compel certain individuals to seek asylum in foreign countries, leading them to abandon their homeland and get a new identity or citizenship. Characters in this type of fiction experience a sense of isolation and alienation from both their home country and the new place where they struggle to feel at home (Hiba, 2021, 97). Al-Shibibi contends in his work "The Quest of Identity in the New Iraqi Novel", that seeking for identity emerged as a significant theme in novels published post-2003. This upheaval resulted in social and political transformations inside Iraqi society, prompting individuals to search for a new identity focused on peace rather than material gain (28) The plot of "The Nightmares of Carlos Fuentes" centers on Salim Abdul Husain, an Iraqi laborer, who tries to shed his Iraqi heritage by assuming a Mexican identity under the name Carlos Fuentes. He adapted well by learning the Dutch language, marrying a Dutch woman, fulfilling tax obligations, and meeting all legal requirements of citizenship. He experiences a transformation as he starts having nightmares related to his previous existence as Salim. When attempting to manage and eliminate these dreams, he tragically takes his own life by jumping from the sixth floor of his residence while asleep, influenced by a nightmare. The story begins by stating that it is about a laborer who resided in Iraq under one name and passed away in Holland under a different name. This opening passage contrasts two distinct locations, providing insight into "the vast difference between them in terms of language, culture, and components of the two societies (Abdelrazak, 2021, p. 10). He is responsible for cleaning the streets following any potential explosions. This employment affects Salim and his colleagues by reminding them of the distressing events in Baghdad and the possibility of being in a similar situation as the victims of those blasts. It also serves as a reminder of their unfortunate situation as underpaid workers: "They were sweeping the market slowly and cautiously for fear that they might sweep up with the debris any human body parts left over" (Blasim 2014, 187). The workers are

searching through the debris of the explosion to recover valuable items such as a ring, wallet, gold chain, watch, or any other important goods among the deceased and body parts (Blasim 2014, 187). Salim was less fortunate than his colleagues in the cleaning crew as he did not come across any precious items. He requires funds to get to Holland and flee from the intense suffering and destruction. He only acquires a "silver ring" from one of the deceased bodies, which he takes with revulsion from the finger of a dead person. Salim will retain the ring, wearing it on his finger, symbolizing his destiny at the story's conclusion. The names of the locations mentioned in the novel, including Iraq, popular market, pit of death, Immigration Department, and Cemetery of Najaf, symbolize places that Salim or Fuentes disliked and want to eliminate. The narration discusses locations like the Netherlands, Amsterdam, France, Spain, and Europe, which symbolize security and distance from his native area that he rejects along with all its social elements (Abdelrazak, 2021, 10). When he seeks shelter in Holland, he rejects his hometown and admires the Dutch way of life (Kate Prengel). The postcolonial perspective is evident in this context, where Western nations symbolize progress, picturesque landscapes, tranquility, and reverence for all living beings. He initiates a comparison between his homeland, Iraq, and Holland by posing a series of questions: Why are the trees so green and beautiful, as though they're washed with water every day? Why can't we be peaceful like them? We live in houses like pigsties while their houses are warm, safe, and colourful. Why do they respect dogs as much as humans? Why do we masturbate twenty-four hours a day? (Blasim 2014, 189). When questioned about his name by the official at the migration office, he contacted his cousin for guidance on changing his name. His cousin suggested that he transform his identity to that of a Mexican man named Carlos Fuentes. Upon enrolling in a Dutch language school, Fuentes made a commitment to avoid associating with Arabs or Iraqis and refrain from speaking Arabic (Blasim 2014, 188). The asylum-seeker's determination to learn the Dutch language highlights the importance of language in reshaping the migrant struggle as a political reinterpretation of the inherent instability in the migratory experience (Hiba, 2021, 100). Similar to Lucy in Kincaid's narrative, Fuentes achieved success when he encountered a compassionate Dutch girlfriend who cared for and admired him (Blasim 2014, 190). Fuentes acquired Dutch citizenship due to his marriage, clean legal record, and linguistic skills. He "felt that his skin and blood had changed forever and that his lungs were now breathing real life" (Blasim 2014, 191). He made a great effort to appear like a "western man" and would often present himself as the offspring of a Mexican immigrant who has established roots in Iraq. Fuentes repeatedly characterizes the Iraqis as uncivilized and backward, referring to them as "savage clans" (Blasim 2014, 190). Fuentes' statement regarding his fellow citizens reflects his postcolonial adaptability. He cultivated this identity during the course of his life in Iraq and the Netherlands. Philip Roth suggests in his novel *Human Stain* (2000) that a man who rejects his historical identity may become entangled or confined by it. Those who reject their true identities will face consequences for doing so. Everything was going well until he encountered the dreadful event. Despite rejecting his homeland while conscious, memories and disturbing thoughts from the past started to trouble his head and annoy him during sleep. Al-Shibibi (2018) observes that Iraqi novels after the 2003 US invasion frequently address themes of dreams, criminality, and bloodshed. The initial nightmare was troubling due to his inability to communicate in Dutch with his supervisor. He communicates using the Iraqi dialect, which triggers "horrible pain in his head" (Blasim 2014, 191). His diligent efforts to acquire the language did not prevent his downfall. The legal significance of language prevailed over dreams and nightmares as "Carlos's inability to speak the host country's language hinders his defense in court" (Hiba 2021, 104). Fuentes convinced himself that they were just dreams and believed they would eventually go away. Night after night, he is relentlessly plagued by recurring dreams. Each day, he encountered a group of children from the impoverished area of his birthplace who taunted him for his new name. They were calling out to him and applauding: Carlos the coward, Carlos the sissy, "Carlos the silly billy" (Blasim 2014, 191). On a different occasion, he dreamt of planting "a car bomb in the heart of Amsterdam" (Blasim 2014, 191). During the trial, Fuentes appeared ashamed and embarrassed. The judge declined to allow him to speak Dutch in order to humiliate and degrade him. When the court provided an Iraqi interpreter to interact with Fuentes, he requested that Fuentes refrain from using his "incomprehensible rustic accent" (Blasim 2014, 192). His language skills once more proved inadequate in providing him with security and the capacity to protect himself (Hiba, 2021, 104). Fuentes made a deliberate effort to manipulate his dreams by consistently visiting the library and spending hours reading about them. During his initial visit, he acquired a book titled "The Forgotten Language." He learned from this book that dreams and nightmares serve as the conduit for the "realm of freedom." "existence of the ego becomes the only reference point for thoughts and feelings" (Blasim 2014, 192). He disliked this view because he struggles to establish a connection between freedom and uncontrollable dreams. The book suggests that "we are free when

we are asleep... freer than we are when awake” (Blasim 2014, 192). Upon the librarian's recommendation to read a book on dreams and food, Fuentes opted to alter his dietary choices. He ceased consuming potatoes, chickens, and all root vegetables. He had learned that consuming root vegetables could lead to nightmares related to one's past and origins (Blasim 2014, 193). Fuentes undergoes enigmatic secret ceremonies to alleviate the daily nightmares he has. The traditions include painting his face like an American Indian, donning "diaphanous orange pajamas", and placing three feathers from different birds under his pillow (Blasim 2014, 194) Fuentes created a ritual where he slept "in a military uniform with a toy plastic rifle" next to him. His quest was finally fulfilled. He desired to manipulate his dreams. The revelation that he was dreaming is what he was striving for. He managed to awaken his consciousness in the dream in order all “the rubbish of the unconscious” (Blasim 2014, 194). In the dream, he was in a building in the center of Baghdad, moving from one apartment to another without mercy, using his weapon to eliminate everyone, including children. He ignored their screams. On the fifth floor, Salim Abdul Husain awaited him, standing directly in front of him. Salim was standing naked next to the window, holding a broom stained with blood. With a trembling hand, Fuentes aimed his rifle at Salim's head. Salim began to smile and repeated in derision, "Salim the Dutchman, Salim the Mexican, Salim the Iraqi, Salim the Frenchman, Salim the Indian, Salim the Pakistani, Salim the Nigerian..." (Blasim 2014, 195) Fuentes attempted to kill Salim with gunshots, but none of them struck him as he leaped from the window. Fuentes' wife woke up upon hearing a scream and saw her husband "dead on the pavement" with a pool of blood under his head as she peeked out of the window. Fuentes attempted to erase his past by throwing himself from the sixth floor while sleepwalking. Kate Prengel observes that the moral lesson is unmistakable: "there's no escaping your past." The narrator speculates that Fuentes could be more forgiving towards Dutch reporters if they report on an incident involving an Iraqi guy, compared to his brothers who buried his body in Al-Najaf, Iraq. Salim's story concludes in an intriguing manner as the individuals he had attempted to eliminate or abandon in his dreams ended up showing him respect and ensuring he received a dignified burial. The narrative highlights that while being a tragedy about a man desiring to live overseas, there is a lovely aspect to it. A photographer was near the setting. He photographed the deceased body of Fuentes: “the only part that protruded from under the blue sheet was his outstretched right hand. The picture was in black and white, but the stone in the ring on Carlos Fuentes's finger glowed red in the foreground, like a sun in hell.” (Blasim 2014, 196) Salim could not live the hell in his country, nor Fuentes enjoy heaven abroad. His body was buried in the soil of his own land, while his soul descended to the actual Hell. Immigrants may tragically face death while searching for a lost paradise. within the framework of Satan, Fuentes attempted to eradicate Salim within himself in order to exist without constraints in the paradise he envisioned mentally. Salim fled from Iraq to seek refuge in Holland. Regrettably, he is condemned to eternal damnation in hell. He did not find delight in his true identity in his homeland or in the paradise he discovered in the diaspora.

Conclusion

Both writers, Kincaid and Blasim, come from countries that suffer from colonization or occupation. Both fled their original countries to enjoy a better life. Hence both discuss the psychological state of their characters as well as the impact of colonization and occupation on them. The two stories describe the tendency of people who are eager to leave their countries to join peace of mind elsewhere. Kincaid's *Lucy* seeks freedom and independence in America even if she works as a servant for a white family. She keeps thinking of her past and sees people whom she has a relationship with within her night dreams as well as daydreams. Blasim's "The Nightmares of Carlos Fuentes" introduces an Iraqi man who is eager to find a real life far away from the war-shattered country. Unlike Lucy, who reinvented her character and felt sorry for leaving her country, the protagonist in Blasim's story completely denied his past, describing Iraq and Iraqis in a bad and ugly way. Rejecting even the Arabic language, Fuentes or Salim lived horrible experiences of nightmares day after day until he committed suicide while he was trying to control his dreams and kill his Iraqi character inside him.

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Author Bio-Note

Sabah Salim Jabbar

Born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1972, Sabah Salim Jabbar is a scholar and instructor at University of Baghdad – College of Languages / Department of English language. He earned his M.A. Degree at the same college in 2010. His fields of interest are English, American, Arabic, and comparative literature. M.A. thesis was a comparative study between William Faulkner and Ghaib Tuma Farman. In 2021, earned his Ph.D. degree at University of Alcala, Spain in American. He published research papers in the areas of American and English Fiction as well as comparative literature. Among these papers 'Multiple Voice Narrative' (a comparative study) (2010) published in *Journal of College of Languages*; 'The Concept of Death in Don DeLillo's *White Noise*' (2015) *Journal of Translation and linguistics*; 'Picaresque Elements in Selected English and Iraqi Novels: A Comparative Approach' *Journal of College of Languages* (2024). In 2024, participated in the 9th International Conference about the Historical Links between Spain and USA, in Madrid.