

PATRIOTIC THEATER: A STUDY OF GHARBI MUSTAFA'S LEYLA, THE KURDISH BRIDE & W.B. YEATS' CATHLEEN NI HOULIHAN

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Received: 01/ 2025 / Accepted: 04/ 2025 / Published: 06/ 2025 <https://doi.org/10.26436/hjuoz.2025.13.2.1550>

ABSTRACT:

The present study is an attempt to examine the representation of patriotism and nationalism in Irish and Kurdish plays. Specifically, the researcher deals with two dramas one penned by the Kurdish playwright Gharbi Mustafa, and the other by the Irish dramatist William Butler Yeats. Their stage plays, Mustafa's *Leyla, The Kurdish Bride* (2010), and Yeats' *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (1902), have been taken into account in order to analyze how the two aforesaid plays are patriotic in nature. For the purpose of achieving the aim of the study, i.e., investigating expressions of national pride and belonging, a careful attention is given to specific symbols, motifs, characterizations, and narratives present in the opted scripts. The analysis of the study signifies that Yeats makes use of an Irish myth-derived figure, namely Cathleen who, in reality, is an incarnation of Ireland, to depict national identity and political conflicts. Meanwhile, Mustafa fictionalizes the true events of a Kurdish martyr, Leyla Qasim, to enlighten the Kurdish case and how the Kurds have been deprived of their privileges for ages. The two dramatic works thematize persecution, foreign oppression, a longing for freedom among other related themes. The paper comes to the conclusion that although these two plays are written over a century apart, yet in tandem they shed light on political oppression, a wish to be free, and national belonging.

KEYWORDS: Gharbi Mustafa, Kurdish drama, Patriotism, W.B. Yeats, Irish drama.

1. Introduction

First and foremost, it is fair to indicate that drama as a literary genre, has for long been tackled as a mirror of the society in staging its values, struggles, and aspirations. In this case, Margot Morgan (2013) points out that, "Like all art, theatre can serve as a window into the life-world of a specific time and place, providing a glimpse of a culture's value systems, underlying ideologies, and understandings of human nature and the human condition" (p. 4). Among the invaded nations by external forces, a considerable number of dramatists have not remained motionless, tight-lipped, or taciturn on the exploitation of the outside. That is to say, they have made use of their prolific minds to utilize theater in bringing awareness to the society and how they can be freed from the colonizers. Such is the case of Gharbi Mustafa and William Butler Yeats that have been adept to write on the sense of patriotism in their dramatic works as an attempt so that their audience perceives the maltreatment of foreign authorities upon the occupied people, and at the same time, feel the privileges of an independent nation.

Drawing from the outlook of various scholars and critics, patriotism has been delineated dissimilarly. To start with, according to Michael Merry (2009), patriotism demands a readiness to defend a nation's honor, whether through words or deeds. For instance, in the first case a patriot might exalt the memory of those who sacrificed their lives for the country, on the other hand, a patriot might choose

to take up arms, either to make a commendation to the sacrifices of previous generations or to ensure the prospect of future freedom. While Merry has one definition, other researchers and educators have found their own ways to comment on patriotism. Kuvondikov Sidikovic (2020) believes that patriotism is characterized by love for one's homeland, true loyalty to its interests, an eagerness to serve, and a selfless desire to protect it. Besides that, it has been claimed by Ku Samsu (2022) that a patriotic citizen asks not what the country can provide them, but what they can offer in order to guarantee their homeland's well-being and prosperity.

2. Gharbi Mustafa and W. B. Yeats: Two Patriot Dramatists

In Kurdish and Irish literature, especially drama, there have candidly been a number of playwrights that write patriotically. Mustafa and Yeats are the epitome of excellence in this field. Not only in their dramatic works, but simultaneously, their avid readers have also felt the attachment of these two prolific writers to their lands in their other literary works. On the whole, Gharbi Mustafa's *Leyla, The Kurdish Bride* (2010) and W.B. Yeats' *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (1902) stand out as two unparalleled instances of patriotic plays that direct issues of national identity, sacrifice, and cultural pride. It's true that the two works have been written in different epochs, i.e., Mustafa's work appearing in the contemporary context of Kurdish nationalism, and Yeats' play being a reflection of the early

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twentieth-century struggle for Irish independence, yet, there is a closeness between both literary pieces in their thematic exploration.

Based on a true story, Mustafa in his work brings the excruciating memories and experiences of one of the daughters of Kurdish revolution, Leyla Qasim, who comes out as an example of true patriotism towards her nation. In an era bristled with fear and execution, Leyla dares to raise her voice for the liberation of her country, and unfortunately, she becomes a victim at the end and gets executed by the diabolical regime of Ba'ath that ruled Iraq during her lifetime. On the other hand, in Yeats' work appears the legendary Irish figure Cathleen that symbolizes Irish nationalism and the fight for independence. She encounters ordinary Irish people, and gives them a sense of encouragement to rise against oppression and fight for their motherland against the colonial forces. In spite of the two plays' disparate settings, it has been discerned that they in tandem give special importance on the essence of patriotism and how it clears the way for freedom. Factually, this ageless quality emphasizes the significance and relevance of their stories across different eras, as it brings contemplation on how fundamental human struggles continue despite shifting surroundings.

3. An Overview on the Historical Contexts of the Selected Plays

Certainly, the two dramatic works opted for this study carry significant historical backgrounds. Starting with Mustafa's work, it is worth mentioning that in *Leyla, the Kurdish Bride*, which surely remains one of his esteemed contributions, the narrative at its outset unfolds in 2009 before shifting to the 1970s, a timespan characterized by considerable political turbulence and cultural movements in Iraq. During this period of time, and especially after the Ba'ath Party came to power in Iraq in 1968, the country was governed by an authoritarian regime that impetuously suppressed any form of opposition. As assured in Mahroo Rashidirostami's doctoral dissertation (2015), that under the leadership of Saddam Hussein, the despotic ruler, the Ba'ath party's commitment to Arab nationalism marginalized ethnic groups in Iraq, particularly the Kurdish population. Besides, Rashidirostami notes that the Ba'ath party sought to eradicate any notions of Kurdish nationalism as they opened offices in Kurdish areas keeping a close eye on them, and mandated that Kurds join the Ba'ath Party and enroll in state organizations. It is further stated that in their efforts to suppress Kurdish identity and political expression, Arabic was designated as the official language in schools, and Kurdish media was subjected to stringent censorship.

Based on these facts, the Kurdish people, who have for long endeavored to gain acknowledgment of their cultural rights and autonomy, encountered considerable difficulties during this era. This is because they aspired for political and social rights and the opportunity to preserve their language and cultural traditions. David McDowall in his book titled *A Modern History of the Kurds* (2021), states that after years of armed struggle between the Iraqi government and Kurdish leaders for their recognition, freedom, and democratic rights, a ceasefire was reached on

March 11, 1970, which granted autonomy to the Kurds in the country. A self-governed Kurdish area was planned to be established, and therefore displaced Kurds were promised a right to return. Nonetheless, many aspects of the agreement remained unfulfilled, which resulted in further conflicts and ongoing oppression. The policies of the Ba'ath regime had catastrophic consequences on Kurdish roots, culture, and language. Repressive actions were taken in order to prohibit the Kurdish language in educational institutions, demolish Kurdish cultural centers, deracinate the Kurds, persecute Kurdish activists, and in the long run they caused a havoc.

Despite what has been stated, Leyla Qasim emerged as a shining figure during this dark time; she was devoted to protecting and defending Kurdish identity amidst the regime's attempts to thoroughly erase it. In this case, Lolav Alhamid in her dissertation (2017) points out that Leyla Qasim is an obvious example in the Kurdish national movement in Iraq during the 1970s, appearing as a patriotic symbol of resistance against the Ba'ath regime. Alhamid remarks that, "As a University student, Qasim became a source of national and political inspiration for the Kurdish students in Baghdad and made outstanding contributions to their national awakening" (p. 99). Alhamid maintains to indicate that Leyla Qasim covertly joined the Peshmerga in the mountains for a short period, where she was introduced to the Kurdish resistance firsthand and gained a closer look of their organizational strategies. Leyla, nevertheless, held the belief that the Kurdish national movement required assistance and action inside urban areas as well in addition to resistance and fighting taking place in the mountains.

Moreover, Leyla Caliskan (2014) in her praise for Leyla Qasim comments that beyond her publicized expressions of love for Kurdistan, Leyla inculcated that women could participate in politics alongside males and give a helping hand to free Kurdistan. Manifestly, this statement demonstrates the important part Qasim played in questioning gender roles and promoting women's involvement in social emancipation and political leadership in the Kurdish environment. For this reason, Leyla becomes an exemplary case of resistance and hope for the Kurdish people with her bravery and activities against a human-kidnapping regime. *Leyla, The Kurdish Bride* after all remains a remarkable theatrical production with the story's realistic depictions of the historical occurrences of the 1970s. Notably, this significance acts as a driving force behind Mustafa's decision to compose this play.

On the other hand, *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, one of Yeats' most eye-opening plays, was first staged at St Theresa's Hall, Dublin, in 1902. It is revealed that this one-act drama was written in collaboration with Lady Gregory who assisted Yeats in penning a number of lines, even though Yeats' name remains its solo author. Truth be told, the play holds a noteworthy historical context due to the fact that it takes place during the 1798 rebellion of Irish nationalists, which was assisted by French revolutionary forces against British rule starting in Killala. The titular character Cathleen is, for sure, a representation of Ireland itself, and her "four beautiful green fields", the ones that are stolen as she mentions, are indeed a reference to the four ancient

Irish invaded provinces: Connacht, Leinster, Munster, and Ulster (O’Gorman, 2022).

The Irish Rebellion of 1798 is certainly considered as one of the revolts against British colonization of Ireland. It was spearheaded by a group called The United Irishmen. The members of this group were agitated by the unjust political system in place, and desired to make a change for the country as a republic. A myriad number of Irish people joined this insurrection because they were unhappy with limited privileges and poor living conditions. The United Irishmen attempted to unite Irish people across religious lines to achieve political change and independence. This is because religious identity was important at the time, as it had an influence on political arena and social relations. This event in Irish history is of utmost importance since it signaled the Irish people’s search for self-rule as well as resistance towards the oppressive rule of Britain. The inspiring ideas of justice and liberation, that fueled the uprising, were finally extinguished and the conditions of the Irish deteriorated with the failure of the rebellion (Halima & Nesrine, 2022).

From a general perspective, Yeats reimagines this insurrection of 1798 in his play as a means of encouraging his contemporary audience to contemplate on the ongoing struggles for national identity and authority in Ireland. The year 1902, when *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* was written and performed, was a time of resurgence for nationalists in Ireland. Artists and writers, including Yeats himself, had a vital role in awakening a national consciousness through literature and drama. Yeats has composed his play to proliferate the number of patriots in the country in an unimaginable manner: Micheal, who is shortly to be the groom, abandons his bride-to-be Delia, which implies that nothing carries importance more than the nation.

4. Leyla Qasim and Cathleen Ni Houlihan: Nationalistic Symbols of Freedom with a Critical Overview

Among the Kurds and the Irish, there have indeed been a few examples of women who have stood against oppression in the case of their nations, whether they are mythical figures appeared only in literature or realistic persons. Mustafa’s Leyla and Yeats’ Cathleen are the most obvious and shining figures with Leyla being a real person and the latter a mythical one. To start with Leyla Qasim, in an article titled “Kurdish Women Politicians: Revolutionary Trailblazers for the Next Generation”, Shilan Hussain (2021) asserts that if a woman epitomizes the essence of the Kurdish woman as a figure of political resistance, that would, by all means, be Leyla Qasim. Hussain further articulates that long before Saddam Hussein was considered as a tyrant and an enemy in the West, Leyla was the one as an activist to oppose him in the early 1970s. It is subsequently expressed that while being busy with her studies of sociology at the University of Baghdad, Leyla dauntlessly started distributing leaflets about the atrocities that were committed by the Baathist party, which was in power with an iron grip. For this cause, Qasim was caught, tortured, and found guilty in a national-broadcast show trial in 1974 when she was only twenty-

two years old. Nowadays, she is well-esteemed and regarded as a national hero to all Kurds across the globe.

Another article under the title “Leyla Qasim: Woman Who Judged Her Executioners” by Sarya Deniz (2023) also sheds light on Leyla’s gallant bravery who represents the embodiment of patriotism and sacrifice within the parameters of her cultural and historical situation. Deniz points out that Leyla was a role model for collaborating with men in the Kurdish liberation movement, whether in the mountainous areas or within the political arena of the 1970s. She was firmly determined to make a permanent impression among Kurdish students and women, who ventured in a dark time to inspire them for an egalitarian society and strive for a free Kurdistan. Deniz discerns that in a time shrouded in trepidation, when the very act of engaging in politics was a dance with fire and danger, few dared to step forward into the tumultuous arena of public discourse, yet, Leyla garnered her courage and raised her voice in her mission of a liberated Kurdistan. However, Leyla’s fearlessness and gallantry posed a significant threat to the Ba’ath regime. Accordingly, she became the first woman to be executed in the Middle East because of political reasons.

Although Gharbi Mustafa’s work, *Leyla, The Kurdish Bride*, tends to be fictional, yet, it recounts true events of the iconic Kurdish woman, Leyla Qasim. Mustafa, in a number of incidents, makes reference to how Leyla is a true representation of patriotism and sacrifice for her nation. The playwright opens his play with a scene where Tara, Leyla’s sister, utters some words to inform the audience about Leyla’s charismatic personality in sacrificing herself for her nation’s cause:

TARA: Well, where do I begin to tell a story about how love can bring meaning to our life? How real love means sacrifice, weather this sacrifice is for the country and the land or for the sake of the people, we do love... the ever-living Leyla, the bravest woman I have ever seen in my life... She scarified the most precious, herself, and her love, for the sake of her strong beliefs; the beliefs which were never shaken not even before the very last minutes of her life... Her body left us long time ago, yet her soul is still with us ever since (Mustafa, 2010, pp. 8-9).

In this excerpt, Tara considers the connection between love and sacrifice, indicating that those who purely love may at times have to forsake something, even their lives for nobler causes, like putting oneself at risk for one’s nation. She regards Leyla’s courage as unprecedented in standing by her nationalistic views, whose love for her nation drove her to the extent of sacrificing herself and what she cared for the most, and thereby has left an imprint that exists even after she bade her forever farewell to the world. At this point, the playwright, through Tara’s words, attempts to instill a sense of patriotism in his audiences in staging how Leyla is regarded now. Obviously, except Tara’s admiration for her sister’s patriotic personality, Leyla herself appears with her direct actions, choices and remarks concerning this case as the story moves forward.

In a scene where Leyla sees herself in the warmth of her beloved’s presence, Bewar, in an early morning at the university, he gently questions Leyla if she prefers her homeland more or her lover. In her response, Leyla raises her voice firmly but in a tender mode, “Who are we

without a land, a group of shadows, wondering in some strange lands" (p. 21). Through Leyla's words, one can detect that homeland is more than just a physical location, it is where one's culture, memories, and history began and thrived, and a definition to one's roots. Pointing out that without a land, they would be like "shadows" is an allusion to the emptiness that one could feel without a sense of belonging. Indeed, Leyla's statement puts emphasis on the fact that both her love for Bewar and her attachment to her motherland cannot be separated. Overtly, Leyla is not rejecting her feelings for Bewar, but rather consolidating the idea that her affection for him and her nation are equally and justly important for her identity.

Another example of Leyla's imperishable love for her nation is appeared during a visit from Dr. Ali, one of her lecturers at the university, while she is behind bars. As an attempt to secure her release, Dr. Ali implores Leyla to formally recant her previous actions and express a genuine remorse for her convictions in hopes of receiving a possible reprieve after being sentenced to capital punishment by the regime. Despite that, Leyla respectfully declines to make changes regarding her beliefs, and that she remains changeless in her principles:

DR. ALI: Miss Leyla, I'm ashamed to find you her

LEYLA: You don't have to be

DR. ALI: You should be free, and go back to college, you are a hard-working student.

LEYLA: I will die for my beliefs; there is no shame in that.

DR. ALI: This is unacceptable, it is not fair

LEYLA: I have accepted my fate, there is nothing you can do. (Mustafa, 2010, pp. 63-64)

In this dialogue, it can be revealed that Leyla's mindset and faith in her convictions remain the same despite her conversation with Dr. Ali who feels ashamed and upset for Leyla's imprisonment. To this cause, Leyla explicates that she has no hesitation about what she believes in for a liberated nation, and that she gestures with a sense of pride "I will die for my beliefs". In this respect, Leyla doesn't hesitate to taste death rather than betraying her principles.

Aside from Mustafa's drama, it is fair to mention that in Yeats' work *Cathleen*, as a mythical and symbolic figure, represents Ireland itself. She is considered as a nationalistic personage and has been referred to in Irish literature widely. According to Zheng Fang (2021), Yeats built this character, *Cathleen*, from esoteric and also other sources, especially Celtic culture and mythology where there is a hag who gets rejuvenated after her people fight and sacrifice themselves for her. Tanya Dean (2014) argues that Yeats features *Cathleen* as anthropomorphic incarnation of Ireland. Dean further points out that *Cathleen* as a trope is inspired by Irish myths as a reaction against the repulsive presentations of Ireland and its people found in foreign artistic works and media. This is reinforced in a study by Marion Quirici (2015) who believes that after the failure of the 1798 rebellion of Irish people against British rule, "[foreign] writers circulated caricatures and stereotypes of Irishness that invoked notions of disability" (p. 75). It is fair now to assert that Yeats' utilization of mythology is to dramatize a nation that has been deprived of its rights and privileges by colonial dominance.

In staging this play, Yeats globalized the Irish cause for independence. Also, this playwright made an important addition to postcolonial literature as he tremendously effected Irish readers during the British imperial control. He spoke the country's native language and referred to cultural history in his work to make a national unity among Irish people against British dominance. For this reason, Yeats' name takes a great part in Irish nationalist movements of early 20th century (O'Brien, 2019). Returning to the script of the play, in the very beginning when the Gillane family notices that there's a cheering outside, there's a discussion among them to know what's going on there. All of a sudden, a memory comes to Patrick's mind about a stranger who appears during wars, and he talks to his mother Bridget, "Do you remember what Winny of the Cross Roads was saying the other night about the strange woman that goes through the country whatever time there's war or trouble coming?" (Yeats, 2015, p. 35).

Because the setting of the play takes place during the 1798 Irish uprising against British oppression, this strange woman as Patrick mentions is of course *Cathleen*, the daughter of *Houlihan*, who is customarily discussed among Irish people during troubling times. Therefore, Patrick reminds his mother of what Winny, one of their neighbors, has already warned them about this woman, who in actuality stands as a nationalistic symbol of freedom for the Irish. After a while, when this strange woman appears at the family's door, she is described as an old woman who informs the family of her situation. She notifies them that she has traveled for a long while recently. At the same time, she refers to the fact that there's no peacefulness in her heart for a reason:

Old Woman: Sometimes my feet are tired... but there is no quiet in my heart. When the people see me quiet, they think old age has come on me and that all the stir has gone out of me. But when the trouble is on me I must be talking to my friends (Yeats, 2015, p. 42).

Taking a close look at her words, it becomes apparent that the old woman appears as Ireland itself that is in need of its people. Even though her feet are weary from traveling, yet, the old woman has to continue seeking help because her unrestful heart is an indication to the turmoil and struggles encountered by her country. This is the reason why she desires to be with her friends in difficult times, which is for sure an expression to protect and liberate Ireland. After all, for having wandered without a break, a sense of pity resides in Bridget's heart who questions the old woman:

BRIDGET: What was it put you wandering?

OLD WOMAN: Too many strangers in the house.

BRIDGET: Indeed, you look as if you'd had your share of trouble.

Old Woman: I have had trouble indeed.

Bridget: What was it put the trouble on you?

Old Woman: My land that was taken from me.

Peter: Was it much land they took from you?

Old Woman: My four beautiful green fields. (Yeats, 2015, p. 43)

Plainly, the old woman's response to Bridget is that she has been wandering due to the presence of "too many strangers in the house," which simply refers to those invaders that have occupied the country. Concerning this case, Fedya Daas (2019) gives assurance that the "four beautiful green fields" symbolize the four invaded provinces of Ireland at that time, while the term "strangers" definitely connotes the colonizers. Hence, she has been wandering in the country to get help and support from people and has no doubts that they will give a hand as shown in the below passage:

Old Woman: I have good friends that will help me. They are gathering to help me now. I am not afraid. If they are put down to-day, they will get the upper hand to-morrow. [She gets up.] I must be going to meet my friends. They are coming to help me, and I must be there to welcome them. I must call the neighbours together to welcome them.

Michael: I will go with you (Yeats, 2015, p. 48).

At this moment, the old woman unveils her belief to the Gillane family that she has "good friends" meaning loyal Irish people. She has blind faith that if those loyal people are not ready today, tomorrow they will be showing up. When she prepares to leave and meet her supporters, Micheal, the one to be married soon, is tempted by the cause saying "I will go with you."

5. Selfless Dedication and Sacrifice to a Worthy and Noble Cause

In every narrative that thematizes sacrifice, one often finds a main character whose deeds rise above personal ambitions in service of a greater cause like the public welfare. Without a shadow of a doubt, the protagonists of Gharbi Mustafa and Yeats' works, Leyla and Micheal, represent this paragon, since they have an attitude of readiness to submit their lives to death in their efforts of seeing a liberated nation. Generally, the theme of sacrifice has been presented and expressed in literature, particularly dramatic works, by a variety of writers in all corners of the world with Kurdish and Irish playwrights being no exception. In Kurdish literature, for instance, *Kotayî Zordar* (1973) [The Fall of the Tyrant] is a play directed by Ghazi Bamarni, a renowned Kurdish dramatist, which is chiefly based on Kurdish folklore in the aftermath of the self-rule agreement with Iraq, and how they honor their autonomy taken through sacrifice. As observed by Mari Rostami (2019) in his book entitled *Kurdish Nationalism on Stage*, Bamarni's *Kotayî Zordar* tells the story of Mir Mohammed Kor, a blind prince who ruled the Soran principality beginning in 1814, later controlling much of Iraqi Kurdistan by 1833 and establishing a centralized government. Nevertheless, he eventually surrendered to the Ottoman Empire and was killed in 1837, which led to instability in Kurdish regions. Despite his downfall, Kurdish nationalists later honored his achievements and made him a national hero in their folklore. In his description of staging this play, Bamarni states:

Throughout history, the literatures of all nations have always been a mark to testify their existence. Although we are performing and narrating a true historical tale, our intention is to urge our thoughtful audience to break free from the chains of the dark past. We must be willing to make sacrifices of any kind to avoid being oppressed by a

merciless enemy. For this reason, it is paramount for our youth to look up to their ancestors and follow our national heroes in the pursuit for justice. (Bamarni, as cited in Mirza, 2011, p. 67)

Certainly, Bamarni's statement puts emphasis on the importance of literature as a reflection of a nation's identity and history. It does bring attention to the idea that, even while recounting true historical events, the goal is to inspire the audience, especially the youth, to exceed the burdens of a difficult past. The specific mention of sacrifice in his words reveals that achieving freedom and justice often demands one's sacrifice. In the case of Leyla Qasim, however, Honar Nawzad (2011) in his book *Leyla Qasim: Temenêkî Biçûk û Mêjûyekî Gewre 1950-1974* [Leyla Qasim: A Young Age and a Great History 1950-1974] declares that Leyla Qasim is recognized as the first woman to be killed in Iraq for her nation, and her sacrifice reverberated throughout the country. Nawzad goes on to report that rather than instilling fear, her death became a reason for many Kurds to begin seeking freedom and deepening their animosity towards the Iraqi regime of that time. He notes that while the enemies of the Kurds expected her martyrdom to suppress resistance, it instead led countless Kurds to name their children after her, saluting her story. In Kurdish literature, Nawzad maintains, Leyla has become a symbolic figure, and has inspired poets and writers to commemorate her sacrifice.

Beyond the literary discussion in regard to Leyla's determination in sacrificing herself for the cause of her colonized nation, the playwright also explicitly and dramatically draws his audiences' attention to Leyla's courage in the play itself. To start with, when the authorities bring her in the courtroom before the eyes of the judge, Leyla hesitates not for a single moment and stands confidently by her ideas about a liberated Kurdistan:

JUDGE: You are here for high treason, conspiring for crimes.

LEYLA: Crimes! Against whom?

JUDGE: The government. Have you anything to say?

LEYLA: If you can call the love of country treason and the demand of our rights is a crime, then I'm guilty.

JUDGE: What rights? You have no rights, savage people. The only thing you deserve is death.

LEYLA: Kill me! But you must also know that after my death thousands of Kurds will wake up from their deep sleep. I'm happy that I will die with pride for an independent Kurdistan... you cannot just kill us all, you can't annihilate a nation because this nation will never die.

JUDGE: You will die—you will be forgotten, down to the bottom of history.

LEYLA: I will die with dignity... (Mustafa, 2010, pp. 50-51)

Throughout this exchange, it is crystal clear that Leyla is, in a defiant manner, standing against the judge, who plainly represents the despotic regime. She refutes the notion that loving one's country could be deemed treasonous, contending that her fight for Kurdish rights is never a crime but a noble cause. Seemingly, she stands in a fit state to sacrifice herself for her nation, simultaneously

proclaiming that her own demise matters not, as a nation can't be wiped off from the face of the earth for such a cause. In addition to that, Leyla's firm decision for sacrifice emerges more clearly in a soul-stirring scene where she encounters her dearly loved one, Bewar, in the prison. At this moment, her beloved poetically speaks to her:

BEWAR: This is would be our last date.

We will stand before our fate.

And heaven will open the gate...

LEYLA: Death is beautiful, when we die for the cause,

Death is a must when we die for the land. (Mustafa, 2010, pp. 58-59)

Through this crestfallen dialogue, Bewar sadly laments that "this would be our last date," and one can sense the unfortunate circumstances befalling the couple against each other's will, since their love is being ripped apart by destiny. With his allusion to "heaven will open the gate," he is suggesting a kind of elevation, that their short-lived relationship might lead to something more refined. On the other hand, Leyla remarks, "Death is beautiful when we die for the cause." Leyla beautifies the concept of death and gives him a sense of reassurance that what they are going through is more than the demise of two star-crossed lovers; It's an honorable sacrifice for a more significant objective.

After she faced her tragic end, Leyla's heroism became a subject of much debate for a variety of influential figures including political leaders, writers, and scholars. For instance, Masoud Barzani, the former president of Kurdistan region, in a documentary paper states that:

My pen cannot find the footprints of my memories when I desire to recount the story, bravery and sacrifices of those activists that are recorded in my mind; among them is the martyrdom of Leyla Qasim along with her comrades... Have faith in my words, not one single event has impacted Barzani and the revolution more than the execution of Leyla Qasim and her companions. It is a reality that they no longer appear before our eyes, but in truth, Leyla alongside her friends became a symbol in the heart of every Kurd, in the heart of every freedom fighter, their image has become an emblem, and their names have become the flag of honor and dignity (Barzani, as cited in Nawzad, 2011, pp. 57-58).

Barzani's stately words are an indication of bona fide veneration towards Leyla Qasim's name and what she meant for the revolution of that time. The solemnity in his remarks removes the curtain on the fact that she has been regarded as a revered woman for all those seeking freedom in all parts of the world. Therefore, her name is recorded in history to ever exist in the memory of freedom fighters.

On the other hand, when it comes to Irish literature, various literary works have made sacrifice one of their major themes. In a study conducted by Chang Young Xu and Yun Ki-ho (2022), it's found out that, "Sacrifice is one of the most venerated values at the heart of Irish nationalism and played an instrumental role in its fight for independence. Thus, it is a recurring theme of Irish nationalist literary works" (p. 99). Verily, Yeats is the master among those Irish writers that touch on the theme

of sacrifice in their works. This is not only a topic in his dramas, but also in his poems like "Easter 1916" in which he bespeaks his esteem for the sacrifice of the martyrs in Easter Rising (Maral, 2021).

Above all, Yeats' *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* is a prime example of national sacrifice in which Micheal deserts his betrothed Delia to join the war for Ireland. In truth, Delia has outwardly a lot more to offer in terms of youth and well-being compared to an elderly homeless woman like Cathleen. Similarly, Michael's parents were enamored at the thought that their son is soon to be married to a decent lady. The young couple's love, however, is not the center of the dialogue, instead the attention is on Micheal's attitude towards Cathleen's serious request. Human love, in Yeats' work, is substituted by a superior, altruistic love for which young men are disposed to make sacrifices, and lose their lives. In simple words, they're mesmerized by Cathleen, the personification of Ireland, to retrieve her "four beautiful green fields."

The inevitability of sacrifice is divulged, in the very beginning, upon the old woman's arrival to the house. Once she sings about a deceased man described as yellow-haired Donough, Micheal questions about the reason of his death who is responded by the old woman as, "He died for love of me: many a man has died for love of me" (Yeats, 2015, p. 45). Her words are an indication that men have countlessly died because of their love for her, symbolically Ireland. The theme of sacrifice is highlighted here that one's love for nation can propel individuals to sacrifice their lives of their own accord. In an entangled state, Micheal craves to know more about these men, and the old woman has no time to squander but to make use of this chance to tell him all about them:

Old Woman: Come here beside me and I'll tell you about them. [Michael sits down beside her at the hearth.] There was a red man of the O'Donnells from the north, and a man of the O'Sullivans from the south, and there was one Brian that lost his life at Clontarf by the sea, and there were a great many in the west, some that died hundreds of years ago, and there are some that will die to-morrow (Yeats, 2015, p. 45).

Shrewdly, Yeats promulgates his idea of nationalism through the old woman's tongue that there have been participants from all parts of Ireland: south, north, west, and everywhere to have died for this land, both in the past and those who might face it in the future. Strikingly, when Bridget, Micheal's mother, smells a rat that the old woman is magnetizing Micheal's heart to join her cause and bring back her stolen lands, she warns her husband Peter to offer her a small amount of money probably to set her on her path. As a retort, the old woman's face, as anticipated by Bridget, becomes contorted and she loathes the offer for something more valuable:

Bridget: [to the Old Woman] Will you have a drink of milk?

Old Woman: It is not food or drink that I want.

Peter: [offering the shilling] Here is something for you.

Old Woman: That is not what I want. It is not silver I want.

Peter: What is it you would be asking for?

Old Woman: If anyone would give me help he must give me himself, he must give me all (Yeats, 2015, pp. 46-47).

In a nutshell, the old woman here clarifies that material offerings, such as the shilling and milk, are of no use. What matters to her is the full dedication of someone who would be open to give himself fully. The old woman needs assistance to take back her lands from the “strangers in her house” but this help requires the people’s sacrifices to her. Near the end of the play, the old woman continues her incantations and makes a bold statement about those helping her:

Old Woman: It is a hard service they take that help me. Many that are red-cheeked now will be pale-cheeked; many that have been free to walk the hills and the bogs and the rushes will be sent to walk hard streets in far countries; many a good plan will be broken; many that have gathered money will not stay to spend it; many a child will be born, and there will be no father at its christening to give it a name. They that had red cheeks will have pale cheeks for my sake; and for all that, they will think they are well paid (Yeats, 2015, p. 50).

A close reading of these words quickly unveils that those lively and healthy people that help her described as “red-cheeked” will predictably sacrifice their lives and be “pale-cheeked”, lifeless. They’ll go through difficulties, face broken dreams, miss out on family joys, their children being orphaned, and so forth. Despite that, they will believe their sacrifices are worth it and “they will think they are well paid” because it’s for the glorification of Ireland. She casts her spell on Micheal immediately, who asks her, “tell me something I can do for you.”

6. Dramatic Poetry: Instilling Homeland Love and Fostering Patriotic Values

In the world of theater, the inclusion of poetry can considerably elevate the sublimity and thematic impact of a play. To elude a prosaic language, playwrights often turn their eyes to the integration of poetic lines and elements in their dramas. In this manner, they aspire to leverage the beauty of language and the strength of verse to convey the message behind their emotions and concepts. This fusion of poetry with drama results in what is commonly referred to as poetic/verse drama, in which poetic language and elements work together to embellish what the audience observes in their characters, scenes, words, etc. In the world of patriotic plays that integrate poems as part of their narratives, influentially become a reason for inculcating the listeners with an affection for one’s motherland. This is due to the reason that such playwrights make use of a persuasive language that portrays the united aspirations of a nation, along with their sufferings, their culture, their ideology, and the rest.

Evidently, a number of Kurdish and Irish playwrights have penned their dramas in poetic lines, or have included poems in their works. As an instance, Ahmad Khani’s classic *Mam and Zin* (1692), the épopée of Kurdish literature, has been edited and staged as a play by the renowned Kurdish Playwright Ghazi Bamarni, including several Khani’s poetic lines:

Ger dê hebûya me îtîfaqek,
Vêkra bikra me înciyadek
Rom u Ereb u Ecem temamî

Hemîyan ji me ra fikir xolamî.

[In case we could have an agreement

All following a leading establishment

The Turks, Arabs and Persians entirely

Would together be into our slavery] (Khani, as cited in Bamarni, 2010, p. 80).

Likewise, in the Irish case, there have been such instances. Seán O’Casey, an Irish dramatist famed by for his *Dublin Trilogy*, in a play titled *The Plough and the Stars* (1926) expresses his attitude on Irish nationalism, “Oh, where’s th’ slave so lowly / Condemn’d to chains unholy, / We tread th’ land that. . . bore us / Th’ green flag glitters . . . o’er us” (O’Casey, 1998, p. 171). His words explicate that why one would remain chained as a slave on a land that has given them birth under a flag, which is clearly a thematization of freedom and oppression.

Now returning to the main works’ story-lines, it is fair to indicate that Gharbi Mustafa and William Butler Yeats have not deprived their audience of the poetic lines, including several poems in their dramas, with all being a reference to the Kurdish question and Irish nationalism. To start with Mustafa’s work, *Leyla, The Kurdish Bride*, in a scene where Leyla is in a discussion with her beloved, Bewar, concerning how the Iraqi regime attempts to eliminate the Kurdish national identity, lights go off stage and a spot of light comes on Bewar who recites:

BEWAR: History did us wrong

They sold us for so long

Divide we stay all along

No one would hear our song

On high mountains we stand

The biggest nation without a land...

We end up again [in] mass graves in desert sand

History repeats itself in this land

We are a playing card in everyone's hand

Living like slaves in our own land. (Mustafa, 2010, p. 24)

Throughout these lines, the speaker eloquently sheds light on the ongoing struggle of Kurds for identity and self-rule with the inclusion of themes like historical injustice, separation, etc. In the opening lines, one can detect history's betrayal of the Kurdish people, having silenced and maltreated them through selling them. Symbolically, the Kurds find rest nowhere other than “on high mountains”, and that they have been exploited as “a playing card” at the hands of their oppressors. The macabre imagery of “mass graves in desert sand” refers to the past atrocities befalling the Kurds. At the end, the speaker ironically expresses that they are “living like slaves in our own land”, which is a direct call for freedom and recognition in their motherland. Moreover, when Leyla hugs her beloved through bars in the jail for the last time, she is left with an utter despondency, and thus, starts to speak sorrowful words:

LEYLA: You went [a]way

On this summer day

You took my heart [a]way...

When I gazed into your eyes

I saw my way to paradise
Come on darling, take my hand
Let's fly away from this Arabian sand
To our father's land
Make our love dance, hand in hand
Dance, dance all the night we stand
Till our souls meet in the ever land
The land of the everlasting sun
In a land.. a land called Kurdistan (Mustafa, 2010, pp. 60-61).

These words spoken behind bars express an intense grief of separation. Now, Leyla divulges her pure love for Bewar which is enveloped in despair. Her yearning desire to be beside her beloved is now nothing but a mirage. She dreamily pleads with her beloved, "Let's fly away from this Arabian sand / To our father's land." Mentioning "Arabian sand" is an allusion to Iraq, where she rightfully finds it a place of strangers away from "father's land" meaning Kurdistan, her homeland. Later, she brings to her imagination a situation in which she can peacefully dance with Bewar in "a land called Kurdistan" without the hands of oppression. Furthermore, in the penultimate scene where Leyla anxiously awaits her mother's visit to see her for the last time before her forthcoming execution, she delves into an introspection:

LEYLA: My heart knows no sorrow or grief
I stand, like a tree with a fallen leaf
Holding my quick fainted breath
Near onto my honorable, waited death
As Gara and Matin, I shall stand
After the snowfall, green covers the land
Like a spring flower, I shall sleep in your hand
Come, break these chains, free my hands untied
Take me on your white horse back, for our ride
Let my soul cross into your side
Give my trembling heart a little place to hide
With a heart full of joy and pride
Tonight, I shall be Kurdistan's bride (Mustafa, 2010, p. 70).

In this scene, Leyla reflects on her death with a sense of pride and honor rather than despair. She feels that she is as firm as Gara and Matin, which are two of the highest mountains in Kurdistan. Afterwards, she addresses an unknown figure, most likely an angel, to take her to "your white horse back" and "break these chains" giving her total freedom. Knowing that she is doomed to taste death due to her activism for a liberated nation, Leyla declares, "Tonight, I shall be Kurdistan's bride", which is indeed a kind of sacrificial love for the homeland. In many cases, the term "bride" implies a new phase in a female's life. She is therefore ready for this new beginning with dignity, for whatever betides her, even if it costs sacrifice.

In a similar case, concerning Yeats' *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, upon her arrival at the cottage and after having an exchange, the old woman, Cathleen in disguise, uses alluring words as a mechanism to have her touch on the family, especially Micheal, to join the Irish uprising of

1798 against British rule. She begins crooning to the family about a man described as "yellow-haired Donough" who has died for the cause, "I will go cry with the woman / For yellow-haired Donough is dead / With a hempen rope for a neckcloth / And a white cloth on his head" (Yeats, 2015, p. 44). Kathryn Van Winkle (2019) refers to this poem in her study stating that Yeats' poetic lines are derived from an Irish folk ballad in which Donough, an Irish man, is executed for an unspecified political crime by British authority. More clarification is provided by the old woman in the subsequent lines when Micheal is astounded and questions her about this man:

Old Woman: Singing I am about a man I knew one time, yellow-haired Donough that was hanged in Galway. [She goes on singing, much louder.]

I am come to cry with you, woman,
My hair is unwound and unbound;
I remember him ploughing his field,
Turning up the red side of the ground,
And building his barn on the hill
With the good mortared stone;
O! we'd have pulled down the gallows
Had it happened in Enniscrone! (Yeats, 2015, p. 44)

Now, the old woman makes clear that this murdered man was from Galway, an Irish city. She has come in turmoil with her hair being "unwound and unbound". She brings back his memories "ploughing his field, and building his barn on the hill" which refer to the man's close connection to his land. She remarks that if a wrongful execution had occurred in Enniscrone, another Irish town, they would've "pulled down the gallows", which is indeed a metaphor for fighting against injustice and standing up for what is right. At the same time, the old woman also makes the family aware that those who die for the nation don't need any mourning or prayers "they will have no need of prayers" because they will be blessed. She starts again to woo them with her tales and her songs:

Old Woman: [Sings.] Do not make a great keening
When the graves have been dug to-morrow.
Do not call the white-scarfed riders
To the burying that shall be to-morrow.
Do not spread food to call strangers
To the wakes that shall be to-morrow;
Do not give money for prayers
For the dead that shall die to-morrow . . . (Yeats, 2015, p. 49)

At this moment, the old woman is asking the people not to grieve too much for the men who will die soon in the fight for the independence of Ireland. The expression is repeated in her words, urging them to understand that their lives are not lost but instead they become symbols of hope, those who love the motherland. She admonishes them against traditional mourning rituals such as keening, putting out money for offerings and prayers, or preparing wakes which is a traditional Irish gathering held before a funeral to honor the deceased, because these are martyrs to an honorable cause. As a comment made on the old woman's appeal, Sarah Cole (2012) writes that during wars and

rebellions, women are expected to follow mourning rituals and formalities, but the call is to repudiate these customs, and in place of that, honor the fallen heroes. Besides, according to Cathrine McNeill (2018), these words are a reflection to what Robert Emmet believed in and stated to his people. He was the leader of the 1798 uprising, who regarded martyrdom for Ireland as a pathway to salvation. To add more, before the old woman leaves and goes on her path, she announces to the family that although her "feet are tired" but there's no quietness in her heart because of the strangers in her house that have taken hold of her "four beautiful green fields." Apparently, as mentioned before, the use of the strangers is an allusion to the foreign forces occupying her "four beautiful green fields" which symbolize the Irish lands. The old woman warns the family that there are a variety who will expel the usurpers from her lands, and even die for her cause. After she heads out, she continues to speak and her voice is hearable, "They shall be remembered for ever / They shall be alive for ever / They shall be speaking for ever / The people shall hear them for ever" (Yeats, 2015, p. 50). These melodic words represent the theme of remembrance for good and value of those who will offer their lives for an altruistic cause, losing their lives for others to live freely, independently, and peacefully. Emphasis is made through these repetitions to appreciate their efforts that will never be forgotten, or left behind. The idea of being "alive for ever" gives one an impression that the future generations will be able to feel their presence. In this case, Mahmoud Abdelfadeel comments on Cathleen that "To make matters mysteriously irresistible, she offers immortality as the biggest and greatest award for whoever sacrifices his life for her" (2016, p. 240). This is the reason why Micheal is enraptured by her story and impulsively follows her steps leaving his bride-to-be Delia desperately weeping "Michael, Michael! You won't leave me!"

7. Conclusion

The present paper comes to the conclusion that Gharbi Mustafa in his *Leyla, The Kurdish Bride*, and William Butler Yeats in his *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* have presented patriotic characters to their audiences for various reasons. In the first place, this is indeed on account of enlightening the spectators and readers in relation to the despotic ruling regimes that have taken hold of their lands viciously. They similarly bring awareness on stage to how the foreign authorities make use of their lands, and at the same time maltreat the natives. Also, another concluding point that is revealed in the analysis of the study is that the aforementioned playwrights have attempted to inculcate national pride in their theatergoers through different manners. For instance, the dramatists' literary characters in their actions perpetually become symbols of freedom for their people in raising their voice against persecution. Mustafa's *Leyla* and Yeats' *Cathleen* in their actions are so exemplary that they stand for nothing more than the idea of liberation. Besides, these characters either sacrifice themselves or logically support their loyal citizens to sacrifice for such honorable causes. Not to be forgotten, the study also finds out that in delivering their speeches, these patriotic characters perennially use a persuasive and poetic language in a way to catch the listeners' attention

more touchingly. At last, it is noteworthy to indicate that these nationalistic works of literature have attracted readers worldwide, and they have been welcomed with complete sincerity.

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شانۆیا نیشتمانیپەرۆری: خواندنهک ژ بو شانۆگه‌ریین "له‌یلا بووکا کوردا" یا غه‌ری موسه‌فا و "کاسلین نی هۆلیهان" یا ویلیام بوتله‌رییتس

پۆخته:

ئه‌ف هه‌کولینا ل به‌ر ده‌ست، بزافه‌کا ئه‌کادیمی به‌ د بوار ئی شروقه‌مکر و خواندنا رهنقه‌دانین هه‌زرا نیشتمانیپەرۆری و نه‌ته‌واپه‌تی د ناچه‌را شانۆگه‌ریین ئیرلهن‌دی و کوردی دا. ب تابه‌ت، هه‌کوله‌ر سه‌رده‌ریی دگه‌ل دوو درامایان ده‌کته‌ ئیک ژ نه‌فیسنا شانۆنه‌فیس کورد غه‌ری موسه‌فا، ده‌هه‌مان ده‌م دا ئه‌وا دی ژ لایه‌ی شانۆکار ئی ئیرلهن‌دی ویلیام بوتله‌رییتس بو به‌راوردکرنا چه‌وانیا ده‌ربرینا هه‌ستین نیشتمانیپەرۆری د ناڤ هه‌ردوو تیکستان دا. شانۆگه‌ریین وان "له‌یلا، بووکا کوردا" (٢٠١٠) یا غه‌ری موسه‌فا و "کاسلین نی هۆلیهان" (١٩٠٢) یا بییتس هاتینه به‌رچافکر ژ بو فێ مه‌رمی. ژ پێخه‌مه‌ت گه‌هه‌شتنا ئارمانجین هه‌کولین، کو ئه‌و ژ لیکولین و شروقه‌مکرنا هه‌ستین شانۆیا نه‌ته‌وه‌ی ده‌فان به‌ر هه‌مان ده‌، گرنگیه‌ک پوخت هاتیه‌ دان ب هه‌ما، موته‌ف، تابه‌ته‌مه‌ندی، و ئه‌و ده‌ربرین کۆ د تیکستین هه‌لیژارتی دا هاتین. د ئه‌جامین هه‌کولین دا دیار ده‌یت کو بییتس مه‌فای ژ که‌ساتیه‌کا ئه‌فسانه‌یا ئیرلهن‌دی و ده‌رگریته‌، ئه‌و ژ کاسلین کو دراستی دا نوینه‌راتیا گیانه‌ی نیشتمانیی ئیرلهن‌دا ده‌کته‌، ژ بو به‌رچاف ئانینا ناسنامه و کێشا نه‌ته‌وه‌ی. ژ لایه‌کی دی فه‌، غه‌ری موسه‌فا مه‌فای ژ یادوه‌ری و ئه‌زمونین راسته‌فینه‌یین شه‌هیدا کوردان له‌یلا قاسم و ده‌رگریته‌ و به‌شیومه‌کی درامای پێشاندده‌ت ب مه‌رمه‌ما به‌رچافکرنا کێشا کوردی و بی بارکرنا وان ژ مافین وان بین ره‌وا. هه‌ردوو به‌ر هه‌مین درامای بابه‌تین زوردرای، سه‌ته‌ما داگیرکه‌ران، و هه‌یفین سه‌رخوبونه‌ بخوه‌فه‌دگرن. ل دوهاه‌ین ئه‌جامین نه‌فێ خاندنێ خویا دکن کو سه‌ره‌رای جیوازا ده‌می دناچه‌را هه‌ردوو شانۆگه‌ریان ده‌ پتر ژ چه‌رخه‌کی ل هه‌ردوو ب هه‌ماهه‌نگی باس ل سه‌ته‌ما سیاسیه‌، خوزبین نازادبونی، و به‌کبونا نه‌ته‌وه‌ی دکن.

په‌یفین سه‌ره‌کی: غه‌ری موسه‌فا، شانۆیا کوردی، نیشتمانیپەرۆری، ویلیام بوتله‌رییتس، شانۆیا ئیرلهن‌دی.

المسرحية الوطنية: دراسة ل للمسحرتين "إيلي عروس الأكراد" لغربي مصطفى و "كاسلین نی هۆلیهان" لويليام بوتله‌رییتس

المخلص:

البحت الحالي هو دراسة أكاديمية في مجال تحليل ودراسة انعكاسات الفكر الوطني والقومي بين المسرحيات الأيرلندية والكردية. على وجه الخصوص، يتناول الباحث مسرحيتي "إيلي، عروس الكرد" (2010) لغربي مصطفى و "كاتلين ني هوليهان" (1902) لويليام بوتله‌رييتس كأساس لتحليل ومقارنة كيفية التعبير عن المشاعر الوطنية في كلا النصين. في إطار تحقيق أهداف البحث، والتي تتمثل في دراسة وتحليل تعبيرات المشاعر الوطنية والارتباط بالأرض، تم إيلاء اهتمام خاص بالرموز الفنية، والعناصر الأدبية، وبناء الشخصيات وتقنيات السرد في النصوص المختارة. تظهر نتائج البحث أن بييتس استخدم شخصية كاتلين من الميثولوجيا الأيرلندية، التي تمثل الروح الوطنية لأيرلندا، كأداة فنية لتجسيد الهوية القومية والصراعات السياسية. من جانب آخر، استخدم مصطفى سيرة وتضحية الشهيدة الخالدة ليلي قاسم كأساس درامي لتصوير وعكس القضية الكردية وكيفية حرمان الشعب الكردي من حقوقه المشروعة عبر التاريخ. كلا العملين الدراميين يتناولان بشكل فني الاضطهاد، وظلم المحتلين، وكذلك النضال التحرري. يخلص هذا البحث إلى أنه رغم الفارق الزمني بين المسرحيتين، إلا أن كليهما يسلط الضوء بشكل فني ومؤثر على القمع السياسي، وهدف الاستقلال وأهمية المشاعر الوطنية.

الكلمات الدالة: غربي مصطفى، الدراما الكردية، الوطنية، وليام بوتله‌رييتس، الدراما الأيرلندية.