International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science

e-ISSN: 2544-9435

Scholarly Publisher
RS Global Sp. z O.O.
ISNI: 0000 0004 8495 2390

Dolna 17, Warsaw,
Poland 00-773
+48 226 0 227 03
editorial_office@rsglobal.pl

ARTICLE TITLE	THE COUNTER-NARRATIVE AND THE DECONSTRUCTION OF COLONIAL DISCOURSE: REPRESENTATIONS OF RESISTANCE IN ABDELRAZAK BOUKEBBA'S *FAST-INFLAMING BLOOD*
ARTICLE INFO	Yasmina Aouadi, Naim Garelmetred. (2025) The Counter-Narrative and The Deconstruction of Colonial Discourse: Representations of Resistance in Abdelrazak Boukebba's *Fast-Inflaming Blood*. *International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science*. 3(47). doi: 10.31435/ijitss.3(47).2025.3558
DOI	https://doi.org/10.31435/ijitss.3(47).2025.3558
RECEIVED	03 March 2025
ACCEPTED	15 May 2025
PUBLISHED	28 July 2025
LICENSE	The article is licensed under a **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.**

THE COUNTER-NARRATIVE AND THE DECONSTRUCTION OF COLONIAL DISCOURSE: REPRESENTATIONS OF RESISTANCE IN ABDELRAZAK BOUKEBBA'S *FAST-INFLAMING BLOOD*

Yasmina Aouadi
El Oued University, Algeria
ORCID ID:0000-0002-2961-751X

Naim Garelmetred
El Oued University, Algeria
ORCID ID: 0000-0001-5756-581X

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes Algerian writer Abdelrazak Boukebba's short story collection Fast-Inflaming Blood as a subtle counter-narrative that subverts and deconstructs colonial narrative, particularly in its representations of the Palestinian cause. Drawing on the Edward Said's theoretical model and broader currents within postcolonial thought—namely, the notion of "counter-narrative"—the article examines the way the book transforms structural violence in the form of siege, bombardment, and forced migration into a literary process that reframes the notions of embodiment, space, and temporality. Through advanced aesthetic and intellectual strategies, Boukebba's book rewrites the colonial period as a dynamic arena of cultural resistance rather than as a passive victimization narrative and cultural recovery. The methodological approach employed combines critical cultural analysis with interpretive literary inquiry, allowing for a nuanced reading of how memory, identity, and resistance are configured within the text. Particular attention is given to stories such as Special Courage, in which the burial of a child becomes a ritual of resilience, and A Special Sea, where the fragmentation of space under occupation is rearticulated as a collective archive of memory. Everyday symbols—like an olive unearthed from a rocket crater or a sea narrated through oral tradition—serve not merely as metaphors but as acts of cultural survival. Ultimately, the study contends that Fast-Inflaming Blood stands as a paradigmatic example of literature's power to dismantle colonial paradigms and to reimagine resistance as an enduring, embodied, and spatially grounded force.

KEYWORDS

Postcolonial Criticism, Counter-Narrative, Palestinian Collective Memory, Colonial Discourse, Cultural Analysis

CITATION

Yasmina Aouadi, Naim Garelmetred. (2025) The Counter-Narrative and The Deconstruction of Colonial Discourse: Representations of Resistance in Abdelrazak Boukebba's *Fast-Inflaming Blood*. *International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science*. 3(47). doi: 10.31435/ijitss.3(47).2025.3558

Introduction.

The study underscores the capacity of narrative texts to deconstruct colonial binaries—such as colonizer/colonized and center/periphery—by reconfiguring victims as historical agents. This dynamic is exemplified in the story *Special Courage*, where the burial of a child is reimagined as a ritual of resistance that rearticulates identity. Moreover, the analysis reveals how quotidian symbols—such as the olive found in a rocket crater or the sea preserved within an oral archive—serve to transform devastated landscapes into narrative spaces that embody resistance as an existential act. This fragmentation of space, as portrayed in narratives like *A Special Sea*, not only reflects its distortion under colonial occupation but also generates a critical and culturally conscious imbalance within the colonial discourse itself.

The symbolic gift described as “from zero distance to Gaza” alludes to an affective solidarity between the Algerian and Palestinian contexts. The study, therefore, focuses on how these texts reconstruct the history of the Palestinian narrative—particularly through the transformation of destruction into poetic imagery that signifies life and regeneration. Ultimately, the research aims to illuminate the intrinsic interplay between the aesthetic and the political, wherein the written word emerges as a cultural weapon—writing life upon the ruins of death—and thereby realizing what Edward Said called “resistance as a form of refusal; because we are personalities in the narratives of others.”

Problem Statement

This study is driven by a fundamental research question: *How does this collection of stories construct a counter-narrative that deconstructs colonial discourse and reshapes collective memory through the use of symbolism, irony, and spatial displacement?* The inquiry focuses on how narrative strategies resist hegemonic representations and engage with memory politics, particularly within the context of the Palestinian experience as portrayed through Algerian literary imagination.

Methodology

This research adopts a critical cultural analysis framework, combining rhetorical interpretation with postcolonial literary critique. The approach involves a close reading of symbolic and narrative elements across the stories, emphasizing the following analytical axes:

- ✓ The transformation of everyday symbols (e.g., bread, the sea, bombs) into instruments of semantic resistance.
- ✓ The deconstruction of spatial binaries (e.g., war/peace, past/present) inherent in colonial narratives.
- ✓ The contextualization of the texts within their historical and political environments, informed by postcolonial theories concerning literature and power.

Objectives

The principal objectives of this article are:

1. To examine the narrative strategies employed in constructing counter-narratives, especially in representing Gaza as a peripheral space in both material and symbolic dimensions, and to connect these strategies to key postcolonial concepts.
2. To demonstrate the emancipatory role of Palestinian symbolism in shaping a collective memory aligned with the ethos of resistance against marginalization and oblivion.
3. To challenge and undermine colonial discourse by exposing its internal contradictions, using narrative as a medium of disruption and critique.

Hypotheses

The research is guided by the following hypotheses:

1. **Deconstructing Colonial Dichotomies**: The story collection reconfigures the “colonizer/colonized” binary by repositioning the victim as an active historical subject.
2. **Everyday Resistance as Liberation**: The narratives depict daily acts of resistance as mechanisms for preserving memory and identity, thereby redefining resistance as a lived, ordinary experience.
3. **Spatial Displacement as Narrative Technique**: The texts employ spatial dislocation to mirror the paradoxes and fragmentation of temporality and geography under occupation, thereby articulating a uniquely Palestinian presence and experience.

Research

Amid the ongoing Palestinian struggle against the Israeli entity—widely regarded as the most prominent model of contemporary settler colonialism—literature emerges as a vital space and a living metaphor. This is particularly relevant in a context where, as Calvaron (2017, p. 166) explains, "colonialism did not stop with the declaration of the international community about the entity of Israel, but rather intensified with its defiant awakening," with the uniqueness of this colonial project lying in its association with the theological fulfillment of God’s promise regarding the Promised Land for the Jewish people. Within such a framework, literature serves as a dynamic site for the production of counter-narratives—narratives that resist the mechanisms of colonial representation which aim to transform identity and distort collective memory.

The short story collection **Dam saree‘**al-iltihab **- Kitāba min al-masāfa ṣifr ‘an Ghazzah** [Fast Inflaming Blood: Writing from Zero Distance about Gaza], by the Algerian writer Abdelrazak Boukebba, exemplifies this counter-narrative practice. It represents a unique literary model that challenges hegemonic discourse through sophisticated aesthetic and intellectual strategies. Rooted in the theoretical legacy of postcolonial critique, particularly the writings associated with *Orientalism* and *Imperialism*, this body of work embodies what critics refer to as "counteraction" or "counter-politics"—a practice that not only deconstructs dominant narratives but also asserts itself through a commitment to aesthetic beauty and cultural resistance.

This literary collection "deconstructs the monolithic narrative that claimed the 'Other' lacked the capacity for self-representation." It restores the voice of the subaltern—previously portrayed as inferior, silent, and lacking intellectual agency—by enabling him to reclaim a sense of self. The subaltern, once reduced to a passive and marginalized figure, initiates a countercultural movement aimed at restoring his modest yet authentic identity and correcting the imperial stereotype disseminated by the colonial center about indigenous peoples (ʿAishuna, 2016).

Within this collection, the subaltern employs highly encoded narrative representations to counter the dominant Zionist discourse. Everyday elements—such as stones, olive tree remnants, pits, or sprigs of thyme—are transformed into potent metaphors. These symbols act as rhetorical detonations, designed to engage the reader's sensibility and challenge the hegemonic Other. Through this mechanism, narrative becomes capable of transmuting devastation into poetry and destruction into a memory-rooted hope.

Importantly, the concept of “zero distance” in this collection does not evoke Roland Barthes’ idea of *writing at zero degree*, wherein the author is effaced. Rather, it reopens the Palestinian wound and fuses it with Algerian-Palestinian blood, united in the shared heat of Eastern suffering and resistance. This direct engagement produces a confrontational and insurgent language that challenges the "Merkava" narrative—an imperial construct that arrogates to itself epistemic transcendence and claims of genetic purity.

This assumption of racial and cultural superiority is precisely what Edward Said refuted when he affirmed that there is no such thing as a "pure, singular culture" and that every culture is, to varying degrees, hybrid, mixed, and differentiated (Said, 2004, p. 70). His argument dismantles the colonial myth of racial preference and purity, emphasizing the inevitability of cultural entanglement.

1- This approach centers the analysis on the collection’s dedication, illuminating the intertwining between the Palestinian experience and that of the Algerian writer, whose familial memory is deeply rooted in the trauma and triumph of French colonialism. The parents and grandparents of this generation participated in a revolutionary struggle that rewrote history through literary narratives interwoven with political consciousness. Thus, the gift “from zero distance to Gaza” is not merely a symbolic gesture—it is a powerful affirmation that anti-colonial struggles, whether in Algeria or Palestine, are threads of a shared fabric. Resistance literature revives this unity by employing a rebellious language that functions as a cultural weapon.

2- This convergence echoes Edward Said’s assertion that literature is not a passive reflection of reality but an active agent in shaping it. In this context, the Palestinian cause, as portrayed in this short story collection, is best understood not simply as a political issue, but as a “battle for existence” (Marshu & Sīd Muḥammad, 2001, p. 192), waged through cultural and rhetorical representations. These are articulated through densely metaphorical and symbolically rich narrative techniques, exemplified throughout this literary work.

1. The Body: From Victim to Living Archive

In the story "Special Courage," the storyteller presents us with a powerful model of counter-narrative, one that not only records violence but aesthetically reshapes its production, thereby fostering critical consciousness. The text’s construction transcends pure literary technique, becoming a resistance strategy that rejects the closure imposed by dominant colonial narratives. This is vividly illustrated in the passage: *"Sitting his son's shroud in the same morning that it is born! He cries, he is aware that two people in life are fleeing from death, while he receives him with indifference; he applauds him."* (Boukebba, 2023, p. 21).

In this context, the story becomes an "open text," dismantling traditional binaries (life/death, joy/mourning) to construct a narrative space rife with contradictions, inviting multiple interpretations. The event of "enough" — on the very morning of birth — intertwines the moment of beginning and end in a single temporal frame, raising a profound existential question: Is the death of the dead an end or a beginning?

This temporal shift transforms the text into a reflective mirror of the violence inherent in the sequential occupation, while leaving each reader to unravel the symbolic meanings through their own lens. The act of "applause" in this mournful context, which might initially seem out of place, holds a spectrum of interpretive

possibilities. Can it be understood as a bitter irony, signaling the futility of death under occupation, defying fear, or perhaps as a rebellion against the logic of the submissive victim?

The story documents the violence of the Zionist military machine, not through vivid depictions of blood or bombings, but by dissecting the existential impact it has on the colonized self. The "child" born and dying on the same day becomes a living metaphor for the occupation's attempt to assassinate the mind and future of the Palestinian people. The "coffin," traditionally a religious and cultural symbol, is reappropriated as an act of resistance, aimed at preserving the threatened identity. Thus, the dead body transforms into another "open text"; its death is not merely a biological event, but a political and historical one, reigniting and preserving the memory of the oppressed.

In line with Edward Said's project, where the colonizer is reduced in colonial discourse to a "passive organism" devoid of agency, this story completely challenges such an idea. The "father" refuses to embrace victimhood, transforming the mourning ritual into an active, essential existential act. The "applause" in this context is not merely a reflex; it redefines the spirit of resistance. Resistance here extends beyond armed struggle, encompassing the preservation of rituals, memory, and even the audacious right to "laugh in the face of death."

The body — until its very death — plays an active role in shaping collective consciousness. By transforming it into a symbol, it produces a counter-narrative that rejects the stereotypes imposed by colonialism. This passage illustrates how the narrative evolves from mere doubt to an active process in which politics, history (Said, 1992, p. 21), and interpretation become central to the most relevant academic and theoretical discussions. It is the history of the body, whose every cell resists surrender, even in death.

In the second story, titled "A Special Hug," we encounter a poignant moment: "The bombardment separated his daughter and her cat. The first relaxed, and the second was wounded. He treated her as though she were his daughter; the cat grieved for her companion, so much so that she grieved amidst the rats, whom the bombings had forced her to join. His daughter frequently looked at him from her bed, asking him to bring her cat. It was not his habit to refuse her request. He embraced the cat, crying and reprimanding her: 'You love your cat more than you love me. She asked for it and did not ask me.' I did not claim that he embraced her more than necessary, but she deserved her companion" (Boukebba, 2023, p. 33).

This story exposes the absurdity of violence by deliberately intertwining the fates of the daughter and the cat. The narrative contrasts "the difference between the bombing of her daughter and her cat," failing to impose any rational logic on the concept of loss. The cat's transformation from a pet into a symbolic stand-in for a murdered daughter—by receiving the same tenderness—reveals that colonial violence does not discriminate. It turns all beings into numbers in its bloodstained record. The only "difference" that bombing and violence create is the absurdity of death itself, not the nature of the victim. In this place, everyone becomes a living corpse, merely postponing death.

The shared grief between the father and the cat generates a parallel language that refuses to reduce suffering to mere statistics. The "cat's asceticism in the rats"—despite its hunger—is not just an instinctual act, but a metaphor for refusing to adapt to a reality that forces victims to live amidst rubble and loss. Even the rats, emerging from the destruction, become part of the narrative of violence that engulfs everyone. The cat, as a symbol of collective memory, resists being forgotten, even at the cost of her own starvation.

The embrace that ends the life of the cat—under the pretense of fulfilling the daughter's request—reveals a profound contradiction. The father's attempt to preserve the memory, unconsciously, transforms it into a replication of the bombing itself. The act of "embracing," which should be an expression of love and intimacy, paradoxically becomes a lethal tool, thus perpetuating the violence that is its very life.

The daughter's repeated urges in a dream—"send her cat"—serve as a counter-narrative to the cold rhetoric of statistics. It is not an escape from reality, but a space that reshapes memory outside the reach of the colonizer's power. Yet, the father, in embracing the cat until its death, later realizes that he has transformed the dream into an extension of violence, as though the occupation has even stolen the victims' dreams.

Reflecting on the title, "A Special Hug," we see the bitter irony in turning human emotions into tools of destruction. The cat's cry, "You love your cat more than me," mirrors the displacement of guilt from the executioner (the colonizer) onto the victim. Instead of rebelling against the colonial bombing and violence, the father punishes himself and the cat for their survival. This defense mechanism illustrates how structural violence generates new forms of self-violence, as the victim, unable to confront the colonizer, redirects her anger inwardly, turning it into aggression against her own life.

The final body to fall in this tragic context is language itself. The cat's death by embrace leads to a vicious and horrific conclusion, where violence perpetuates counter-violence even in the most mundane aspects of life. The story does not simply recount an individual event; it reveals how the colonial system

dismantles and distorts even the possibility of innocent grief. Through these conscious and resistant representations, the short story answers with the force of a bullet to the claim that: “The colonial paradigm continues to perform its central work in the crystallization and design of modern consciousness, even after the collapse of classical and modern colonial states” (Ruwajifa, p. 104).

In the story "Special Envy," the following passage reads: "A small fragment hit the right lens of his medical glasses; the right eye envies the left eye on the clearness of the vision... He went to the Eye Hospital in the neighborhood of Al-Nasr, and found some of the victims of the bombing carrying their eyes in their hands; he envisioned his right eye through the fog of vision" (Boukebba, 2023, p. 54).

The story transforms the eyes—from mere tools of vision and perception—into a symbolic space that reflects the fragmentation of identity under violence. The injury to the "right lens of glasses" caused by a small fragment is not just a physical accident; it serves as a metaphor for how external violence (such as bombing) penetrates the tools used for self-understanding and perception of the world. The resulting visual displacement—blurry vision in the right eye versus the clear left eye—embodies the internal conflict between the attempt to clearly understand reality (represented by the left eye) and the blurred vision imposed by violence (represented by the right eye). In this sense, the body becomes an arena for the conflict between what is seen and what should be seen.

The envy between the eyes—first from the right to the left, and then vice versa—reveals a psychological defense mechanism produced by violence. While the injured (right) eye envies the intact eye for its clarity of vision, this envy flips in the hospital, where the intact (left) eye envies the injured eye for its "blurry vision." This reversal illustrates that clarity—within the context of violence—can become an existential burden, as the "blurry" vision becomes a refuge from facing the painful reality of loss (as seen in the victims who are holding their eyes in their hands). In this context, envy is not a negative feeling but an attempt to choose the lesser of two painful realities: one that is open to the pain of clarity and another that blends denial with rejection of the overwhelming reality, symbolized by the fog.

The story takes us into the "Eye Hospital," further intensifying the visual fragmentation by turning it into a collective phenomenon: "the victims of Qisas hold their eyes in their hands." This image embodies the complete alienation of humanity in war; the eye—a symbol of vision and perception—is uprooted from its natural place on the face, becoming a detached and lifeless organ. This transformation reflects how the body itself is forcibly reshaped to align with the logic of violence. The victims, who bear their eyes, become mirrors of the narrator, amplifying sadness and grief through multiple voices. Their suffering indicates that the narrator's visual fragment is not singular but part of a larger fragmentation that affects both the individual and the collective identity.

The struggle between the eyes represents the disintegration of a single body into two conflicting entities, as if external violence has penetrated the body, planting the seeds of war within. This rupture is not confined to sight and vision alone but symbolizes a deeper division of the self: one part confronts the horrific reality (as seen by the left eye) while the other retreats into protective imagination (as seen through the blurry vision of the right eye). These disturbing and satirical scenes reach an extreme degree, especially when it comes to the grotesque, "injuring the recipient's senses and distorting cultural and aesthetic themes" (Shetiwi, 2023, p. 385). This distortion, however, is not just an image of despair; it is woven into the fabric of resistance, for the victim—torn by pain and absurdity—becomes an active participant in the act of resistance.

The shift from "envy of clarity in vision" to "envy of blurriness in vision" reveals how the body—under the weight of violence—refuses to remain whole, choosing instead division as a strategy for survival. This process turns Zionist colonialism into a form of "insanity in terms of its weight over colonial peoples and civilizations, a state of indifference to the lack of values in which enslaved peoples flounder" (Ben Toumi, 2025, p. 157), with violence and bloodshed at its core. In this context, we observe the "insane psyche," which plays the game of rhetorical manipulation and narrative seduction, leading to the “general use of the pistol to restore authoritarian regimes almost everywhere.” In the light of the burning war (Mbembe, p. 127), the war emerges as a form of organized annihilation of unarmed Palestinians and the remnants of their country's infrastructure and identity.

2. Olive Buds: Childhood as a Tool to Dismantle Colonial Discourse

War leaves scars on the consciousness and psyche of the child, a figure typically associated with play in peaceful spaces and innocent laughter, only to find themselves as the most vulnerable link in the equation of colonial violence. This complex and distressing situation necessitates that, from the perspective of resistance, the child must continue to "naturally coordinate his integrated development, even if threatened by the events

of war, as long as there is, beside him, a family equipped with sufficient self-confidence and a kind of serenity" (Nassar, p. 81) to face the dangers brought by the war, which has continued unabated for so long.

Hospitality among Arabs is a beautiful and rare trait, one that they take pride in and preserve throughout their history. Even during times of war, they have maintained this core value that defines Arab culture—"which does not prevent one of the warriors from providing the villages (food and water) to the other warrior" (Ben-Tanbak, 1993, p. 26).

In the story "Special Generosity," the narrative complicates our understanding. Generosity and hospitality, typically cultural components of Arab identity, are transformed into a potent strategy for responding with violent generosity to the forces of the Israeli occupation, which is portrayed as a "heavy guest" from the perspective of the story. The child is asked by a teacher, "What do you want to be in the future?" His response is, "Engineer of bombs." When asked why, he replies: "I heard my grandfather say: The bomb is not a tribute to the guest if it is gas, and I must be generous. There are many 'guests' in Palestine" (Boukebba, 2023, p. 12).

In the Arab collective imagination, hospitality is a moral pillar that represents identity and belonging. However, in this narrative, it is recoded and recontextualized as an existential act of resistance against displacement and alienation. Rather than offering the customary coffee and dates, the child offers "bombs" to the colonial guest, thus transforming the intimate act of reception into a symbolic and allegorical ritual. This shift through cultural metaphors exposes the oppression at the heart of the colonial project, which defines the "guest" while violating the sanctity of the "host." Hospitality, in this new context, becomes a metaphor for entitlement and sovereignty over the land. Generosity is redefined—not as subordination to the other, but as an assertion of the right to defend the sanctity of the earth and uphold one's identity and belonging.

The story does not deny the innocence of the child, but rather highlights the birth of colonialism as a distortion of childhood. This forced maturation compels the child to adopt a consciously resistant stance in the face of daily oppression. The character evolves from one who throws stones to one who transforms them into cultural ammunition for resistance. In this process, the act of "playing" itself becomes an act of defiance in a context where the child is denied the right to play. This shift demonstrates that "awareness" is not merely cultural but an existential necessity shaped by the practices of occupation. It also challenges the orientalist discourse that portrays Palestinians as "victims" of vague emotions or as "savages" outside the purview of history.

The story here rests on a radical paradox: the use of the symbolism of hospitality—traditionally regarded as the pinnacle of humanity in Arab culture—to perform a nominally “violent” act. This inversion exposes the structural inhumanity of colonialism, which distorts even the noblest of cultural values. It transforms the grandfathers of generosity into tools of resistance and confrontation. When the guest is honored not with *coffee* but with a *bomb*, the narrative provokes a fundamental question: has the intimate, human, hospitable encounter been turned into a tragedy?

The transformation of hospitality in this narrative is inseparable from a collective memory that reclaims its symbols within the context of resistance. Honoring the guest is no longer a mere social gesture; it becomes an echo of liberation stories passed down through generations. The child, who refuses to host the occupier with *coffee* and instead responds with *bullets*, is not merely acting on impulse. He is consciously stepping into the legacy of his ancestors—those who once received strangers with bread but are now compelled, through their children, to defend that same land with arms. In this way, *armed hospitality* becomes an extension of legitimate resistance, a reaffirmation of the historical right to exist.

This Palestinian child breaks away from the colonial matrix, rejecting the imposed monism of the colonial vision that seeks to fix the East in passive roles. Instead, he emerges as what Al-Muhabbashi terms an *“active and activated subject”* (Al-Muhabbashi, 2022, p. 47).

The story operates on three levels:

1. It shifts hospitality from a static cultural value to a dynamic weapon of critique.
2. It transforms the child from a passive subject and victim of colonial discourse into an active producer of counter-narrative.
3. It reveals how culture, when placed under pressure, manifests as resistance—not by abandoning its essence, but by reconfiguring its symbols.

This is how literature becomes a battlefield of meaning, and how the child, through the language of his people, crafts a new form of *generosity*—one that confronts violence not with submission, but with subversive affirmation.

The title itself becomes deeply ironic: what is "special" is not the joy of giving, but the tragic distortion of gifting itself. A child choosing a tank over a teddy bear is not an isolated event but a condensed image of an entire generation raised amid the rubble of war and emotional deprivation.

This narrative sharpens its critique through the deliberate juxtaposition of the intimate with the militarized, of play with death. When Bukba (Boukebba, 2023, p. 57).

Describes how the child "chose the tank," the moment is framed not as innocent curiosity but as an inherited response, where the "special gift" becomes a symbolic initiation into the normalization of violence. The father's emotional paralysis, torn between the memory of his brother on the front and the desire to maintain his daughter's innocence, evokes a deeper commentary on intergenerational trauma. The war intrudes even into the symbolic space of birthdays, where gestures of affection are haunted by the looming presence of martyrdom and loss.

In essence, the story deconstructs the false dichotomy between war and play. It insists that, under colonization, even toys become politicized. The tank is not just a child's choice—it is the embodiment of a reconfigured imagination, one that mirrors the architecture of occupation and the militarization of dreams. Thus, the "special gift" does not celebrate life but marks a painful rite of passage into a world where survival is learned early, and innocence is sacrificed at the altar of resistance.

Childhood is objectified and normalized through daily exposure to violence, wherein the figure of the "demanding" child symbolizes a rejection of "small" gifts—an act that underscores the impossibility of preserving innocence amid the realities of enforced maturity. The child's selection of the tank is not a mere childish desire but rather a surrender to environmental conditioning that has rendered violence the existential sustenance of Palestinians.

The transformation of the Merkava tank into a "toy" consecrates war, embedding it within the cultural fabric as something familiar and desirable. This process socializes children into accepting violence as a normalized, even celebrated, component of daily life. The narrative starkly reflects the rapid and profound displacement between domestic space and the battlefield, as well as the dissolution of the boundary between life and death. This transformation, articulated in a single sentence, reveals how the invasion and occupation dominate not only physical territory but also the interior landscapes and dreams of children.

The cold, austere language—as in the expression "putting the headscarf in the driver's glove"—produces a tragic realism, demonstrating how violence becomes an unremarkable thread in the tapestry of everyday existence. The contradiction between protection and destruction is encapsulated in the dual gifting of the teddy bear (as a symbol of soft colonial discourse) and the tank. This contradiction directly confronts the colonial project, which presents itself as a savior through gestures of care and innocence symbolized by the teddy bear, while simultaneously enacting destruction through instruments of war like the tank. The irony reaches its peak in the child's choice between two instruments of death—the teddy bear or the tank—posing this decision as a pseudo-democratic act that merely offers the illusion of freedom (Walia, 2007, p. 60).

The short story "A7Special Teacher" reads:

He remembered his teacher who used to begin the lesson before the bell rang, and decided to visit him at school. He found the school suspended, yet his attention was drawn to a tearful sentence written on the board: 'We will complete the lesson in Paradise!' He entered the Al-Sabra Health Center and was struck by the sight of a large corpse surrounded by ten small ones. Then he learned that it was the teacher and his pupils. He smiled tearfully: 'You never abandoned your habit! You gave the lesson before entering Paradise!(Boukabba, 2023, p. 52).

The story powerfully embodies the violence of the colonizer and the excessiveness of bloodshed through the destruction of the school, which stands as a symbolic space for knowledge and hope—an emblem of resistance against the colonial machinery that seeks to uproot the foundations of the future. The closure of the classroom and the school, and their transformation into cadavers amassed at the so-called "Health Patience" center, is not merely a gruesome image but a visual testimony to the military strategy of colonialism: the targeted dismantling of the centers of cultural empowerment and intellectual continuity. In this context, the school constitutes an existential threat to the colonial project because it fosters cognitive and cultural consciousness capable of deconstructing dominant narratives.

The fatal scene of the teacher's corpse surrounded by his pupils transforms the classroom—the space once dedicated to learning—into a mass grave. Yet, the sentence written on the blackboard, "We will complete the lesson in Paradise," subverts the attempt to silence the voice of knowledge. It turns death into a continuation of the educational process, as if the colonial killing machine had not succeeded in extinguishing life, but had merely transferred the classroom from the temporal realm of earth to the eternal time of the afterlife. Here, death itself becomes an educational paradigm: martyrdom is not an endpoint but a "lesson" in how to transform physical defeat into spiritual triumph. In this powerful imagery, biology is surpassed by epistemology—knowledge proves to be mightier than bullets.

The testimony in this context transforms into a form of "rebirth," symbolically opening the doors of Paradise. The text explores this deeply rooted religious symbol, particularly through the phrase "completion of the lesson in Paradise," which embodies the concept of seeking knowledge as an act of worship—a pursuit that endures beyond death. This notion resonates with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), which states: “When the son of Adam dies, his deeds come to an end except for three… or knowledge that benefits him.” The colonial machine’s persistent effort to silence the teacher and reduce him to "eternal silence" (Gibson , 2013, p. 166) represents a futile endeavor, as the teacher has already completed his educational mission. Even in death, he will continue to fulfill this mission, albeit in a different realm.

The tearful smile at the end of the story—"Smile tearfully: you have not been left behind!"—captures the inherent duality in Arab-Islamic culture, which intertwines "patience" with "calculation." The act of crying over the loss of the dead does not diminish the joy derived from the immortality of souls in Paradise. In this context, Paradise is not merely a compensatory escape but rather an extension of the pursuit of knowledge, a pursuit that colonialism reduced to corpses but which has, symbolically, been elevated to a realm beyond the reach of colonial violence.

As a sign, the phrase written in a confused line—likely created by the teacher in his final moments—suggests that while colonial violence may silence voices, it cannot erase the written word. The line itself becomes a testimony, ensuring the continuation of resistance until the very last moment.

3. Representations of Spacetime: Fragmentation and Reconstruction of Reality

Waheed bin Bouaziz, in his book *Misery*, critiques the cultural studies accountabilities, the political hypocrisy, and cultural elitism of the international community, which claims neutrality or even supports just causes. He states: “It is strange that the presence of these statements was initially for the purpose of criticizing imperialism and imperial formations, but unfortunately, the matter finally turned into a weapon directed at the militant fronts, and was also turned into a smart way to undermine developing nationalisms and anti-colonialist ideas under the pretext of paradise and excessive rise in the literature of the contrary” (Bouaziz, 2023, p. 15). This passage highlights the dominance of liberalism as a system of control, specifically in the manipulation of revolutionary critical terms such as hybridism and exile literature, which are repurposed in ways that strip them of their liberating potential.

The story "Repeated Narratives" affirms the exiling of Palestine from earthly time, with Palestine now measuring time by the groaning of the wounded and the final breaths of the dead. In this narrative, time becomes distorted: "waiting for the day, and if he came to rest waiting for the night," with the realization that both are equally cruel and destructive. This leads the narrator to contemplate a third possibility, one that allows him to forget his fear. He carries an appendix for his brother’s forehead, apologizing for his inability to return by night, prompting his brother to ask, "Are we at night or in the day?" (Boukabah, 2023, p. 67). This story, appearing on page 67, is intended to poignantly stir the reader’s conscience, both visually and historically, reminding us of the Arab defeat at the hands of the Israeli entity in the 1967 war. The narrative critiques the failure to "overthrow the revolutionary" regimes in Egypt and Syria, to destroy their military and economic power, and to dismantle the current of the Arab revolution (Rahmoun & Bedida, 2020, p. 433).

The repetitive nature of this story reflects the cyclical nature of Zionist colonial time in Palestine—time that continuously repeats itself, bound by the same colonial and historical conditions and tools.

The text seeks to deconstruct the traditional linear structure of time (chronological linearity: day/night) in order to reflect a fragmented reality under the bombardment and siege. The narrator begins the “witness” by waiting for the day, then the night, but concludes that both are “equal in severity and destruction.” This statement obliterates the distinction between day and night (traditionally day for activity, night for rest). The temporal shift symbolizes the collapse of the everyday routine system under the conditions of war, where movement becomes a vicious cycle of fear and threat, with no meaning other than a miserable continuity.

The brother's final question, “Are we in the night or in the day?” reinforces this confusion. The siege transforms time into an indeterminate, floating mass, dissolving the boundaries between time periods and rendering existence a mere act of formal survival.

The narrator’s (the witness's) attempt to invent a “third time” represents his quest to create a symbolic space that transcends the severity of the two controlled times. This third time may be an expression of hope, psychological resistance, or even imagination—an escape from the grim realities of daily life. However, the failure of this attempt is evident in the brother's return to his perplexing question about the nature of time, reinforcing the mental and existential state of being under siege.

This distortion of time resonates with Edward Said's concept of "internal exile," where the Palestinian is forced into a state of estrangement within their homeland due to occupation or siege (Amari & Umm al-Saad, 2022, p. 278). In this context, "memory becomes the means to restore it and the thread of his story," serving as a desperate attempt to return to the homeland, even if only symbolically.

The characters in the story appear physically and morphologically present, yet they suffer from an internal exile, caught on an invisible front in an endless war. The narrator (the witness) can do little but offer sustenance through aesthetic resistance—by writing about this defining moment. The siege does not merely steal the land; it also steals time, memory, and the very sense of belonging. The narrator's care for the machine gun—an emblem of ongoing violence—indicates the normalization of a state of emergency, where instruments of war become part of daily life, functioning as substitutes for the vanished routines of peace.

This narrative endeavor, through its aesthetic representations, attempts to weave together real and imagined history into a unified fabric (Al-'Awf, 2021, p. 129), operating within a counter-narrative strategy that relies on the explosive potential of language itself.

Wars leave profound psychological and cultural scars, especially in an unarmed civilian society such as the Palestinian one. As Lounis (2024, p. 95) notes: "The danger of this war lies in turning people into tools for killing." The victims are depersonalized, transformed into fleeting images disseminated coldly by the media.

In the short story *"A Special Sea"*, the motif of fragmentation is present again:

"Between him and Gaza are waves of love. He sits with his whisper more than with any other creature in the sector. The war visitors came between them; they watched it from afar, from the balcony. The balcony was bombed, and he was drawn to the sea. The drawing was buried, and he wrote a poem about the sea, and kept it for some of the camp's children. Every child preserved it. He no longer keeps his hair. The camp was bombed…"

Here, the balcony—a space of intimacy and contemplation—becomes a target, while the poem about the sea symbolizes both memory and resistance. The act of writing and preserving that poem becomes a means of survival, a legacy passed on to the children of the camp, even as the physical world around them is annihilated. The absence of hair signifies trauma, perhaps the toll of stress or mourning, underscoring the irreversible personal and collective losses of war (Boukabah, 2023, p. 65).

One of the essential tasks of the counter-narrative is to resist the culture of erasure. In this regard, colonial regimes frequently employ methods such as mind manipulation, brainwashing, and domestication as instruments of domination (Bauman & Donskis, 2018, p. 96). Within this framework, the representation of the sea in the story is constructed through a dual lens of "beauty and cruelty." The sea is portrayed as a source of love, hope, and humanity; yet, it is simultaneously surrounded by warships that obstruct any direct or intimate interaction with it. This duality reflects the bitter reality of Gaza, where the sea—typically a symbol of freedom and openness—becomes itself imprisoned under colonial military control.

The protagonist's shift from sitting by the sea, to watching it from a distance, and finally to expressing it through drawing and poetry, marks a form of symbolic resistance to marginalization and erasure. The sea here is not merely a geographic entity, but a vessel of collective memory and identity—elements the colonial power attempts to erase—yet which endure through art and literature.

The children in the story are not incidental characters; rather, they are transformed into bearers of a memory larger than the besieged sea itself. Each child preserves a "bayt" (which in Arabic refers both to a poetic verse and a physical house), suggesting a profound tragic resonance: in a world where their literal homes are destroyed by bombardment, they carry with them metaphorical "houses" made of poetry. The fragmented poetic verses carried by the children symbolize the fragmentation of Palestinian identity under siege. The word "bayt" thus becomes a layered metaphor: each child holds not a safe home, but a verse—an echo of the sea—embedded in a strand of hair they preserve. When the camp is bombed, and the children are carried away "unconscious by the sea," the poetic becomes entangled with the tragic, and memory becomes a fragile resistance against annihilation.

Painting and poetry emerge in the story as dual strategies of survival—forms of aesthetic resistance through which the character dedicates himself to the creation of an *alternative sea*, a symbolic refuge that compensates for the inaccessibility of the real sea. However, the subsequent destruction of both the painting and the poem illustrates that the colonial power does not merely target tangible land, but also wages war on memory, heritage, and artistic expression. Yet, the act of preserving the poem among the children transforms it from a personal possession (*milk fardi*) into a shared cultural legacy (*irth jamāʿī*), rendering its erasure impossible, as it has been woven into the consciousness of a new generation.

The conclusion of the text—depicting the waiting for the children to regain consciousness—embodies a deeply tragic paradox: the reclamation of *Baḥr Ghazza* (the Sea of Gaza) is contingent upon the awakening

of these children, yet it is the very bombing that may have obliterated their memory. This contradiction encapsulates the broader Palestinian condition: How can identity be constructed under occupation? The story's answer lies in the children themselves. Even if rendered unconscious by war, each child carries within them a poetic *bayt* (a "verse" or a symbolic "house"), which acts as a seed for a future cultural narrative—one that, like the phoenix, is destined to rise from the ashes.

The story of "ڤ (Ḥu)" from *Furṣa Khāṣṣa* (*A Special Opportunity*) presents a profound reflection on pragmatic resistance and utilitarian creativity in the face of colonial military violence. As the narrative reads: "The Gneizeton and the Seamen could not come out and are about to come out. Will he venture? He saw in one of his olives calling out to him, and he choked in pieces to her! Will he arrive? A rocket woke up and made a hole in the courtyard, and he smiled: 'I will use it to plant olives.'" (Boukebba, 2023, p. 23)

This story illustrates how space, initially marked by destruction, is imaginatively reconstituted into a site of creation. Through a dense symbolic structure and aesthetic layering, the narrative articulates a counter-colonial strategy that transforms violence into potential. This transformation is deconstructed through the following key elements:

1. **Binary Oppositions** (*al-aḍdād*): *Destruction vs. Creation*. The story's architecture hinges on a system of oppositions that emphasize the contrast between devastation and rebirth. For example, the end of the olive season ("the season is about to come out") signifies loss, yet the crater caused by a rocket becomes a "golden opportunity" (*furṣa dhahabiyya*) to replant life—an olive tree—redefining temporality from *nihāya* (an end) to *ibtidāʾ* (a beginning).

2. **The Dream vs. Reality Dichotomy**: In the dream, the olive trees call to the narrator (the *shāhid*, or "witness"), embodying a deep emotional and symbolic connection to the land. This imagined call is immediately disrupted by the violent intrusion of reality—the explosion of a rocket. Yet, instead of responding with despair, the narrator's reaction embodies a transformative optimism: the rocket's crater becomes a space for new growth. This response is a demonstration of psychological and cultural resilience where destruction results in continuity, as it does in the Palestinian ethos of rebirth in the context of land attachment in the face of erasure.

4. Cynicism and Symbolic Violence: Dismantling the Discourse of Hegemony

The irony embedded in advanced narrative techniques plays a crucial role in deconstructing the cultural and social constructs inherited from colonialism. By utilizing a variety of constructs, these narrative strategies combine analytical precision with subtle semantic maneuvering. This allows the writer to reinterpret historical narratives, unveiling the contradictions inherent in colonial domination. Through indirect and symbolic exposure of dominant discourses, the narrative invites the recipient to engage critically. In this context, irony becomes a transformative tool, turning the text into a space where the marginalized voice is heard, casting light on the colonizer's paradoxes of identity and authority. The irony blends conscious critique with profound analysis, reshaping collective consciousness and offering a creative space that challenges traditional narrative frameworks. This approach emphasizes the power of storytelling to serve as a form of aesthetic resistance and imaginative redefinition.

In the story *"The Special Minister"*, the narrative addresses a deeply entrenched idea within the collective Zionist imagination: the erasure of Palestine and its connection to the land. This is encapsulated in the globally circulated slogan that "Palestine is a land without a people, and the Jews are a people without a land." It is no coincidence that the "Palestinian" label, replete with historical context, is consistently absent, replaced instead by generic labels such as "Arab" or "Bedouin" (ʿIsāwī, 2021, p. 29). This deliberate substitution is meant to rob the Palestinian people of their history and culture. This account preserves the denial of Palestinian national rights and upholds the colonial discourse. Thus, the account seeks to legitimize the idea of the "bloody heritage" that the Israeli entity exclusively appropriates to itself.

In *" The Special Minister"*, the text reads: "The Minister of the Israeli Heritage called for the nuclear bomb of Gaza, and he smiled: This is a minister who is in harmony with his position. It defends the only legacy of his state: extermination." (Boukebba, 2023, p. 46)

The short story *" The Special Minister"* addresses the problem of colonial discourse, which hides its true intent under the guise of culture and heritage. Through satire, the narrative embodies Edward Said's statement: "Imperialism is culture before it is politics." The narrative exposes this contradiction through sharp irony—where the title *"Israeli Minister of Heritage"* itself is an embodiment of this contradiction. "Heritage," in epistemological terms, is supposed to preserve memory and human history. However, the minister's call for "nuclear rhetoric" undermines this by framing it as an act of genocide. The irony here lies not only in the contradiction between the name (heritage) and the practice (destruction), but in the transformation of "heritage"

into an ideological cover to justify violence. These mechanisms are reminiscent of colonial discourse, which uses two-sided terms such as “civilization” and “modernization” to disguise projects of destruction.

The narrator (the witness) comments in the story that the Israeli minister “defends the only heritage of his state: extermination.” This statement reveals the mechanism of reducing the state’s history to the act of extermination, as a barren "heritage." This semantic shift, transforming genocide into "heritage," strips away one of colonialism's tools: the production of a historical narrative that glorifies violence as part of identity. In this sense, genocide becomes not just a military policy, but a “culture” practiced by the state and presented as an existential value. This parallels Edward Said's analysis of colonialism as a “system of representation” before it was a military invasion.

The story highlights the central role of colonial culture in consolidating hegemony. The call for nuclear annihilation does not come from a minister of defense, but from a minister of heritage! This displacement illustrates how imperialism transforms culture into the sphere of justification, where language itself—through terms such as “heritage”—becomes a tool for normalizing violence. The colonial state produces discourse that links our existence with the “right” to exterminate.

The smile in the text ("he smiled") is not an expression of acceptance, but an act of narrative and civilizational resistance, as it ridicules the claims of the moral state and reveals their falsity. Smiling here functions as a form of “sarcasm,” as described by Hume Baba Bavin, in which the satirical narrative becomes a tool for deconstructing the discourse of power, "and history into a satirical comic" (*Bābā, 2006, p. 174*). This strategy condemns the colonizer. The narrator (the witness), throughout this story, does not confront the rhetoric of anger. Instead, he exposes the cynicism of the colonizer’s inner contradictions, which weakens their deceptive authority.

The text in its letters relies on acrimonious spelling to expose the cultural mechanism of colonialism, where extermination is presented as a “legitimate” verb. This is achieved through the falsification of language and the redefinition of heritage. Resistance to colonialism is not merely about confronting its policies; it lies in dismantling its cultural discourse. This narrative model—through its reduction of “heritage” to genocide—encourages the reader to reconsider all colonial discourses that hide behind humanistic slogans while implementing projects of death and erasure for the other.

In the story *"A Special Bag"*, it is written: “He deludes himself by shopping, he comes out with an empty black bag, and returns with another that he does not know what it is for now! In the last bag, he found a sprinkling of wheat and a message: ‘You sack. My son wished for Paradise, so he was holy and hungry, while the wheat was being put in the garbage.’ (Boukebba, 2023, p. 27).

The short story *"Special Bag"* addresses the issue of humanitarian aid within the context of systematic violence, exposing the contradictions of human discourse that alleviates suffering without addressing its root causes. The empty bag here symbolizes illusion and absurdity; the hero “deludes himself by shopping,” participating in the climate of empty consumption. This is a critique of formalities that offer “solutions” (like humanitarian aid) while failing to tackle the core of the problem.

Wheat in this context symbolizes basic sustenance and life, but it is reduced to a “gift” within the bag, illustrating how the hunger crisis (caused by wars and blockades) is reduced to temporary relief. Wheat here is not a solution; rather, it is a witness to the failure of the world order to end the colonial violence that creates hunger. Meanwhile, the message conveys an individual tragedy (the martyrdom of the starving father) while simultaneously acting as a collective symbol of the common Palestinian fate. The phrase “Heaven wished for my son” illustrates the transformation of the victim into a “martyr,” but it ridicules this transformation caused by colonialism. This martyrdom was not a result of armed struggle but rather a consequence of hunger imposed by the siege, which condemns and lashes the conscience of the world.

The Gaza bath (pigeon) is a symbol of world peace, but the placement of wheat in the context of Gaza—besieged and destroyed—reveals the contradiction between the Roman discourse on "peace" and the harsh reality of the daily violence produced by the Zionist machine. The son, who feeds the pigeon while starving, becomes a paradoxical metaphor for the false "peacemaking" that neglects the fundamental needs of human beings.

The hunger that exists in Gaza, silenced by the international community and weaponized by Zionism as a tool of war, will remain a bloody tattoo in the pages of history and in the conscience of humanity. The martyrdom of the starving father and the feeding of the pigeons highlight how hunger is used as a weapon in conflicts, such as the Israeli siege of Gaza, while aid is offered as a temporary solution that turns the victims into mere recipients of mercy, not active participants in liberation.

In this context, aid manifests itself as an ideological cover that reveals its true purpose. The story mocks the mechanism of providing humanitarian aid (such as the filled bag) as an illusory alternative to justice. The

bag, loaded with wheat and an emotional message, does nothing to stop the continuation of the siege or prevent the martyrdom of innocent children.

Throughout the story, "martyrdom" is redefined as a spiritual philosophy. It is associated with hunger and suffering, deconstructing the typical stereotype of the martyr in the Palestinian context. It reveals that death, inflicted through slow violence (such as siege), is yet another form of forgotten resistance.

Irony reaches its peak in the story of the "Special Cigarette," where it says: "Although his house is pierced, so that he can host in the open air, he insists on smoking his cigarette on the remaining part of the balcony. Faithful to his children, who kept him and his neighbor safe before they were bombed. He went out and smoked; he was amazed at the camp meeting with all the rocks, and laughed at the cowardice of the occupation soldiers. Then appeared to him a goose that smoked the world; and sent its children to heaven." (*Boukebba, 2023, p. 47*).

In the narrative, smoking on the ruined balcony becomes a symbolic act of the man's insistence on not abandoning his daily routine regardless of how apocalyptic the environment is. It is not only a routine aspect of one's daily routine to smoke but also a rebellious, ironic action as it brings out the absurdity of one attempting to carry on with business as usual when there is destruction and violence all around. The ruined balcony, open to the heavens, ceases to afford shelter, but still the man clings to this fleeting show of life. It is a satirical commentary on how the occupation seeks to impose a "normal life" on the Palestinians, even though that "normalcy" is shaped by constant destruction. The occupied life, as depicted in this scene, has become so desensitized to the horror of death and violence that the daily routines—the very acts of survival—are turned into mockery.

The paradox of the father's failed protection of his children is stark. While he tries to keep them safe by smoking in a place away from them, believing that this act protects them from the danger of the occupation, he is ultimately unable to protect them from the bombs. The story exposes the futility of these "protective" measures when the larger system of occupation actively creates death zones for civilians. The occupation becomes the stage for death, stripping away any semblance of safety and leaving only ruins where families try to cling to their humanity in an inhumane context.

Moreover, the image of turning rubble into tables and candles highlights the absurdity of the so-called "reconstruction" efforts promoted by international bodies. These acts of restoration themselves are not concerned with real restoration but are an act toward covering up the perpetual destruction. The candles in these places serve to symbolize an act of rebellion—a gesture toward lighting the collective memory and guaranteeing its continuation within the Palestinian erasure framework through state systemic practice. Even an effort at reconstruction, reclaiming, and significance where, though there is physical dimming, there is an effort. The irony is so heavy: life, embodied in the candles, is being built out of the same destruction of death.

These acts of restoration themselves are not concerned with real restoration but are an act toward covering up the perpetual destruction. The candles in these places serve to symbolize an act of rebellion—a gesture toward lighting the collective memory and guaranteeing its continuation within the Palestinian erasure framework through state systemic practice. Even an effort at reconstruction, reclaiming, and significance where, though there is physical dimming, there is an effort. The irony is so heavy: life, embodied in the candles, is being built out of the same destruction of death.

The story mocks the language of the occupation, and most particularly the phrase "the strongest army in the area," which is now cowering, unable to confront the Palestinian children and stones' strength. The joke is a biting criticism of the military's purported toughness, flipping on its head the official mythology of invincibility by highlighting the absurdity of its fear of the oppressed. The joke is a cultural act of resistance, utilizing satire to deconstruct the iconography of the powerful occupier and expose the weakness of its rule. Edward Said's concept of cultural resistance is realized here, as the humor and ridicule in the narrative serve as weapons against the colonizer's prestige, revealing the deeper vulnerabilities of the occupying force.

The transformation of Gaza from a victim of occupation to an active symbol of resistance is one of the most striking elements of the story. "Gaza smokes the world" suggests an aesthetic shift in which Gaza itself becomes a dynamic force, a metaphor for the ongoing resistance against colonial violence. Rather than being simply a site of destruction, Gaza is depicted as an active, creative entity. The "smoke" issuing from Gaza is not a signal of defeat but of resistance, along with it the moral cause of the Palestinian people's struggle for freedom. The image reinforces that, however much the occupation wishes to incinerate Gaza, it inadvertently fuels a fiercer resistance, as embodied by Gaza "smoking the world."

The phrase "sending her children to heaven" is skillfully ridiculed in the story, subverting the rhetoric used by the occupation to justify its military actions. The claim of "military precision" and the technological superiority of the Israeli army are debunked as nothing more than a façade. Children are not casualties of war

by mistake; they are deliberately targeted, and their deaths are a direct result of the occupation's policies. The "heaven" to which the children are sent is not a place of peace, but a cruel distortion of paradise, where the innocent are killed for political purposes. The sky here is not a symbol of peace but a witness to the crime—the violent transformation of childhood into a vulnerable target. The rhetoric of the occupation is exposed for what it is: a delusion of victory built on the systematic erasure of lives.

The narrative links the destruction of homes and the killing of children to the cultural "heritage" of the Israeli occupation. The porch and the open house are not evidence of the "barbarism" of Palestinians— as portrayed by the occupation— but rather symbols of the extermination culture practiced by the colonial state. This evokes Edward Said's assertion that colonialism is a "culture before it is politics," a culture of occupation that dismantles both geography and memory.

Ultimately, the story not only exposes these contradictions but also presents itself as an act of resistance. For example, laughter amidst the rubble, transforming it into a meeting table, embodies the resistance of life to occupation. This redefines the concept of destruction, positioning it as the creation of a new home for collective joy.

Conclusions

The "*Fast-Inflaming Blood*" (Dam Saree' Al-Iltihab) group represents a comprehensive counter-narrative model that deconstructs the colonial discourse. It transforms structural violence—such as siege and displacement—into a creative act that reshapes memory and identity. Through temporal shifts, as seen in the story of "A Special Sea," the destructive space is redefined as an archive of collective memory, where the rubble turns into a symbol of life, transforming geographical fragmentation into secret fragmentation that both generates and exposes the imbalances inherent in the colonial project.

The story articulates the contradictions of colonial discourse through sharp irony, such as in the depiction of "extermination" as an Israeli "heritage" in the story of *The Special Minister*, thereby embodying Edward Said's notion that colonialism is enacted through a culture of domination. These stories subtly transform everyday symbols—such as the wheat in "Special Bag"—into tools of resistance, exposing the fallacy of humanitarian aid that mitigates violence without addressing its root causes.

The counter-narrative is not confined to deconstructing colonial binaries (colonizer/colonized), nor does it reframe Palestinian victims as mere historical actors. For instance, in "Special Courage," the child is buried in a ritual that rewrites identity outside the framework of victimhood. Consequently, the narrative, through its critique of both the Algerian and Palestinian contexts, becomes a cultural weapon that achieves what Edward Said called "the refusal to be characters in the mysteries of others," asserting that resistance is as total as it is existential.

REFERENCES

1. Abu al-'Awf, M. (2021). Al-ḥarb wal-sarrad: Riwayat Ramād al-Sharq li-Wassīni al-'Araj numūdhajan [War and Narrative: The Novel *Ashes of the East* by Wassini al-Araj as a Model] (Vol. 1). Egypt: Egyptian General Book Organization.
2. Aishuna, L. (2016). Al-sarrad wal-sarrad al-muḍād fi siyāq mā ba'd al-kulūniyāliyya [Narrative and Counter-Narrative in the Context of Postcolonialism]. Jijel: Master's Thesis (Manuscript).
3. Al-Muhabbashi, Q. (February, 2022). Al-kulūniyāliya al-jadīda wa taghyīr qawā'id al-lu'ba [Neocolonialism and Changing the Rules of the Game]. *Adab wa Naqd*, 407, 47.
4. Amari, M., & Umm al-Saad, H. (November, 2022). Tajalliyāt al-manfa wa tashakkulāt al-huwiya fi al-sīrah al-dhātiyya, Khārij al-Makān li-Idward Said, numūdhajan [Manifestations of Exile and the Formation of Identity in the Autobiography, *Out of Place* by Edward Said, as a Model]. *Al-Madawana Journal*, 278. Retrieved from https://asjp.cerist.dz/en/article/205194.
5. Bauman, Z., & Donskis, L. (2018). Al-sharr al-sā'il, al-'aysh ma'a al-lā-badīl [Liquid Evil, Living with No Alternative] (Vol. 1). (Hajjāj Abu Jabr, Trans.). Cairo: Arab Network for Research and Publishing.
6. Ben Sanitan ben Tanbak, M. (1993). Ādāb al-ḍiyāfah fi al-shi'r al-'arabī al-qadīm [The Ethics of Hospitality in Classical Arabic Poetry]. Kuwait: Scientific Publishing Council - Kuwait University.
7. Ben Toumi, Y. (2025). Al-muqawama wal-nazariyya: Al-riwaya fi muwājaha al-imperātūriya, nahw nazariyya thālitha lil-riwaya [Resistance and Theory: The Novel in Confrontation with Empire, Towards a Third Theory of the Novel] (Vol. 1). Baghdad: Awar Publishing & Distribution.
8. Bhabha, H. (2006). Maq'ad al-thaqāfa [The Location of Culture] (Vol. 1). (Thā'ir Dīb, Trans.). Morocco: Arab Cultural Center.
9. Bouaziz, W. B. (2023). Bu's al-naẓariyya: Masā'alat fi al-dirāsāt al-thaqāfīyya [The Misery of Theory: Interrogations in Cultural Studies] (Vol. 1). Algeria: Dar Mim.

10. Boukebba, A. R. (2023). Dam saree‘al-iltihab - Kitāba min al-masāfa ṣifr ‘an Ghazzah [Fast Inflaming Blood: Writing from Zero Distance about Gaza] (Vol. 1). Dar Khayal for Publishing and Translation.
11. Calvaron, I. (2017). Idward Said [Edward Said] (Vol. 1). (Mohammad Al-Jurti, Trans.). Syria: Safahat for Studies, Publishing, and Distribution.
12. Gibson, N. C. (2013). Fanon, al-khayāla ba‘d al-kulūniyāliyya [Fanon, Imagination after Colonialism] (Vol. 1). (Khalid Ayyab Abu Hadib, Trans.). Qatar: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies.
13. Lounis, B. A. (2024). Al-qirā’a fi al-munāṭiq al-maḥẓūrah: Maqarāt naqdiya fi riwāyāt ‘arabiyya mu‘āṣira [Reading in Forbidden Zones: Critical Approaches to Contemporary Arabic Novels] (Vol. 1). Algeria: Dar Mim Publishing.
14. Marshu, G. M., & Husayni, S. M. S. (2001). Naḥnu wal-ākhar [We and the Other] (Vol. 1). Lebanon: Dar al-Fikr al-Mu‘āṣir.
15. Mbembe, A. (n.d.). Ma ba‘d al-isti‘mar - Ifrīqiya wal-bahth ‘an al-huwiya al-maslūbah [Postcolonialism: Africa and the Search for the Stolen Identity]. Ibn Al-Nadim Publishing & Distribution.
16. Nassar, K. (n.d.). Wāqi‘ al-ḥarb wa in‘ikāsātihā ‘ala al-ṭifl [The Reality of War and Its Reflections on Children]. Lebanon: Grous Press.
17. Nua‘isawi, K. (January, 2021). Ṣūrat al-ākhar al-Filasṭīnī fi al-adab al-‘ibri al-ḥadīth [The Image of the Palestinian Other in Modern Hebrew Literature]. *Adab wa Naqd*, 29.
18. Rahmoun, Y., & Bidiḍa, L. (December, 2020). Ḥarb Juwan (al-Naksah) wa maqqif al-Jazā’ir minhā - Dirāsah fi al-ta‘āmul al-siyāsī wal-‘askari [The June War (The Setback) and Algeria's Position on It: A Study of Political and Military Interaction]. *Journal of Legal and Political Sciences*, 11, 433.
19. Ruwajifa, L. S. H. (n.d.). Madārāt sarradiyya: Qarā’āt tatbiqīya ‘ala al-riwāya wal-ṣaṣṣa al-ṣīra jiddan [Narrative Orbits: Applied Readings on Novels and the Very Short Story].
20. Said, E. (1992). Tamthil al-musta‘mir maḥwar al-anthropology [The Representation of the Colonizer: The Axis of Anthropology]. *Al-Karmel Journal*, 21.
21. Said, E. (2004). Al-thaqafa wal-imperialiya [Culture and Imperialism] (Vol. 3). (Kamal Abu Dib, Trans.). Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Al-Adab.
22. Shetiwi, A. (2023). Jamāliyat al-qubḥ fi al-sīrah al-dhātiyya: Al-sīrah al-dhātiyya li-Muhammad Shukri anmūdhajan [The Aesthetics of Ugliness in Autobiography: The Autobiography of Muhammad Shukri as a Model] (Vol. 1). Nabeul: Zaynab for Publishing and Distribution.
23. Walia, S. (2007). Idward Said wa kitābat al-tārīkh [Edward Said and Writing History] (Vol. 1). (Ahmad Khreis & Nasser Abu Hayja, Trans.). Jordan: Azmina for Publishing and Distribution.