

Psychoanalytical Reading of Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin*

Dissertation submitted to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, in partial fulfillment for the  
award of B.A. degree in English Language and Literature.



Name: Sona George

Register Number: 210021000954

Research Centre and Postgraduate Department of English

Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara

Kochi – 682021

2024

## Certificate

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **Psychoanalytical Reading of Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin*** is a bona fide record of sincere work done by, Sona George, Register Number : 210021000954, Bharata Mata College, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature under the Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam during the year 2023-2024.

Project Guides,

Ms. Lissy Kachappilly

Assistant Professor

Research Centre and

Postgraduate Department of English

Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara

Dr. Thara Gangadharan

Head of the Department

Research Centre and

Postgraduate Department of English

Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara

## Declaration

I, hereby declare that the presented dissertation **Psychoanalytical Reading of Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin*** is based on the research that I did on under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Lissy Kachappilly, Assistant Professor, Research Centre and Postgraduate Department of English, Bharata Mata College, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature from Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam. This is a report of my hands based on the research done on the selected topic and it is my original work and interpretations drawn therein are based on material collected by myself. It has not been previously formed basis for the award of any degree, diploma or fellowship or other similar title or recognition.

Date: 29/04/2024

Sona George

Place: Thrikkakara

Reg.No: 210021000954

## Acknowledgement

I find myself fortunate to be surrounded by people who are forever willing to help and guide me. I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Lissy Kachappilly guiding me in accomplishing my research work titled **Psychoanalytical Reading of Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin***. Her supervision and support truly helped in the progress and timely accomplishment of this research work.

I express my sincere thanks to the Principal Prof (Dr) Johnson K.M, Dr.Thara Gangadharan, Head of the Department, and all other faculty members of my college for their support and concern.

I am also grateful to my beloved Mother and Father, family members and friends for their loving encouragement. Above all, I thank God Almighty for constantly supporting me and for blessing me with such wonderful people in my life.

Sona George

## Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Psychoanalysis and Trauma Theory	6
Chapter 3: Psychoanalytic Analysis of <i>Mornings in Jenin</i>	10
Chapter 4: Unravelling Trauma	15
Chapter 5: Conclusion	20
Works Cited	

This project follows MLA 8<sup>th</sup> edition

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Susan Abulhawa, a Palestinian-American author, is renowned for her poignant storytelling and advocacy for Palestinian rights. Born in Kuwait to Palestinian parents, she experienced displacement during the Gulf War, eventually settling in the United States. Abulhawa's works frequently explore themes of exile, identity, and resilience amidst political turmoil.

Her debut novel, *Mornings in Jenin* (also titled *The Scar of David*), received international acclaim for its vivid portrayal of Palestinian history through one family's saga. Published in 2010, the novel became a bestseller, establishing Abulhawa as a significant literary voice.

Grounded in her individual experiences and commitment to social justice, Abulhawa is an outspoken advocate for Palestinian rights, engaging in activism and humanitarian efforts alongside her literary pursuits. Through a blend of lyrical prose and historical narratives, Abulhawa captivates readers globally. Her subsequent novels, including *The Blue Between Sky and Water* (2015) and *Against the Loveless World* (2019), further highlight her talent for crafting compelling stories that resonate across cultures. Susan Abulhawa continues to be a steadfast voice for Palestinian dignity and human rights through her writing and activism.

*Mornings in Jenin* by Susan Abulhawa is a sweeping saga that delves into the lives of the Abulheja family against the backdrop of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The narrative begins in the tranquil village of Ein Hod, where the Abulhejas enjoy a peaceful existence until the eruption of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War forces them to flee their home and become refugees in Jenin.

At the heart of the story is Amal Abulheja, whose journey from childhood to womanhood serves as a lens through which readers witness the tumultuous events unfolding around her. Alongside her brothers, Yousef and Ismael, Amal grapples with the harsh realities of life in exile, navigating love, loss, and the relentless pursuit of justice.

Yousef's idealism leads him to join the fedayeen in resistance against Israeli occupation, while Ismael seeks solace in education and becomes a doctor. Their divergent paths reflect the varied responses to trauma within the Palestinian community. The Abulhejas endure the challenges of occupation, including military raids and home demolitions, finding strength in their bonds of love and solidarity. Through intimate family dramas and larger historical events, the novel paints a nuanced portrait of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

Memory and remembrance are central themes, as the Abulhejas strive to preserve their identity amidst attempts to erase Palestinian history. Tragedy strikes when Yousef is killed during a military raid, galvanizing the family's resolve for justice. Amidst the turmoil, Amal finds love with Hasan, whose family's ties to the Israeli military complicate their relationship. Their romance unfolds against a backdrop of political tension and societal prejudice.

As the years pass, Amal becomes a mother to Ismail, passing down the stories and memories of the Abulhejas to ensure future generations remember their sacrifices. The novel concludes with a poignant climax, highlighting the resilience of the Palestinian people in the face of oppression. Through the Abulhejas' story, Abulhawa offers a powerful testament to the human spirit's capacity to endure, resist, and hope for a better future.

*Mornings in Jenin* is a masterful work of historical fiction that illuminates the Palestinian experience with empathy and insight. Through richly drawn characters and evocative

storytelling, the novel invites readers to bear witness to the struggles and aspirations of a people determined to reclaim their dignity and homeland. Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin* provides a compelling exploration of psychoanalysis and trauma amidst the backdrop of the Palestinian experience during the Arab- Israeli conflict. Through the intricate tapestry of the Abulheja family's multigenerational saga, Abulhawa delves into the complex psychological dimensions of individual and collective trauma. This introduction aims to provide an overview of the novel's thematic focus on psychoanalysis and trauma, emphasizing key narrative elements that illuminate the characters' psychological landscapes.

Firstly, it is crucial to acknowledge the historical context in which the novel unfolds. Against the backdrop of the Arab- Israeli conflict, the Abulhejas' story encompasses decades of displacement, loss, and struggle for survival amidst ongoing violence and oppression. This historical backdrop serves as a catalyst for exploring the profound psychological effects of trauma on the characters' lives.

Central to the novel's examination of psychoanalysis and trauma is the character of Amal Abulheja, whose journey from childhood innocence to adulthood is marked by profound personal loss and collective upheaval. Through Amal's perspective, readers witness the psychological toll of displacement as she grapples with questions of identity, belonging, and the quest for meaning in the midst of chaos and destruction. Moreover, the novel delves into the complexities of intergenerational trauma, as the Abulhejas' experiences reverberate across generations, shaping the psychological landscape of subsequent family members. Characters like Yousef, Ismael, and Huda exemplify different responses to trauma, from Yousef's idealistic fervor to Ismael's pursuit of healing through medicine.



The theme of memory and remembrance emerges as a crucial aspect of psychoanalysis within the novel. Through Amal's grandmother, Yehya, and her evocative storytelling, the Abulhejas confront the ghosts of their past, grappling with the legacy of trauma and the imperative of bearing witness to their experiences.

Beyond individual psychology, the novel also explores the collective psyche of the Palestinian people, highlighting resilience, resistance, and the determination to reclaim agency in the face of oppression. Through moments of solidarity, resilience, and acts of resistance, Abulhawa portrays the indomitable human spirit's capacity to endure and overcome even the most profound traumas.

*Mornings in Jenin* offers a poignant and multifaceted exploration of psychoanalysis and trauma within the context of the Palestinian experience. Through its richly drawn characters, vivid imagery, and evocative storytelling, the novel invites readers to contemplate the enduring effects of trauma on individual and collective psyche, while also celebrating resilience, strength, and humanity in the face of adversity.

Memory and remembrance emerge as central themes, underscoring the importance of bearing witness to the past and preserving Palestinian identity in the face of erasure. Through Amal's grandmother, Yehya, and her evocative storytelling, the Abulhejas confront the ghosts of their past, grappling with the legacy of trauma and the imperative of remembrance. As Abulhawa continues to advocate for Palestinian rights, her work serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative potential of storytelling. By amplifying marginalized voices and shedding light on the Palestinian experience, Abulhawa's novel urges readers to confront issues of empathy, understanding, and solidarity.

Within *Mornings in Jenin*, Abulhawa delves into the Palestinian narrative, delving into the depths of trauma and resilience. Through her eloquent prose and vivid character portrayals, she unveils the enduring impact of displacement, grief, and oppression. Advocating for Palestinian rights, Abulhawa harnesses the power of storytelling to prompt readers to reevaluate their biases and stand with marginalized communities. As her work sparks crucial conversations and spurs activism, *Mornings in Jenin* stands as a testament to literature's ability to amplify silenced voices and drive societal change. Through its challenge to readers to confront their assumptions, the novel fosters empathy, comprehension, and solidarity with those who have endured oppression and trauma.

The project contains five chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction. The second chapter is about the trauma theory and psychoanalysis theory. Third & fourth chapter talks about the analysis of the novel through the lens of psychoanalysis. The last chapter concludes the analysis of how trauma impacts the characters, narrative, and themes of the novel.

## Chapter 2

### Psychoanalysis and Trauma Theory

Developed in the year 1890 by Australian doctor Sigmund Freud, psychoanalytic theory is a psychological theory and therapeutic technique. He created a method of psychotherapy to help those who were mentally ill or retarded. A fundamental notion in psychoanalytic thought pertains to the concept of the unconscious mind. According to Freud, our unconscious minds—of which we are unaware—have hidden motives and wants that shape our behaviour. The ego, which weighs desires against reality, the superego, which reflects internalised society standards, and the id, which is motivated by instant gratification, are the three components of Freud's theory of the psyche. Stephen Frosh, the famous clinical psychologist observes: "Psychoanalytic theory continues to have a significant impact on how we understand the human mind and behaviour. It offers dramatic insights for the study of culture and society and a wealth of ideas for therapeutic practice" (Frosh 1).

The conscious mind is the centre of our awareness. It guides rationality and logical reasoning by processing instantaneous thoughts, sensations, and senses. We can interact with the environment around us, live in the present, and make thoughtful judgements thanks to this mental faculty. But it has a limited capacity, and our beliefs, biases, and experiences from the past influence it. The subconscious mind, which houses memories, routines, and automatic processes, is located underneath conscious awareness. It works covertly, influencing our feelings, ideas, and actions without our conscious knowledge. The subconscious mind has a big but frequently undetectable influence on our day-to-day lives. It can influence everything from ingrained habits like riding a bicycle to hidden worries and ambitions. The unconscious mind is the lowest level of consciousness, containing repressed memories, unsolved problems, and

primitive instincts. According to Freudian psychoanalysis, it retains suppressed urges and traumas from infancy that could later surface as psychological disorders in maturity. Even if it is hidden from conscious consciousness, the unconscious mind nevertheless has an impact on us through symbolic expression, nightmares, and verbal blunders.

Many psychological scientists continue to believe that the unconscious mind is only the shadow of a “real” conscious mind, despite convincing evidence currently showing that the unconscious and its counterpart are equally flexible, sophisticated, controlling, deliberate, and action oriented. The operational definition used in cognitive psychology, which equates unconscious with subliminal, is partly to blame for this “conscious -centric” prejudice. (Bargh and Morsella 73)

Trauma theory on the other hand is based on the study of psychological trauma and aims to explain the psychological effects of traumatic experiences such as abuse, natural catastrophes, and warfare. Cathy Caruth, the trauma theorist thinks that there is a close connection between trauma and literature and thinks that there are undiscovered connections between trauma and writing. The intense emotional reaction to things that overpower one’s feeling of security, confidence, and command induces trauma. In the field of trauma studies, Caruth’s *Unclaimed Experience* is regarded as a ground breaking study. In literature, she is also credited as the founder of trauma theory.

According to Chandrima, “trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden, or catastrophic events, in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and

uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (Chandrima 930).

Caruth also makes the point that trauma’s “belatedness” has an impact. A traumatic event does not fully register in the consciousness of the person experiencing it. It only appears following the conclusion of the event. Caruth places post-horrific stress disorder (PTSD) in a similar vein, contending that it is a historical occurrence in which the survivor’s horrific experience haunts them periodically. “What returns to haunt the victim, stories tell us, is not only the reality of the violent event but also the reality of the way that its violence has not yet been fully known” ( Kanur 3).

Post-Traumatic Stress disease (PTSD): Hypervigilance and flashbacks are two signs of this psychological disease that can arise after experiencing trauma. Trauma frequently sets off dissociation, which can cause experiences of amnesia or detachment by upsetting identity, memory, or consciousness. Flashbacks or intrusive recollections can be caused by traumatic situations that cause memory distortion or fragmentation. Resilience and healing: Social support and coping mechanisms are two aspects of resilience and healing that trauma theory examines.

The war between the nations will affect the children and the family.

In families traumatized by war, domestic violence frequently is directed not just at intimate partners but at children as well. Children and adolescents who have experienced Trauma may externalize psychological distress as behavioural problems such as hyperactivity and aggressiveness, and those suffering from PTSD may display various types of incompetence, an inability to concentrate, or refusal to complete schoolwork or household tasks. (Fegret 3)

When combined, psychoanalysis and trauma theory provide a deep understanding of human behaviour, coping strategies, and the long-term effects of traumatic experiences and early life events. Trauma theory explores the psychological fallout from traumatic events and routes to resilience and healing, whereas psychoanalysis concentrates on the unconscious mind and developmental phases.

The project explores the ways in which trauma can appear in several forms, including psychological, emotional, and cultural ones, and how it affects the identities and behaviours of the characters in *Mornings in Jenin*. It also examines the author's depiction of resiliency and recovery from trauma and thinks about the larger implications for comprehending past and present conflicts.

## Chapter 3

### Psychoanalytic Analysis of Mornings in Jenin

In the outline of the novel, we can see the UN General Assembly decides to divide Palestine and establish the state of Israel in 1947. Consequently, Jewish settlers appropriate Palestinian land, and the Palestinian people are forced into camps for refugees, initially located in the West Bank city of Jenin. Over the course of the following 60 years, the stories of Yehya's sons, their spouses, and their kids are told against the backdrop of the ongoing war between Palestinians and Israeli authorities, military personnel, and settlers. In 1947, Yehya's wife Basima passes away from shock when the first bomb is dropped on their property. Hasan and Darweesh, Yehya's sons, along with their families, are eventually driven from their hamlet and made to live in the filthy and claustrophobic Jenin refugee camp.

Struggles become part of their daily life. They are mistreated by Israeli forces, and Ismael, one of Hasan's children, is abducted by a soldier whose wife is infertile. Once a wild and spirited young woman, Dalia, the boy's mother, is profoundly affected by this loss. Yousef and Amal, her children, are raised in the shadow of their deceased brother. Dalia recollects:

After the bombing the following day, in the crowd of fleeing villagers, he saw that Arab woman, her baby held tight to her chest, her defiant ankle bracelet as pretty as she. Moshe made his way toward the crowd, coming up behind the Arab woman. Before he reached her, the throbbing crowd jostled the baby from her arms, into that fateful instant. In a flash, Moshe snatched the child, tucked it in his

Army sack, and kept moving without looking back. He heard the woman yell, “Ibni! Ibni!” and that made him believe that she had seen him take her baby. But she had not. The crowd pushed on, more gunshots rang out, and the Woman was shoved along. (Mornings in Jenin 36)

After the baby is snatched by the soldier, Dalia goes to the stage of depression, and finally goes to a refugee camp. There she gives birth to a child who is the protagonist of the novel, “Amal, born as the third child. Amal was born into the heat of July 1955” (MJ 50). Dalia has no interest in Amal. Psychoanalysis indicates that Amal did not have a joyful upbringing. “Mamma kissed me as she rarely did” (MJ 64).

The utilisation of Freudian theory to examine Amal’s journey in *Mornings in Jenin* offers a comprehensive framework for comprehending the intricacies of her character and psychological growth. With its focus on the unconscious mind, defence mechanisms, and phases of psychosexual development, Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory can shed light on the underlying conflicts and motivations that drive Amal’s relationships and actions throughout the book. We can investigate how repressed trauma, unsolved conflicts, and unconscious desires influence Amal’s trip and aid in her psychological development by closely analysing significant passages in the text. The idea of the unconscious mind, which comprises memories, feelings, and thoughts that are not conscious yet affect behaviour, is one of the main ideas of Freudian theory. Amal struggles with the horrific experiences she has throughout *Mornings in Jenin*, such as her family being uprooted from their Palestine home and the violence and tragedy they face. These encounters turn into suppressed memories that have a lasting impact on her mental health.

For instance, Amal is depicted in the novel’s opening chapters as a little child living in Ein Hod with her family before to their forced removal by Israeli forces. This horrific incident



serves as a defining moment in Amal's life, influencing her identity and perspective. The unconscious mind may suppress such traumatic experiences as a protective mechanism to shield the person from intense emotions, according to Freudian philosophy.

In an effort to offer fresh perspectives on fictional works, Abulhawa explores the peculiar and lesser-known facets of Palestinian history throughout the entire book. The Palestinian characters' inner lives, trauma, and suppressed emotions and wants are all dramatised in the book. It is believed that the characters' disasters and demise are caused by the trauma's recurrent intrusion, which is damaging. It clarifies that while some characters are left psychologically traumatised, others can overcome their experiences and understand the workings of the unconscious. Furthermore, Palestinians use storytelling as a tactic to fulfil a self-understanding purpose.

In the camp, Hasan reads poems to Amal in the mornings to instill in her a love of learning and poetry as a token of his appreciation for her hard work and devotion. Things continue in the camp, but tragedy strikes again in 1967 during the six-day Israeli-Palestinian conflict when Hasan vanishes. As Yousef experiences military abuse, learns of a friend's murder, and observes Amal being murdered while evading a soldier, his desire for revenge gradually grows. When Yousef and Ismael—now known as David—cross paths, they do not recognise one another as fellow soldiers and refugees. After joining the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO), Yousef eventually departs to fight with them, leaving behind his beloved Fatima and a distraught Amal. After Dalia passes away, Amal moves to Jerusalem to study and reside in an orphanage. She receives a university scholarship and departs for the United States after graduating. She goes back to Lebanon in 1981, and this time Yousef is married to Fatima and has a child. Majid and Amal meet, fall in love, and get married. As hostilities rise once more,

Amal—who is pregnant—returns to safety in the United States to await Majid. But when Israel invades Lebanon, he is slain. A Christian militia massacres Fatima and her infant son Falasteen in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982. Yousef returns to the PLO to fight. Sara is born to Amal, who endures a troubled life.

Here, Amal uses coping strategies like denial, displacement, and repression to deal with the excruciating pain and trauma she endures. For instance, it is possible to interpret her choice to flee the terrible reality of her background as an act of denial given that she left Palestine and moved to the United States. She then lost her Arab identity, which she initially tried to preserve. She disassociated herself from her Arab culture and adapted to American society. Amal finds it difficult to let go of the past at times, and at other times she considers herself well integrated into the new environment of the USA. As the story unfolds, Amal experiences multiple bouts of despondency and hopelessness. She reflects, “I have always found it difficult not to be moved by Jerusalem, even when I hated it. It sparks an inherent sense of familiarity in me – that doubtless, irrefutable Palestinian certainty that I belong to this land. It possesses me, no matter who conquers it, because its soil is the keeper of my roots, of the bones of my ancestors” (MJ 140). These remarks clarify Amal’s understanding that, even though she has physically left Palestine to live in a distant place, her bond with the country in terms of cultural memories and desires is unavoidable. “Amal’s tragedy is a communal one, a betrayal that curtailed the dignity of the whole race of Palestine” (Payel Pal 9).

The failure of international agencies to find a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict is highlighted in Abulhawa’s novel. Regretfully, the majority of Palestinians continue to struggle for their national independence and the remainder are dispersed over the globe. The sole openly

protected expression of Palestinian love for their homeland is found in their stories and memories despite having lived their entire lives in camps and as immigrants in other Arab countries.

Abulhawa attests to the hopeless fate of the Palestinian-Arab people via Amal's steadfast ties to her homeland, which ultimately prove to be fatal.

## Chapter 4

### Unravelling Trauma

The word trauma comes from the ancient Greek meaning wound. Although the precise definition of the modern concept of trauma varies according to context and discipline, there is a general consensus that if trauma is a wound, it is a very peculiar kind of wound. “There is no specific set of physical manifestations identifying trauma, and it almost invariably produces repeated, uncontrollable, and incalculable effects that endure long after its ostensible precipitating cause” (Elissa 1).

Cathy Caruth, the literary theorist has contributed significantly to the field of trauma studies. She has written extensively on the portrayal and comprehension of trauma in literature and culture. Caruth’s work provides a comprehensive and insightful examination of trauma. “In its most general definition, trauma de – scribes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (Caruth 11). This implies that the effects of a traumatic incident do not appear immediately after the event. Instead, it can take several decades for the impacts to manifest themselves. As a result, trauma survivors may experience delayed reactions in the form of persistent nightmares and hallucinations.

The essence of the trauma inflicted upon the Palestinian people during the events of the Nakba is aptly captured in this sentence by Abulhawa. “One instance can crush a brain and change the course of life, the course of history” (Mornings in Jenin 32). In order to evaluate Abulhawa’s *Mornings in Jenin* to highlight the pain of being uprooted, losing one’s house, and

becoming a refugee. Abulhawa's creative depiction of the Palestinian tragedy reveals a profound comprehension of the traumatizing consequences of al-Nakba on those who survived it. She explains al-Nakba as an event that "shattered present and future", a gusting wind "that grabbed the land at one corner and shook it of its name and character" (MJ 3).

*Mornings in Jenin* is filled with numerous traumatizing events that occur throughout the book and have a profound effect on the protagonists' mental health. The Israeli bombing of Ein Hod, which destroys the community, is the first traumatic incident. "The village was laid to ruin and Dalia lost all but two sisters that day. The father who had burned her hand lay charred in the same square town" (MJ 28). During the war, her child Ishmael was snatched by soldier Moshe, and she was unable to protect him. This was the major tragedy in her life. Amal, who was born in the refugee camp, and her mother's relationship have been affected by the tragedy. The mother struggles to build a strong connection with her daughter and only shows affection towards her when the child is asleep. Dalia's this detachment can be interpreted as a "reaction to the loss of a loved one or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, and ideal, and so on" (Freud 243). One's mental health may suffer the most from the combined effects of several family member deaths and the enduring pain of exile. Amal considers how it has affected her mother and declares, "war changed us, mama most of all. It withered Mama. Her essential fibre unravelled, leaving her body a mere shell that often filled with hallucination" (MJ 86).

The protagonist, Amal, endures painful events from childhood to adulthood. Amal carries scars on her flesh from being shot by an Israeli soldier. During the Six Day War, she lost her father, Baba, who she shared a close relationship with. Amal struggles to hold onto her memories

of her father, remembering him as a strong, proud, and loving father, while her mother, Dalia, was lost in her melancholy and waited for him to return until the day she passed away.

I needed to believe Baba was dead. I could not bear the thought of him suffering away from us and I chose to know he was in heaven wearing his dishdashe and kaffiyeh proudly, the tip of his pipe at his lips, a cup of coffee at his fingers, and a beloved book in his hands. I struggled all my life to keep that image of him – a strong, proud, and loving father. (MJ 88)

Despite Amal's desire to move on from her past and the time she spent in the camp, every event in her life in America brings back memories of it. Says she: "I wanted to be an American. I wanted to pack away my baggage of past and tragedy and try on Amy for size" (MJ 186). Her attempts to start a new life in America are hindered by the trauma of her past that is still with her. "She cannot control these harrowing flashes of memory, which spoil her new life in the United States even as they blur her native past and present" (Suod 49).

Amal experiences trauma similar to her mother Dalia's when her beloved husband, Majid, is slain, leaving her to give birth to their daughter, Sara, alone in the US. She mimics the exact defensive strategy that she resented in Dalia during her childhood for as a child.

The final death scene of Amal, the main narrator, is a metaphor for Palestinians' brave challenge to rebuild hopes of reintegration into their homeland. Although Amal was torn, oppressed, and rootless for years, she finally decided to come back from 'the States' to Jenin to join her family and later dies there on the land of her birth. Such a scene of death embodies the physical and ancestral link between the Palestinians and their homeland. (Oulwan 44- 45)

Yousef, who is Amal's elder brother, learns a difficult lesson after his wife and children are killed. Though Yousef himself is spared, he becomes consumed with a burning desire for

revenge against those responsible for the deaths of his wife and daughter. Sadly, Fatima and Falasteen are also murdered in a brutal manner. Yousef's anger toward Israel is further fueled by his grief and indignation over the senseless loss of his loved ones.

When depicting personal trauma, the traumatized protagonist experiences three stages of trauma reaction: regression, fragmentation, and reunification. Recollections serve as a clear indication of unresolved trauma that seeps into her consciousness. The book's narrative depicts how Amal's children and grandchildren have been affected by persecution and exile, which have caused trauma to be passed down through the generations. Each generation faces unique challenges amidst ongoing conflict and occupation, ranging from personal relationships to political activism. Throughout the novel, Abulhawa skilfully portrays the unwavering tenacity of the Palestinian people in the face of immense suffering. Amal and her family experience challenging situations, but they also share happy moments filled with love and support that help to strengthen their relationship despite being separated. *Mornings in Jenin* provides an insightful portrayal of how people cope with trauma, show resilience, and maintain hope even in the midst of adversity. Through the use of compelling characters and poignant stories, Susan Abulhawa showcases the profound and lasting impact of conflict and dislocation on individuals.

The novel provides a compelling examination of the trauma that the Palestinian people endured following the Nakba and the ongoing Israeli occupation. War, loss of loved ones, displacement, loss of identity and homeland all bring back memories of a life marked by sadness. Abulhawa's novel underscores the importance of grieving and healing to overcome difficult experiences in life. It illustrates the deep and long-lasting effects of oppression, violence, and relocation on individuals, families, and communities through the lives of its characters. Despite the hardships and injustice, the book also highlights the compassion, bravery, and resiliency of

the Palestinian people. As readers, it is our duty to acknowledge their suffering and support their fight for independence, justice, and peace.



## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

Mornings in Jenin narrates the story of Palestine through the experiences of a family that was forced to flee from the Jenin refugee camp during the 1948 Israeli Palestine conflict. The family's ancestral home was the village of Ein Hod, where they had been farming citrus and olives for forty generations until they were taken from their land by force. The novel covers the accounts of four generations of this family, providing insight into the displacement and struggles faced by Palestinian refugees. The analysis of trauma theory and psychoanalysis in Mornings in Jenin has provided valuable insight into the complexities of human experience, the aftermath of past traumatic events, and methods of psychological resilience. By utilizing concepts from psychoanalytic principles and trauma theory, we are now able to understand better how larger socio political factors can impact an individual's experiences. This analysis has enabled us to gain a clearer understanding of how the characters in the story react to trauma and cope with its effects.

Upon careful analysis of the main objectives of this project, psychoanalysis is a valuable method for examining the psychological aspects of trauma in literature. By exploring the unconscious motivations, defence mechanisms, and behavioural patterns of the characters in Mornings in Jenin, this project uncovers the narrative's profound layers of significance and meaning. The analysis made a significant contribution by identifying trauma as a complex phenomenon that extends beyond individual experiences. The project highlights the interconnections between personal and societal trauma and how they affect each other. By placing the characters' trauma within the broader context of Palestinian history and the ongoing Middle East conflict, we realize how they are intertwined.

This project has shed light on literature's role as a means of resistance and resilience in the face of traumatic experiences. The main characters in the novel *Mornings in Jenin* demonstrate their humanity despite being dehumanized, take back control of their stories, and resist the erasure of their past by retelling their experiences. By doing so, they demonstrate how literature can be a potent tool for promoting social change, empathy, and bearing witness. *Mornings in Jenin* provides a profound insight into how trauma can shape both individual and collective identity, memory, and experience. The examination of psychoanalysis and trauma theory provides a comprehensive understanding of how trauma affects people. This offers valuable lessons that remind us of the importance of standing up for what is right, holding those in power accountable, and striving towards a fair and empathetic future. This is particularly relevant as we grapple with the devastating impact of trauma and violence in our world.

Abulhawa narrates Palestine's historical development from the start of El Nakba in 1948 to the Jenin massacre in 2002. She also includes some autobiographical situations from her personal life, particularly her four years spent in an orphanage before earning a scholarship to study in America. She has been successful in delving into the innermost thoughts of the Palestinian people and helping them heal from the psychological and cultural pain they endure. She has resisted the Israeli's attempts to erase Palestine from history through narrative memory.

The protagonist's life emphasizes three phases of trauma response—regression, fragmentation, and reunification—to illustrate her suffering from both personal and cultural trauma. Amal, who was the protagonist, grew up as a refugee, living in the shadow of her mother who was crushed by the loss of a child. In 1967, she went through six terrifying days in a hole in the earth that changed her family's life forever. The novel's title comes from episodes where

Amal's father read poetry to her in the early hours of the morning before disappearing. Her brother, Yousef, is about to join the resistance, and her mother is showing signs of dementia.

Abulhawa employs flashbacks to demonstrate how trauma has a significant impact on Amal's life. Flashbacks indicate that the traumatized individual is still reliving the terrible event that caused their trauma, and they serve to bring back the dreadful memories into their consciousness. Nightmares and flashbacks are symptoms of repressed trauma, and they serve to bring back the dreadful memories into their consciousness.

To analyze how *Mornings in Jenin* portrays individual and societal pain, the project integrates Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis with Cathy Caruth's trauma theory. This project uses Freud's idea of the unconscious and Caruth's concept of "delayed understanding" to study the experiences of the characters. They draw comparisons between Caruth's emphasis on repetition and Freud's theories of trauma replay in dreams and symptoms. Examine how the characters' identities and relationships are impacted by traumatic experiences. The novel portrays trauma being passed down through generations, referencing Freud's idea of unresolved tensions being inherited subconsciously. By combining these perspectives, they offer a sophisticated interpretation of how trauma functions in the novel and its consequences for both individual and societal healing.

This project utilizes textual analysis to examine Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin*. The focus is on how the author uses literary metaphors to convey the harsh reality of Palestine, specifically the brutality of Israeli violence against Palestinians and the resulting psychological and physical agony. Abulhawa's investigation delves into the question of who the true terrorist is in Palestine. Through the use of various literary devices, the book sheds light on Israeli terrorism and the difficulties faced by Palestinians living under occupation. In her writing, Abulhawa

argues that it is the violent and aggressive Israeli occupation that fuels Palestinian resistance. Her book, *Mornings in Jenin*, seeks to justify the methods of Palestinian resistance, asserting that Palestinians are justified in their struggle against Zionist domination. According to Abulhawa, Israel is the true source of terrorism, not the Palestinians.

The novel provides a poignant portrayal of life as a Palestinian living under Israeli Palestine conflict. Abulhawa employs literary metaphors to underscore the immense difficulties faced by Palestinians. This novel explores Abulhawa's use of literary devices to illustrate Palestinian resistance against Israeli aggression and to challenge common perceptions of terrorism in the region. *Mornings in Jenin* masterfully portrays the horrors of Israeli aggression and the resilience of Palestinian resistance through various literary techniques. The author effectively depicts the physical and psychological suffering inflicted on Palestinians, evoking empathy in readers with the use of vivid imagery and figurative language. The novel's character development and narrative structure work in harmony to humanize the Palestinian experience and challenge the dehumanizing stereotypes that the media often propagates.

*Mornings in Jenin* challenges the traditional narratives surrounding terrorism and resistance in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Through a skillful blend of literary techniques, Abulhawa illuminates the complexities of the conflict and asserts the legitimacy of Palestinian resistance. She also exposes the horrific reality of the Israeli occupation through her use of language, imagery, and symbolism. The novel is a captivating read that engages readers on both intellectual and emotional levels and serves as a powerful illustration of the Palestinian people's resilience in the face of injustice.

## Work Cited

Abulhawa, Susan. *Mornings in Jenin*. Bloomsbury Publishing ,2010.

Al Suod, Yassir Sabri. "Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin*, Naomi Nye's *Habibi*, and Shaw Dallal's *Scattered Like Seeds: A Critical Insight into the Dialectic of Past and Present in Contemporary Arab American Literature*." Bridgewater State University, 2015, p 49.

Bargh, J. A., and Morsella, E. "The Unconscious Mind: Perspectives on psychological Science." *A Journal of The Association for Psychological Science*, Vol.3, no.1, 2008, pp. 73–79.

Caruth, Cathy. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016, p.11

Chandrima Sen. "Trauma and Pain: A Study of Ajai Kumar Patra's Resonance of Life." *JETIR*, Vol.7, no.5, 2020.

Freud, Sigmund. *Mourning and Melancholia*. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud: On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*. Vol.14, 1917, p 243.

Frosh, Stephen. *A Brief Introduction to Psychoanalytic Theory*, Red Globe Press, 2012.

Kanur, Pushpneet. "Cathy Caruth's Trauma and Contemporary Indian Fiction: A Study." *Shodhgangotri*,2023, <https://shodhgangotri.inflibnet.in>.

Marder, Elissa. "Trauma and Literary Studies: Some 'Enabling Questions'." *Trauma and Literary Studies*, 2006, p.1

Mitchell, Stephen A, and Margaret. J. Black. *Freud and Beyond: A History of Modern Psychoanalytic Thought*. Basic Books, 2016.

Oulwan, Eman Tharwat Abdo. "Displacement as a Traumatic Experience in Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin* and Khaled Hosseini's *Sea Prayer*." Vol.76, October 2021, pp.44-45.

Pal, Payel. "Loss and Exile: Refugees' Experiences." Vol. 2, no. 10, October 2016, p.9.