



Open Access

QLANTIC
 JOURNAL OF
 SOCIAL SCIENCES
 AND HUMANITIES

Intergenerational Trauma in Joukhadar's *The Map of Salt and Stars* and Alyan's *Salt Houses*

Hameeza Hussain¹ Rakia Imtiaz²

Abstract: *The study of intergenerational or multigenerational trauma is the locus of 21st-century fiction and non-fiction; however, few research studies dare to explore the contextual reality of this research scope. This present research analyzes the issue of intergenerational trauma in Jennifer Zeynab Joukhadar's *The Map of Salt and Stars* and Hala Alyan's *Salt Houses*. With Michelle Balaev's theorization of pluralistic trauma, this study focuses on the experiences of Arabs' intergenerational trauma in selected novels and also on the contexts related to the trauma experiences. This article uses the textual analysis approach to support its conceptual framework that illustrates the context of war and displacement in different Arab states. The analysis of the two novels illustrates how trauma affects not only victims' lives but also their descendants' lives.*

Key Words: Alyan, Arab, Intergenerational Trauma, Joukhadar, Trauma

Introduction

Trauma research is important because of the tragic events such as 9/11, the two wars fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, Americans evading from Afghanistan without proper planning, and the Arab Springs that claimed the lives of myriads of people in Syria and Iraq. Shoshana Felman claims, "The 20th century can be characterized as the century of trauma" (Felman, 1992, p. 171). The reality and existence of the victims who must survive and face the outside world are called into question by this violent legacy. Trauma theory can be seen as a necessary tool for answering their questions. In Elissa Marder's point of view, the trauma is considered "a very eccentric kind of bruise," lacking clear physical evidence, and mostly a large, consistent, hard-to-detect bruise. The difference always happens after a long time of initial experience. Trauma can be thought of as having a moral, political, and historical nature, caused by events commonly occurring in social relationships and resulting from the social forces involved (Marder, 2006, p. 817).

The present study highlights the traumas suffered by Palestinian and Syrian Arabs when they were evicted from their homes and the cultural loss that accompanies such displacement. The Gulf War, the Lebanese Civil War, the War on Terror, the Algerian Resistance, and other historically significant traumatic events like the Nakba and Naksa in Palestine, as well as state authoritarianism and dictatorship, have not been examined in the modern world. While contemporary criticism draws attention to the characters' plight through a close reading of the narrative, it also analyses the trauma suffered by the characters on an individual and group level while shedding light on the cultural values that shape their lives beyond just the idea of family. According to the present study, this trauma-specific approach promotes diversity and provides knowledge that incorporates, but extends beyond, the pathological study of traumatic thinking. The analysis below uses intergenerational ideas to examine intergenerational vulnerability in pursuit of goals. Furthermore, Balaev also means that we need to look at trauma from new angles by looking at it from different contextual aspects, such as culture, location, landscape, and protagonist, which this study emphasizes. Such pluralistic elements, according to the author, are crucial for comprehending traumatic experiences in literary works. The standard approach to trauma research is criticized by Balaev in the section titled "Selective use of psychological theories that construct a single model of pathology to explain

¹ M.Phil. in English, Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Faisalabad, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

² Lecturer in English, Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Faisalabad, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

trauma." This section serves as the introduction to this article. She asserts that Caruth and others' conventional perspective "is that trauma is a wordless, ineffable emptiness that is inherently sick, timeless, and repetitive" (Caruth, 2016, p. 3).

Balaev (2012) deviates from earlier trends in trauma research by pointing to the limitations imposed by this model. Instead, she says people experience trauma in different ways. She argues that it's not just traumatic events that are indescribable. She argues that such pluralistic aspects are important for understanding traumatic phenomena in literary works. From a political point of view, the conflict in the Middle East has been completely distorted by the Arab Spring, the war in Iraq, the war in Lebanon, and more. Traumatic experiences such as acts of terror, civil war, riots, and oppression have haunted people and turned into real mental health problems.

Places in the Arab world seamlessly fade into the background. The field of Arabic literature and the Western publishing world rarely overlap. The global community is mainly unaware of Arab-related literature. Arab world representatives primarily rely on various news reports. On the other hand, unlike non-fiction forms of expression such as journalism, literature can be seen as an independent and prominent real life in these regions. It depicts elements of Arab life that are rarely highlighted by available non-fiction sources. Both Alyan and Joukhadar succeed in portraying the trauma they experience daily, poignantly depicting all the traumatic events that mark the scale of terror and suffering, especially in the Arab world. Consequently, the current research can be seen as having literary and social relevance.

Research Questions

- How do Joukhadar's *The Map of Salt and Stars* and Alyan's *Salt Houses* describe the multigenerational trauma of Syrians and Palestinians?
- How do Arabian Diaspora writings represent the episodes of violence regarding intergenerational trauma?

Significance of the Study

The idea of trauma is becoming more prevalent in today's literature. People uprooted by war and civil turmoil have made up a sizable component of the global diaspora in recent years. It is important to elevate the voices of these marginalized people above the chaos of frequently widespread problems. This in-depth analysis of trauma tries to paint a clear picture of these people's challenging physical and mental existence. Therefore, the works of fiction that are the subject of this investigation are relatively recent and have very few reviews, so the importance of the investigation can be called very great. On the other hand, this study, due to its originality, can be seen as an attempt to fill this gap and provide a better critical understanding of the chosen topic and novels. In addition, these two fictional works, Hala Alyan's *The Salt Houses* (2017) and Jennifer Zeynab Joukhadar's *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018), deserve critical consideration from a trauma theory perspective. So, in this research paper, Hala Alyan's *Salt Houses* (2017) and Jennifer Zeynab Joukhadar's *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018) are two novels that are examined. This study is limited to two literary texts to allow for a comprehensive survey (Joukhadar, 2018).

Literature Review

According to the American Psychiatric Association in the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, DSM-5 (2013), trauma is a major physical and mental risk that causes overwhelming, distressing and generally does not affect the mental health of individual victims (s) as well as their family, friends, and loved ones. The first phenomenon is often sudden and unexpected. It can happen once, it can recur periodically, or it can recur over and over until it becomes chronic. Examples of traumatic experiences include combat in the armed forces, terrorist attacks, natural or man-made disasters or accidents, violent deaths of loved ones, traumatic separation, neglect or abandonment, enslavement, some kind of disability, disease, etc. Due to the extent, complexity, length, amplitude, and homeostasis of multiple potential stresses, the specifics of trauma have been explored and subsequently amended numerous times.



For this particular study, the authors from the Arab diaspora's contemporary novels *Salt Houses* (2017) by Hala Alyan and *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018) by Jennifer Zeynab Joukhadar were taken into consideration. People who live in Middle Eastern nations have suffered war, forced displacement, inter- and intra-group rejection, natural disasters, etc. According to psychologists like Yuval Neria (2008), who specializes in treating PTSD and trauma associated with combat. Victims of repeated incidents involving this indicate the high number of trauma cases in these countries, but local criticism on the matter is still lacking. Academic and media studies frequently depict significant traumatic events that have affected a nation, a person, or a group of people, such as the Syrian Civil War in 2012, the Yemeni War, the Palestinian Nakba, and the Iraqi invasions. Repression, dictatorship, war, conflict, and forced migration still abound, but local critics and understanding of the painful phenomenon are lacking. To combat cruelty and suffering, it is important to critique works from Arab countries, and this particular study aims to get closer to that goal.

Michelle Balaev's conceptual lens is used to analyze both works of fiction, highlighting the painful events that people go through as they try to deal with trauma in their daily lives. Their ties to the cultural norms of their birthplace are severed by eviction, and their identities must be rebuilt. To expand the breadth of trauma research, she contends that attention must be paid to methodologies other than the conventional paradigm. She suggests using a pluralistic approach that takes into account many theories, the significance of geography in literary descriptions, and various contextual elements of traumatic experiences. According to Balaev (2014), using only traditional psychological interpretational techniques limits researchers to a particular range of explanations for fictional accounts, but "literary trauma theory is, we need to cast a wider net to understand the diverse accounts of trauma in literary capture" (Balaev, 2012, p. 11). She argues that to adequately characterize the phenomenon of trauma, a variety of terms and traits from literature and other domains are required. According to her, explaining the phenomena of trauma necessitates a diversity of terms and characteristics from the literature and other fields of study.

In *Traumatic Realism* (2000), Rothberg makes the case that traumatic experiences lead people to focus on the formal constraints of representation and to react socially as a result of the public discourses surrounding the events. Rothberg situates his use of the conventional model within a framework of cultural studies. Traumatic realism, according to Rothberg, blends the normal and abnormal features of traumatic experiences into a narrative form and a social response (Rothberg, 2000, p. 7). Rothberg describes Ruth Kluger's experience in a concentration camp as "a conflict between the extreme and the ordinary, rather than collapsing or being transcended by dialectical integration, and they create stories that are transcended by dialectical integration" in her analysis of the author's memoir *Living on A Youth* (1994). They are held together and, at the same time, remain separated forever. (Rothberg, 2000: 130). According to Rothberg, "rather than mimicking an event, a traumatic realist project transforms the reader in ways that make it an object of knowledge and make him aware of his relationship to post-traumatic culture attempt." (Rothberg, 2000:140:11). Since current research focuses on applying concepts from Michelle Balaev's works *Trends in Literary Trauma Theory* (2008), *The Nature of Trauma in American Novel* (2012), and *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory* (2014), a discussion of the growth of trauma studies in recent years can be regarded as relevant to current research. She emphasizes the need for theoretical pluralism while considering trauma in literary narratives. This can be considered very important for reading the selected material (Balaev, 2012).

An article by Madelaine Hron titled "Translating Pain: Immigrants Suffering in Literature and Culture" (Hron, 2010) analyzes the scholarship of immigrants from as different as Eastern Europe, Muslim North Africa, and the Caribbean and explores the immigrant experience. It displays various manifestations of psychological and physical stress brought on by several factors, including new cultures, outdated values, traditions, and especially their culture in the context of the host country" (xvi). It is based on the study of several marginalized immigrant literary groups, which present images that correspond familiar and uncanny to the earlier conventional attitude towards immigration. On the other hand, this study analyzes novels whose characters are mainly from the upper class in life, from the middle class and above. This is done in an attempt to read selected materials creatively. Despite being shielded by money in some fictional characters, they still experience severe psychological and physical pain that makes their survival impossible. Although the incisive explanations of translations in the book assist the present study, the

selected books mostly focus on the experiences of refugees. Hron, as she notes in the text, concentrates on exposing the anguish connected to dislocation and the torture of displacement, "the pedantic suffering" (Hron, 2010, p. 237). This specific idea supports the direction that trauma research is headed in since it makes an effort to depict the suffering that results from the trauma site and the significance of shifting culture, place, and time regarding a particular area.

In addition, Stephan Milich challenges the common practice of equating the concept of trauma with a single historical or biographical event, the effects of which are gravely disruptive on a person's psyche as well as his relationship to society, in his article *Trauma in Contemporary Arab Literature: Translating Oblivion* (2016). Even if the traumatic event may have passed, its aftereffects still alter the victim's life or even that of a certain community. Milich abandons this method of thinking about trauma and bases his argument instead on the idea that if attention is paid to those who are experiencing colonialism or its aftermath, the idea that emerges can be understood as the struggle for survival on the part of the individuals as a norm rather than an abnormality. Milich's theory of trauma differs from mine in that my research focuses not on pre- and post-colonial research but rather on previously unexplored areas of research. It is similar to criticism in that it focuses on widely debated topics. Examining the thought processes behind the establishment of repressive dictatorships in Syria, Egypt, Algeria, and more allows us to dig deeper into the trauma literature in particular countries. The present study seeks to identify what Milich calls traumatic violence and oppression because characters in selected works experience trauma on a social and personal level, leading to their transformation (Milich, 2016).

Research Methodology

Michelle Balaev's approach has been used to analyze the selected fictional narratives. Three of Balaev's publications, *The Nature of Trauma in American Novels* (2012), *Trends in Literary Trauma Theory* (2008), and *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory* (2014), the latter of which she edited, are used in this analysis. According to Balaev, trauma is "a person's emotional response to an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standards by which one evaluates society" (Balaev, 2012, p. 150). She explores the history and current applications of literary trauma theory in considerable depth. Balaev contends that to get over the "discursive dependence" (xi) on a specific psychologically oriented technique of conceptualizing the idea of trauma, we need a more flexible and nuanced understanding of the trauma phenomenon.

Balaev draws reference to ideas like unspeakability and unrepresentability at the outset of her argument because they have long been associated with the study of trauma. The premise that trauma is a life-altering experience with an infinite range of possibilities and that it defies expression was reinforced by earlier trauma theorists. Traumatic events cause their victim such horror that they can't understand the seriousness of the situation, and as a result, they are unable to articulate it or even speak about it incoherently. They are unable to speak, stressing the language ambiguity, ambivalence, and aporia. Trauma is defined by Richard McNally, a psychologist, as "an objectively defined event, the person's subjective interpretation of its meaning, and the person's emotional response to it" (McNally, 2005, p. 78). She claims that the definitional process is challenging. Contrarily, Balaev researches trauma theory to consider novel angles for its expanding discussion.

In the past, the literary trauma theory's preeminent psychological trend had it that the victim's consciousness would most often become fragmented as a result of their painful experiences. Balaev recognizes through her conceptualizations that a theoretical model of pluralism must be adopted to account for the variety of images used to express trauma in literary works and mode of thinking that participates in interpretation while referencing several trauma and memory theories and paying close attention to the many representations that can be found in texts. Balaev embarks on a journey to develop a methodology that participates in theoretical diversity and deviates from the widely accepted classic model to introduce alternative theoretical approaches through her critical evaluation of alternative theoretical approaches to address the various reactions, imagery, etc., connected with trauma in literary works.

The texts chosen are *Salt Houses* (2017) by Hala Alyan and *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018) by Jennifer Zeynab Joukhadar. The primary goal of the current study is to analyze trauma, which is a significant and



ongoing component of the world, as shown in these texts and the conceptual framework above. Thus, a qualitative methodology is used to examine the selected works. The qualitative research handbook by Denzin and Lincoln classifies this method as thorough "...a view of the universe that is naturalistic. Qualitative researchers, according to this definition, "study things in their natural environments, trying to make sense of or interpret phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin, [2000](#), p. 3).

The current study, which may be considered as being based on cultural ideas, is comparable to this Belsey concept. Michelle Balaev's conceptual investigation leads to the conclusion she expresses in her proposal. The focus of this study is on Balaev's reliance on culture to comprehend trauma. One of the concepts she advances is the idea of keeping silent about trauma. She claims that silence functions in various cultural contexts. What should be discussed publicly and what should be kept private depends on societal culture. As a result, the use of such a storytelling approach highlights how terrible the traumatic circumstance is. The current study is based on the cultural, social, and historical context examined in the chosen sources and is organized around Belsey's claims as she contextualizes the artwork analysis. This analysis demonstrates the combination of Belsey and Balaev. This is evident from the current study's concentration on analytical topics that account for the nuanced psychological and social aspects that have a significant impact on how a victim experiences a traumatic incident. Through the blending of numerous contextual elements, including protagonist, location, time, culture, scenery, etc, that create the emotions and narrative of the painful experience of the characters in the chosen texts, an analysis of trauma has been spread (Belsey, [1999](#)).

Text Analysis

According to Balaev, traumatic fiction is defined as a literary work that evokes a profound sense of loss or intense terror on both a group and an individual level. The alteration of the self that occurs after an external, frequently terrible experience that discloses and unravels who you are and the world around you, according to the author, is one of the most significant elements one may recognize in a traumatic novel. External events can take many different forms, such as war, natural disasters, or even more personal ones like rape, abuse, etc. (Balaev, [2012](#), p. 149). The two books under discussion fit this accurate description of a terrible novel by Balaev. *Salt Houses* [2017](#), one of Hala Alyan's novels, depicts a contemporary issue: the suffering Palestinians continue to experience as a result of Israel annexing their homeland and the unrelenting battle to rebuild their lives as refugees in other countries. Alyan depicts the imaginary Yacoub family's journey through her book as she sketches a picture of their tragic lives across four generations to highlight the implications of such a complex topic. They initially resided in a mansion in Jaffa, but the Israeli invasion cruelly tore them away from their beloved Palestine. Families are dispersed around the globe, and characters are uprooted and permanently displaced.

The second novel, *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018), is comparable in that it qualifies as a unique masterpiece. This is the vivid account of Nour and her family, whose lives grow more and more rife with trauma and loss as a result of Nour's father's death and later as a result of their exile from Syria, their ancestral home. Jennifer Zeynab Joukhadar deftly interweaves the two tales in the novel as she depicts the miserable existence of Nour and her remaining family, which comprises her mother, two sisters, and a brother. Another story is connected to the audience through the persona of Nour, narrating the tale of Rawiya and her travels away from home to a town in Syria, where she apprentices under a cartographer by the name of Al-Idrisi. Joukhadar depicts the individuals' shared suffering from both the past and the present as the two storylines are deftly told, often overlapping. The novel's general environment is rife with innate unease and melancholy. Additionally, these two books depict horrific events that properly capture the protagonists abandoning their home countries and leading to their ongoing deprivation of community and existence are evident. Additionally, these two literary studies books can be compared to Balaev's definition of a "tragic novel" (Balaev, [2012](#), p. 149). This approach has the potential to create a strong sense of the pain and suffering that the characters experience, both alone and collectively.

These two novels depict a past that is both family and emotional, but the loss of one's homeland and the trauma that results from it predominates in the setting of domestication. Additionally, female protagonists predominate in texts produced by women, whereas male protagonists are relegated to the

background of novels. The male characters aren't portrayed as traditional boys involved in physical activities; instead, they have kind and considerate dispositions. The story's action might be perceived as receiving significant backing from the female characters. The experiences of wealthy families who are confident in their financial security and can survive on their own are regularly described in the novel, in contrast to the refugees who are commonly depicted in these books and who live in terribly difficult circumstances. Alyan and Joukhadar hope to deflect attention from the people and circumstances that recur in these traumatic situations by allowing for a more pluralistic and diverse interpretation of the experiences of grief of those who may have had some stability in life but still live in various types of trauma.

The main characters in these two novels, *Salt Houses* (2017) and *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018), highlight the everyday lives of people who were not directly impacted by the war but whose families were nonetheless affected by it and its aftermath and were forced to flee their homes. They describe the experiences of a larger segment of the population. According to Balaev, "the traumatic novel paints a picture of a suffering individual but portrays it in a way that suggests that this protagonist is the character of 'everyone.'" In reality, the term "protagonist" often refers to a historical time when a particular race, culture, or gender endured significant suffering while carrying out a critical mission (Balaev, 2014, p. 155).

Thus, as demonstrated above using Balaev, the current assessment objectives are to present a traumatized protagonist based on their cognitive ability and accuracy about their trauma. This is often associated with broad cultural ideologies and social characteristics. It can be confirmed that the protagonists in decision texts are people who are going through difficulty by looking at the vulnerabilities in those texts. One of their responsibilities that can be identified is that their origin can be traced to the time in the afterlife when members of a specific race, gender, culture, or society were shut out. As a result, it intensifies the suffering and destruction that can be brought on by violence, rape, forced relocation, torture, or any other type of physical or mental cruelty. Consequently, the traumatized protagonist describes how trauma is perceived and remembered in a particular setting and society. The protagonist uses numerous synonyms, which, together with Belsey's usage of polysemic, makes their role extremely difficult to analyze from the perspective of text analysis when looking at trauma in literature. Analyzing trauma in literature from the standpoint of text analysis is challenging. Such a reading begins with the preceding diseased viewpoint. Fictional portrayals frequently attribute magical and good qualities to traumatized protagonists, which is some specific information that might be useful to others (Belsey, 1999).

For instance, Billy Pilgrim, the protagonist of *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969), possesses the capacity to travel through time. He possesses the rare capacity to take pleasure in time spent in the afterlife in the form, gift, and destiny as if everything were taking place in front of him simultaneously (Vonnegut, 1969). Nour, the main character in *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018), has an aesthetic ability that enables her to see and perceive color and a capacity that proves extremely helpful in several circumstances in the content. The main characters of each literary text seem to be essentially correct. In *Salt Houses* (2017), Alia plays three great roles in a radical drama that exposes some of the reactions to trauma. The 1967 First Six-Day War, 1987's First Intifada, 1990's Gulf War, 2000's Second Intifada, September 11, 2001, and finally, the 2006 Lebanon War, which occupied the region, were only a few of the numerous events that the region experienced. Many different reactions are described throughout its life. In a timeline of such demanding events, Alia mostly describes the cultural strife around the *Salt Houses* (2017) film's direction, which might be interpreted as something she is revolting against.

Nour, the main character in *The Map of Salt and Stars* (2018), gains strength from the fact that she is the book's young protagonist. However, from Nour's point of view, the family's travels through other countries and the Middle East were interconnected. In contrast, *Salt Houses* (2017) presents events through a variety of viewpoint characters, creating the sense that the text is a compilation of numerous short stories.

The Map of Salt and Stars (2018), on the other hand, describes the whole thing through Nour's eyes. Her reputation as a main character is also marked by his ability to anesthetize. From her perspective, the various people are most accurately depicted. This, along with the specific circumstances and her infantile innocence, set her apart and defined a special portrayal of trauma. The common but crucial feature that throughout the text's orientation, the names of each parent's father and mother are never referred to by Nour as father or mother; instead, she refers to them as aunts who are just like all the other children,



'Baba' and 'Mama,' is another function that supports its status as a child protagonist. This demonstrates Joukhadar's keen interest in the idea of skillfully capturing trauma from a child's point of view. In addition, rather than focusing on a single, overarching representation of the trauma that haunts the protagonists, each novel offers a wide variety of recollections. In contrast, character memorization is a malleable modification. The offering elements are all prepared for testing, as are the person's demands, personality traits, and associated social and cultural traits. Additionally, as Balaev has demonstrated, traumatic experiences are linked to altered perspectives of society and the outside world, in addition to the memories connected to the incident. It may be seen that the characters are not as noteworthy as real people whose lives are pathologically disturbed.

This reflects the severity of the psychological and physical pain Nour and those around her go through and further confirms that breathing has become a stressful task for their survival. The moment in which Nour's mother carries her daughter through the streets of Damascus while Huda receives medical attention for shrapnel that buried her after the shelling gives the protagonist's weight, which is why Nour is carried on her shoulders, its origin. Nour wanted to halt and express her suffering to anyone who would listen after watching her home devastated in front of her eyes. She seeks to decipher her own experience and dismantle the barrier of silence she has built around herself. She bears this wound on her back because she is the main character (Joukhadar, [2018](#), p. 103).

In contrast, it is observed that the pain they suffered puts them in danger of forming another world in place of their afterlife. They are not viewed as individuals spreading their sick selves to others; instead, they are engaged in reforming their awareness. For instance, the terrible tale of Will Gatlin, a ranger in the Grand Canyon, is told in Edward Abbey's novel *Black Sun* (Abbey, [1990](#)). The loss of Gatlin's girlfriend, who is supposed to have vanished before the book started to be published, is said to be the cause of his trauma. Gatlin suffers a permanent loss as a result of Sandy's disappearance (Lyon, [1971](#), p. 158).

She was being crippled by the thoughts of the tranquil moment they had earlier spent together. Similar memories of Alia's past in Amman (57), where her mother prepares for the family, flood back to her in Kuwait as she stands at the kitchen window of her home there in a scene from the novel *Salt Houses* ([2017](#)). Through the kitchen window, the aroma of her delectable foods and mint blew. Her mother's recent passing has tainted the pleasant memories of her past, and she must now fight to eradicate them from her heart to not recall them.

The main characters in the two novels observe several similarities, including the initial death of their fathers. Additionally, Hala Alyan writes *Salt Houses* ([2017](#)) so that almost every character in the novel tells and illustrates from their point of view. Connecting the pieces makes the entire book read like an anthology of short stories starring the same characters. Additionally, chapters are titled following the letters of the text itself rather than being numbered. In addition to the two chapters that are given from Alia's perspective, the ending is also told from Alia's perspective, making Alia the major character in some instances. Analyzing Alia's tale will help you comprehend the various oppressive phases she experienced. Alia may have viewed the limited period she had with her family in Jaffa as the time before her deportation. The period Alia spent in Nablus after leaving Jaffa can be considered her life before the savagery of the Six-Day War in Palestine, during which her mother, Salma, persuaded her to go see her sick sister Widad. From the start, Alia displayed disdain for the journey and expressed a desire to stay at home in Nablus with her husband, Atef, and brother, Mustafa. The intense heat of Kuwait completely paralyzes her senses, and she feels cut off from her sister Widad, which could be read as a sign of coming doom for the Jacoub family. Furthermore, if Widad represents a painful attachment to Jaffa, then protagonist Alia is examined as a nostalgic attachment to Jaffa because of her mother Salma, Alia's role as a protagonist, and Alia's traumatized experience of her mother's life. However, Alia still harbors a nostalgic attachment to Jaffa despite this relationship being traumatic.

As for Alia, since she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, she has become increasingly isolated from her family. Her illness can be seen as a symbol of external troubles and part of a psychological breakdown as she is permanently damaged both pathologically and psychologically. It changes the way the main characters of this novel readjust their sense of self as Alia continues to carry the burden of traumatic experiences while reliving memories. This melody not only widens the gap between the past and the

present but also helps to create a contrast between forgetting and memory. It also emphasizes the way the past keeps interfering with the present. The next sentence reads: She is singing to the kid on her chest in her mother's garden, a garden someplace in Kuwait. She is alone and listening to archaic music in the dark (Alyan, 2017, p. 310). She experiences a sense of homecoming towards the end of the text after witnessing her granddaughter Manar caring for her young daughter and singing a lullaby in Arabic. It implies that you believe her native tongue may be indicative of what gives her the fortitude to carry onward.

Conclusion

The current study sought to close gaps in particular areas as it advances knowledge of trauma associated with culture, people, and society in Arab nations like Palestine and Syria. The purpose of the current study was to examine the hardship brought on by conflict for the general population in these nations. It aimed to critically examine both works by approaching them from different angles. In recent years, significant efforts have emerged to remove trauma research from the prevailing trends of Europeanism, which often tend to standardize human, social, and cultural pain. A reoccurring issue in cultural and literary studies, trauma has also received criticism from a variety of angles over the years. In addition, patriarchy is one of the major issues facing the Arab world. Arab women have always been portrayed as being oppressed and outnumbered by males. These two novels involved in this study mainly contained female characters, so through the agency that carried out this study, the researchers attempted to combat this stereotype. This range is based on the horrible events these women went through and how these crimes affected them in their societies. Additionally, this study tried to lay the groundwork for further investigation into the Palestinian and Syrian populations.

The majority of the writing about these people is geared towards non-fiction documentaries, particularly those made in Syria. These texts used in this study, however, are fictional and portray trauma and conflict through the eyes of common people, their wounded souls, and families, as well as through the traumatized and tortured generations of children. In short, trauma still exists in our lives. This study is also a survey for this purpose. In the novel context of this study, the trauma suffered by the characters from losing their homeland was considered. The researchers used a multidimensional refugee study model, which was also instrumental in this study. With the help of current research, efforts have been made to demonstrate that this dynamic is most reinforced in Middle Eastern countries such as Palestine and Syria. Given the common link between the growing number of armed complaints and subsequent psychiatric and humanitarian mediation, it is clear that these issues need to be discussed. The analysis above uses intergenerational ideas to examine intergenerational vulnerability in pursuit of goals. Furthermore, we need to look at trauma from new angles by looking at it from different contextual aspects, such as culture, location, landscape, and protagonist, which this study emphasizes.

References

- Abbey, E. (1990). *Black Sun: A Novel*.
- Alyan, H. (2017). *Salt houses*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.). American Psychiatric Publishing.
- Balaev, M. (2008). Trends in Literary Trauma Theory. *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, 41(2), 149–166. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44029500>
- Balaev, M. (2014). *Literary trauma theory reconsidered*. In *Contemporary approaches in literary trauma theory* (pp. 1–14). Palgrave Macmillan, London
- Balaev, M., & Satterlee, M. (2012). *The nature of trauma in American novels*. Northwestern University Press.
- Belsey, C. (1999). *Critical practice* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Caruth, C. (2016). *Unclaimed experience: Trauma, narrative, and history*. JHU Press.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Felman, S. & Laub, D. (1992). *Testimony: Crises of witnessing in literature, psychoanalysis, and history*. Taylor & Francis.
- Hron, M. (2010). *Translating pain: immigrant suffering in literature and culture*. University Of Toronto Press.
- Joukhadar, Z. (2018). *The Map of Salt and Stars*. Atria Books.



- Lyon, T. J. (1971). Black Sun by Edward Abbey. *Western American Literature*, 6(2), 157–158. <https://doi.org/10.1353/wal.1971.0026>
- Marder, E. (2006). Trauma and literary studies: Some enabling questions. *Reading on*, 1(1), 1–6.
- McNally, R. J. (2003). *Remembering trauma*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- McNally, R. J. (2005). Debunking Myths about Trauma and Memory. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 50(13), 817–822. <https://doi.org/10.1177/070674370505001302>
- Milich, S. (2016). *Trauma in contemporary Arab literature: Translating oblivion*. Routledge.
- Neria, Y., Nandi, A., & Galea, S. (2008). Post-traumatic stress disorder following disasters: a systematic review. *Psychological Medicine*, 38(4), 467–480. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0033291707001353>
- Rothberg, M. (2000). *Traumatic realism: the demands of holocaust representation*. University Of Minnesota Press.
- Vonnegut, K. (1969). *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Delacorte Press.