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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Section: *Literature, Linguistics & Criticism***National self-consciousness and cultural resistance in Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World*: A postcolonial study**Muntadhar Ali Mohammed^{1,2} & Fazel Asadi Amjad^{1*}¹Kharazmi University, Iran²Imam AlKadhim University College, Iraq*Correspondence: asadi@khu.ac.ir (Fazel Asadi Amjad)**ABSTRACT**

The present study intends to examine national self-consciousness and cultural resistance in Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* (2020). It shows that the colonizers' arrival in Palestine resulted in the deterioration of its culture and led to the subsequent oppression of its people. On the other hand, the current study shows that the selected novels serve as a means of keeping alive the memory of the Palestinians' national self-consciousness in their struggle against colonial Zionism and a literary act that embodies cultural resistance. It also examines the rise of Palestinian characters to the status of national icons, which parallels the heroic history of the Palestinians and their ongoing struggle for independence. The theoretical analysis of this research is based on the work of postcolonial theorist Edward Said and is set within the context of Postcolonial theory. In addition, the research delves into additional aspects of postcolonial reading by demonstrating how the harsh and chaotic socioeconomic and political realities of colonial Palestine are counterproductive to the ideal national self-consciousness of the characters, as well as how the depressed, ambitious rural people of Palestine are heavily influenced by the tragic repercussions of war, becoming disillusioned and marginalized. It also observes the chosen works' political-historical context as well as the characters' realization of the current situation as they bear witness to the decline of their own country and their efforts to preserve their cultural legacy and identity. Ultimately, this study demonstrates that the cultural and identity crisis of colonial Palestine leads to growth in cultural resistance and national self-consciousness and allows characters to confront the leading edge of oppressive forces.

KEYWORDS: *Against the Loveless World*, cultural resistance, independence and post-colonial theory, national self-consciousness, Susan Abulhawa

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I. Introduction

Because of ongoing wars in Palestine, the Palestinian narrative, marked by years of dispersion, colonialism, and resistance, has a unique position in recent literature. *Against the Loveless World* (2020), by Palestinian American Susan Abulhawa, is a powerful narrative of the Palestinians' collective and personal struggle for survival and their resistance to Israeli occupation. This study is set within postcolonial theory and employs Edward Said's concepts of national self-consciousness and cultural resistance to Abulhawa's work to examine the Palestinian culture and identity in the face of systematic erasure and colonial brutality. Nuhr, the female protagonist of the novel, is a freedom fighter and national icon. Drawing things from the past, Nuhr narrates from her perspective as a prisoner in an Israeli jail who resists exile and persecution in refugee camps while still in charge of her life. *Against the Loveless World* not only shows what life is like under occupation, but it also acts as a literary resistance and a means to keep the Palestinians' memory alive in their struggle against the Zionist occupation. Therefore, it illustrates the efforts of Palestinians who seek to reclaim their narrative by contrasting the thriving culture of pre-colonial Palestine with the current state of disarray. The current study is situated within postcolonial discourse. It examines how the Palestinian characters in the targeted work emerge as national icons, with their sufferings reflecting the broader anti-colonial movement. This aim is fulfilled by looking at Said's works: *Orientalism* (1978), *The Question of Palestine* (1979), and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). It also explores the social impacts of displacement by illustrating how cultural practices, including oral storytelling, needlework, and ancestral connections to land, can act as strategies for resisting colonial erasure. Furthermore, this study fills an important gap by focusing on national self-awareness and cultural resistance, unlike previous analyses of Abulhawa's work that mainly looked at trauma, diaspora, and feminist issues. The study indicates that the work illustrates the suffering of Palestinians while actively constructing a counter-narrative that challenges Zionist colonisation and restores a sense of shared identity. By accomplishing this, *Against the Loveless World* goes beyond being a work of fiction and becomes a political statement for freedom and self-determination. In this regard, literature is seen to keep national consciousness alive even while people are being oppressed by looking at Abulhawa's representation of resistance warriors, maternal legacies, and the symbolic restoration of land. Ultimately, this study positions *Against the Loveless World* within the tradition of resistance literature, where creating narratives serves both as a means to survive and as a method to combat being forgotten.

2. Literature Review

The debate surrounding colonialism and postcolonialism, along with the cultural conflicts between the East (colonised) and the West (colonisers), paved the way for the emergence of concepts such as otherness, cultural resistance, national self-awareness, self-determination, and counter-discourse. At the same time, many scholars consider such arguments to be controversial. Cultural and literary scholars believe that confrontations between cultures can have irreparable impacts on all parties involved. Conversely, others assert that it is crucial to resist any attempts to integrate local and host cultures. In this context, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has emerged as a powerful tool for uncovering the implicit ideologies and power structures embedded in texts, both literary and non-literary. For instance, Butar-Butar, Herman, and Manalu (2025) utilized Fairclough's CDA framework to analyze skin-lightening advertisements targeting women, revealing how discourse is shaped by sociocultural and historical norms that reinforce gendered and racialized beauty standards. Their study demonstrates how textual narratives can perpetuate systemic oppression—an insight that resonates with this paper's analysis of literary discourse in *Against the Loveless World*, where narrative is used to challenge colonial erasure and assert cultural identity. The current literature review aims to examine scholars and researchers' efforts as far as Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* is concerned, providing context for the current investigation. Abulhawa's work is a notable addition to Palestinian postcolonial literature, providing a poignant critique of colonialism, displacement, and resistance. This literature review aims to demonstrate that, despite the widespread acclaim for Susan Abulhawa's selected works over time, there remains potential for productive critical discussions. Many aspects of these works have yet to be fully explored, making them ripe for further study. The postcolonial discourse will serve as the focal point of the subsequent investigations, which are presented in the order of their occurrence in the following chronology:

Hassan (2020) analyses neocolonial pacification in the Oslo Accords by examining Nahr's denial of "normalisation", a significant issue in current Palestinian discourse. He discusses decolonial resistance and illustrates how Nahr's trip serves as a counter-narrative to colonialism and Zionist authority.

Hammad (2021) employs Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* to investigate how Nahr's body represents both a site of colonial dominance, manifested through arrest, imprisonment, and sexual abuse, and a means of resistance, expressed through hunger strikes and political disobedience (p. 293). The study finds that Nuhr is a traumatised witness to the suffering experienced by Palestinians. The study portrays Nuhr as a spectrum of nostalgically ravaged immigrants.

Abu-Lughod (2021) applies Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?* to examine how both colonialism and political respectability marginalise Nahr (p. 114). Her last self-narration demonstrates her empowerment. He asserts that Abulhawa's depiction of Nahr contradicts both Western feminist principles and Arab nationalist ideologies.

Elia (2022) references Mohanty's *Under Western Eyes* to discuss Nahr's sexual autonomy, particularly in relation to sex work, which challenges imperialist feminist saviorism (p. 180). In contrast to the Western portrayal of "oppressed Muslim women" as exploited by institutions, Nahr asserts her ownership of her body.

Al-Mousawi (2022) employs Spivak's *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Paradigm to assert that Nahr's first-person narrative challenges the Western perspective that often silences Palestinian women (p. 350). According to him, Nuhr's narrative exemplifies a vigorous resistance to both Israeli occupation and patriarchal subjugation, contrasting sharply with the docile victims portrayed in Orientalist discourse.

Barakat (2022) utilises Fanon's revolutionary praxis to examine Nahr's transition from nonviolence to armed resistance as an illustration of the "necessary violence" inherent in the struggle against colonialism (p. 12). In contrast to Western humanist criticisms, Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* presents resistance as an ethical reaction to colonialism.

Abu-Manneh (2023) employs Said's *Orientalism* to examine how Nahr's expulsion from Kuwait during the Gulf War illustrates the fragmentation of Palestinian identity due to colonialism (p. 217). The narrative contradicts the Zionist notion of "a land without a people" and instead endorses Palestinian identity and resilience. The researcher also discusses how Abulhawa illustrates the ongoing Nakba (catastrophe).

Khalaf (2023) employs Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* to examine the hybrid identity of the novel's protagonist, Nahr, as she moves between Kuwait and Palestine. He presents a critique of the colonial suffocating occupation and double standards (p. 82). He discusses how Abulhawa's work illustrates settler-colonialism and the terrible consequences of forced displacement.

Saadia et al. (2023) examine Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* (2020) from Philip Ricks' *Resistance Theory* (1994) and *Postcolonial Feminist Theory* (1901), stating that Abulhawa's work is a touching but horrific account of a Palestinian woman's fight against persecution, prejudice, occupation, and displacement. According to the researchers, Abulhawa's central character, Nuhr, personifies the fight against tyranny, brutality, and exile. This study highlights Nuhr's inner conflicts, her challenge of patriarchal and colonial systems, and her capacity for recovery from adversity.

All of the abovementioned investigations emphasise the value of studying Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* because of the many insights they provide about Palestinian culture, identity, and history. However, no research has approached *Against the Loveless World* with a focus on cultural resistance and national self-consciousness. Furthermore, no other study examines Abulhawa's selected novel through the lens of concepts such as cultural resistance and national self-consciousness. The target novel responds to and criticises Zionist colonialism, which created the crisis of Palestinian culture and the Palestinians' desperate and diasporic upbringings.

3. Approach and Methodology

The theoretical framework of this study encompasses Edward Said's concepts of national self-consciousness and cultural resistance. It is set within postcolonial theory, which will be applied to Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* (2020). The goal of the Postcolonial theory is to undermine the standard narratives about colonial rule. There is no denying that Postcolonial theory is an effort to pinpoint the negative effects of the colonial era and find solutions to them. Furthermore, the origins and effects of cultural and social identity

differences are also investigated. Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Spivak, Homi Bhabha, Aijaz Ahmad, and others study the root causes of identity crises by delving into multiculturalism and the collision of civilizations. In defining postcolonialism, Ashcroft et al., (1989) posited: “We use the term ‘post-colonial . . . to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day” (2). For Loombe (2005): “It has been suggested that it is more helpful to think of postcolonialism not just as coming literally after colonialism and signifying its demise, but more flexibly as the contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism” (16).

The current study employs Said’s concepts of national self-consciousness and cultural resistance as discussed in his seminal works, *Orientalism* (1978), *The Question of Palestine* (1979), and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), which are pertinent to understanding the process of individual self-conception and identity formation. As far as national self-consciousness is concerned, Edward W. Said argues in *The Question of Palestine* (1980) that since 1967, the Palestinians have had an inclination to identify their struggle with that of Vietnam, Algeria, Cuba, and Africa. Said makes this statement in reference to the Palestinians. This change in focus may be attributed, at least in part, to an increased political consciousness on a global scale. This enhanced political awareness has emerged as a result of the broad diffusion of notions about freedom and knowledge as well as the continuous battle against colonialism and imperialism. Moreover, this shift in emphasis can be attributed, at least in part, to the ongoing fight against colonialism and imperialism. In addition, the power of the media has, at times arbitrarily and at other times justly, brought together distant regions of the globe and even more diverse points of view. After the end of World War II, local inhabitants’ senses of self-perception and political allegiance both went through considerable shifts and expansions as a result of the war’s aftermath. The first significant change is a significant increase in people’s pride in their nation. When the independence of a nation-state or its territorial integrity is in jeopardy, one’s reaction to this predicament may vary from a bit of worry to a high level of anxiety (142-143). The main point in this argument is about raising Arabs’ national consciousness by educating them on historical, cultural, socio-political, religious, and even ethical spheres of life, which are very necessary for a nation’s well-being. They must be reminded of their shared past and destiny.

On the other side, in his seminal work, *The Question of Palestine* (1979), Edward Said describes cultural resistance as follows:

As a consequence, much of what Palestinians do, and much of what they think about, concerns Palestinian identity . . . On the other hand, the specific travail and the concrete hardships of being Palestinian have exercised the talents of all of our writers, so much so that Arabic literature (which does not have an ample secular tradition of autobiographical or confessional writing) now boasts a genre of Palestinian, so-called “resistance” writing, which means a writing of self-assertion and of resistance to anonymity, political oppression, and so on. (155)

Said asserts that concepts of Palestinian national identity significantly influence Palestinian conduct and cognition. For him the unique problems faced by Palestinian society have pushed Palestinian writers to their farthest limits. A new type of Arab writing has emerged: Palestinian “resistance” literature, whereby the author asserts their distinct identity while repudiating political, cultural, or social oppression. Said provides a specific illustration of the characteristics of Palestinian writing by using Mahmoud Darwish’s little poem, *Identity Card* (1964). The intrinsic strength of this succinct poem is in its capacity to not only symbolise but also personify the Palestinian people of the late 1960s, a time when their political identity had been essentially reduced to a mere label on an identifying paper (qtd. in Said 155).

4. Discussion

4.1 Echoes of Awakening in *Against the Loveless World*

One possible interpretation of the word “national self-consciousness” is being aware of and accepting one’s own national identity along with its related principles, challenges, and triumphs. A feeling of national pride and unity is essential, as is an appreciation for the value of those who personify and advance the national cause. Without doubt, *Against the Loveless World* aims at raising and reawakening the political awareness of readers in general and the national awareness of Palestinian individuals in particular about the colonial case of Palestine. For instance, Nuhr, the narrator and protagonist of the novel, proudly describes the involvement of the Palestinians,

in particular Mhammad Jalal AbuJabal, a hero and guerilla warrior involved in resistance activities against the Zionist colonialists.

The depiction of Abu Jabal as a valiant warrior who stands up for his people and their cause in the face of enemies is in line with the concept of national pride. Characters such as Sabah highlight the idea of national pride even more when talking about freedom fighters, as she describes Mhammad Jalal AbuJabal as “a bona fide hero, a guerrilla fighter responsible for resistance operations. . . . He killed one of them with a knife, then took his gun and shot the other one . . . He’s not a boy. He’s a man. A famous freedom fighter” (39-40). It becomes clear that AbuJabal is a symbol of defiance and national pride in part because of the things he does. Sabah’s tone and reference to AbuJabal’s popularity show that his community views his deeds as heroic and commendable, which strengthens the sense of shared identity and national pride. Sabah’s responses to AbuJabal’s hero status mirror the community’s intense feeling of national pride; members of the community praise and internalise the acts of those who battle for their cause. By focusing on the heroism of resistance fighters and how they shaped communal pride and identity, *Against the Loveless World* provides a window into how Palestinian individuals see national self-consciousness.

Also, *Against the Loveless World* places great importance on certain aspects, such as establishing a bond with the Palestinians’ land, culture, and history, comprehending their position in the world, discerning the purpose for which they fight, and experiencing a sense of value or worth. These characteristics often correlate with a feeling of identity, objectivity, and contentment. They also represent an affiliation with the surroundings and a sense of belonging to a particular geographical area. The affiliation with land may provide a feeling of constancy, assurance, and a basis for an individual’s existence. The objective for Nuhr is: “To exist on your land, in the bosom of your family and your history. To know where you belong in the world and what you’re fighting for. To have some goddamn value” (157). This denotes the deep emotional and cultural connections that arise from being a member of a family and sharing a common ancestry. It implies a feeling of assistance, affection, and consistency that may enhance the Palestinians’ welfare and sense of self. The characters in *Against the Loveless World* come to a full understanding of their position in the world and the cause they are defending. These elements influence their perception of their identity, affiliation, and self-esteem.

Additionally, the novel explores issues of individual strength, self-identity, and a desire to contribute to meaningful causes, such as rebellion and national freedom. These topics are related to the larger context of national self-consciousness. Nuhr’s trip to Palestine results in a profound shift in her understanding of her value and ability. These factors lead to her feeling of personal liberty and an understanding of her capabilities. The reference to seeing oneself as a participant in a significant endeavour, such as rebellion and national liberation, implies a desire to associate with a broader social purpose. This desire is a manifestation of national self-awareness, as it signifies an acknowledgment of the significance of one’s country, its challenges, and the desire to contribute to its emancipation or progress actively. Nuhr states: “I’d left with a sense of my worth as a woman who could engage with the world intellectually, who could love and be loved . . . I dared to imagine being part of something as important as resistance and national liberation. The idea of transporting the weapons had settled in me, then morphed into a plan” (177). The quote touches on aspects often linked to individual empowerment, a need for group involvement, and a dedication to a greater purpose. These themes imply a connection with national identity and a recognition of the importance of Nuhr’s function within a wider national framework. On the other hand, Susan Abulhawa refers to the idea of the Women’s Association gathering, known as “Aisha’s Army,” which was established in the 1980s during the Intifada and has just lately been revitalized. According to Bilal, this group’s mission is to enable women from all around the nation to go on prison visits. Also, Bilal implies that his courageous mother, Hajjeh Um Mhammad, actively participates in revolutionary circles. When asked about his mother’s weekly Women’s Association meeting, Bilal says: “Something they set up in the Intifada back in the eighties. They picked it up again a month ago. They call it Aisha’s Army. As far as I know, they help organize and support prison visitation trips for women around the country. But knowing our mother, she could be organizing a revolution herself” (186). This activity alludes to the fact that the Women’s Association is filled with members who are self-conscious about their country. The association’s dedication to assisting women who are part of the resistance movement or who have been impacted by the struggle is shown through the organisation of prison visits. This shows that people are aware of the national struggle and want to help and stand with those fighting for it.

Furthermore, the Women's Association plays a pivotal role during "the Intifada," a time of violent Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation. The association's resurgence demonstrates the Palestinians' steadfast sense of national pride, which suggests a commitment to the Intifada's tenets and goals. Hajjeh Um Mhammad is shown as a powerful and influential character in Bilal's statement about his mother, perhaps leading a revolution on her own. The suggestion that she has the talent and motivation to take part in revolutionary actions further demonstrates the community's strong sense of national pride. Her possible participation in more extreme measures demonstrates a strong dedication to the Palestinian resistance movement and a readiness to take substantial risks to see it through.

In another instance, one Palestinian sniper, Tha'ir Hamad, attacks Israeli troops at a roadblock during the Second Intifada, as described in the selected novel. The specifics of the assault showcase Tha'ir's resolve and pinpoint accuracy in sniping. National self-consciousness provides light on the larger framework of the Palestinian conflict and how Tha'ir's acts are seen within that framework. Abulhawa describes him as follows: "Tha'ir Hamad was a twenty-two-year-old lone Palestinian sniper who'd attacked soldiers at a checkpoint at the beginning of the Second Intifada. All he had was an old WWII Mauser rifle and thirty rounds of ammunition" (269). Without a doubt, an act of national pride has motivated Tha'ir to launch the assault on Israeli troops. In taking up weapons against the invading soldiers, Tha'ir is showing his dedication to the national cause, which is in line with the larger resistance movement. The novel also emphasises how determined and resourceful Tha'ir is. His proficiency as a sniper is on full display in his ability to kill Israeli troops while escaping arrest for long stretches. The fact that his name has come to be associated with accuracy and skilled shooting further emphasizes the relevance and significance of his actions in the Palestinian narrative.

Despite attacking the troops, Tha'ir does not injure an Israeli mother and her children, indicating that he was morally aware, as the narrator says: "An Israeli woman with her children arrived to pass through the checkpoint, but he yelled at her to leave, refraining from harming them" (Ibid). A consideration of the Palestinian quest for justice and the differentiation between civilians and combatants is observed in this moral judgement. Tha'ir's deeds show his loyalty to the country and his will to fight violently against the occupiers, characteristics shared by the rebellion during the Second Intifada.

4.2 Cultural Resistance Against the Loveless World

This section explores how "cultural resistance" is employed in Susan Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World*. The novel tells the story of Palestinians' exile through Nuhr's first-person account. Many of the characters in the novel use cultural resistance to stay true to who they are and their customs, even when things get tough. The characters have a strong spiritual connection to where they live. For instance, among Nuhr's mother's mementos from her time in Haifa is a box containing black-and-white pictures. Talking about her mother, Nuhr narrates: "Her family had been well-off, but European Jews stole everything when they conquered Palestine in 1948—right down to their furniture, books, and bank accounts. Her family became penniless overnight, then scattered to different corners of the world or died" (31). The fact that Nuhr's mother keeps the pictures shows that she was fighting against the erasure of her history and trying to stay connected to her culture and heritage, even though she and her family had suffered loss and relocation as a result of the 1948 occupation of Palestine. The images documenting Nuhr's mother prior to the events of 1948 serve as a visual depiction of her story and recollections. By clinging to these images, Nuhr's mother is fighting back against the invaders' efforts to dilute and demolish her family's heritage and history. One interpretation of her actions is that she is struggling to preserve her cultural legacy and uniqueness. Doing so demonstrates a desire to keep her cultural identity alive, fight against erasure, and keep control over her own story and history.

Moreover, the novel provides many observations on the characters' affiliation with their Palestinian ancestry and their attempts to preserve and convey cultural recollections and narratives. These features might be seen as manifestations of cultural defiance within the framework of a diaspora encounter and a desire to return to the homeland. When the mother talks about her memories in Palestine, it blooms in Nuhr's imagination as she says, "It was no longer the lost home and heritage trapped in Mama's tin box of old photos from her childhood in Haifa, my parents' wedding, and their life in Ein el-Sultan" (224). The characters' enthusiasm for Nahr's imminent visit to her native Palestine reveals their bonds to the country. Nuhr's mother has tried to preserve Palestinian history through her old images and the tales that go with them, even after her family was uprooted

and suffered great loss. The images act as concrete linkages to the past, and the way Nuhr's mother is thinking about her tatreez (Palestinian needlework) is another indication of her interest in cultural icons and customs. The mother states: "I thought a lot about this and decided to use the basic patterns of a Jerusalem thobe, because we're being erased from her story and her stone," she said. Even the way she described her embroidery was poetic" (240). Nuhr's mother's decision to embroider with designs from a Jerusalem thobe is a statement about her resistance to the marginalisation of her people. By using these ancient patterns, she subtly emphasizes their importance and their role in the story of Jerusalem, a city steeped in history and culture. Arguably, *Against the Loveless World* reflects how deeply Nuhr's mother feels a longing for Palestine, her family's ancestral country. Ancestral roots and the need for a feeling of belonging are emphasised when she talks about the trees that her grandfather planted and the memories associated with them. This is why, after arriving in Palestine, Nuhr, guided by Bakir, goes directly to her family's ancestral home in Haifa. She seems to be searching for links to her family's history while also experiencing a mixture of melancholy and yearning as she investigates the nearby garden and trees. After looking through Mama's photographs, Nuhr spots a three-story house with balconies that looks quite similar. A little tree farm with a partly open wooden gate and a modest stone wall stands next to the home. The old gate, which was originally decorated with a ceramic plate reading "HOME OF EL HAJ ABU IBRAHIM, NASER JAMAL NASRALLAH" (141), now displays evidence of its glorious past.

Nuhr's decision to cross the broken gate and enter the garden signifies their desire to be in proximity to the tangible remnants of their family's history. The trees planted by their great-grandfather symbolise the missed chances and thwarted futures resulting from their family's relocation. Nuhr traverses the forest in search of the illustrations that Nuhr's mother has mentioned. They seek evidence of their family's connection to the garden. Initially, however, they do not discover any illustrations. The mention of a sycamore fig tree with red fruit evokes a strong sense of familiarity for Nuhr. She and Bakir ascend the tree and harvest the delectable and aromatic figs. Nuhr says: "I climbed as best I could, grabbing fistfuls of fruit and tucking them into my purse as I searched for evidence that this was my mother's tree" (141). So, Nuhr and Bakir store the figs in their backpacks as a tangible memento of their journey. Nuhr's behaviour demonstrates her strong desire to establish a connection with her family's ancestral heritage, envision other possibilities, and uncover evidence of their mother's historical presence in this location. The garden and trees serve as a metaphorical representation of an individual's quest to rediscover their origins and reclaim their identity after a relocation.

On the other hand, storytelling functions as a powerful instrument for preserving cultural and historical legacies. For instance, Sitti Wasfiyeh, Nuhr's paternal grandmother, draws from her memories of Palestine to inform her grandchildren and daughters about their ancestral homeland through the medium of storytelling and oral history. Through the act of sharing narratives, personal encounters, and cultural customs, she actively contributes to the conservation and dissemination of Palestinian principles and customs to the younger generations. Nuhr describes Sitti Wasfiyeh as follows: "Sitti Wasfiyeh, Hajjah Um Nabil, lived with us. Unlike Mama, she'd never really left her village in Palestine. Just as I dove into the cube, my grandmother roamed Ein el-Sultan in her mind. She bored us with tales of her childhood and about people we didn't know. She was sure we would return someday" (31). Through storytelling, Sitti Wasfiyeh has the ability to communicate the challenges, victories, and distinctive elements of Palestinian culture, fostering a feeling of pride and admiration among the younger generations. Through actively immersing themselves in narratives from history, young individuals such as Nuhr develop a more profound comprehension of their heritage, personal sense of self, and the obstacles encountered by their forebears. Sitti Wasfiyeh's emphasis on her age and knowledge of Palestine suggests a desire to preserve and pass on cultural knowledge and memories to future generations. Wasfiyeh says, "It looks like I need to. I'm a better storyteller because I'm older and remember more because I was in Palestine longer" (125). She ensures the continuation of her family's historical heritage and their lasting connections to Palestine by repeating her tales.

Furthermore, cultural resistance may be seen in Sitti Wasfiyeh's steadfast belief in the eventual return to Palestine and her dedication to preserving the stories of her community. By keeping alive the traditions and stories that have been handed down from generation to generation, she is fighting back against the marginalisation of Palestinians' culture and history. Doing so will guarantee that subsequent generations will maintain a solid connection to their heritage.

Above all, *Against the Loveless World* mentions two figures, Ghassan Kanafani (1936-1972) and James

Baldwin (1924-1987), who are icons in terms of cultural resistance. Nuhr expresses her deep respect for Ghassan Kanafani, a Palestinian writer, his writing, and the similarities between him and James Baldwin. This highlights the commonalities among them, such as resistance to persecution, devotion to their societies, and willingness to sacrifice all for their causes. These two figures are icons in terms of cultural resistance. Even though Baldwin and Kanafani were thousands of miles apart, their works exhibit a lot of the same rebelliousness and passion because they were both born around the same time and went through quite similar experiences. Despite the pain they had endured, the writers shared an affection for their countries and the communities they belonged to. Nuhr makes clear: "Baldwin and Kanafani were contemporaries thousands of miles apart who never met but lived parallel lives. They wrote with the same passion, the same irreverence, and the same defiance, with overlapping wounds and bottomless love for their people. Baldwin was forced into self-imposed exile, and Israel assassinated Kanafani. To be committed is to be in danger" (247). The paragraph also recognises that Baldwin and Kanafani had distinct ends. In the face of racist and cultural pressures, Baldwin decided to go into exile for himself, while Israel regrettably killed Kanafani. Those who are devoted to their purpose and fight for justice confront risks and hazards, as this juxtaposition shows: "To be committed is to be in danger." The last phrase captures the essence of the dangers and sacrifices that come with standing up for one's people and resisting injustice. It stresses the importance of having the guts to fight for one's beliefs, no matter how dangerous the situation becomes.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, Abulhawa's *Against the Loveless World* delves into the Palestinian narrative and the realities of Palestinians living under the Zionist occupation. The target novel highlights the importance of the homeland and the ability to make independent choices. It aims to raise the voices of Palestinians and illuminate their challenges, ambitions, and perseverance. It also underscores the significance of national self-awareness and the preservation of Palestinian heritage, history, and identity. Through the portrayal of complex and varied characters, she confronts and undermines preconceived notions and biases, encouraging a more profound comprehension of Palestinian culture and cultivating a feeling of dignity and self-consciousness among both Palestinians and global readers. *Against the Loveless World* explores the personal narratives of Palestinian individuals and families, focusing on the impact of the Zionist occupation on their sense of self and identity. Abulhawa's skillful integration of historical events and human experiences enhances the readers' comprehension of the Palestinian experience while also promoting cultural resistance against the injustices of oppression and occupation. Abulhawa's writings also emphasise the fight for liberty and the desire for an independent Palestinian country. Thus, her literary works serve as a source of inspiration, urging readers to confront the many challenges faced by Palestinians in their quest for liberation and strive for a fair and harmonious future. Edward Said emphasises the importance of cultural resistance and national self-consciousness, which can function as unifying forces for opposition and as aspirational frameworks for a future devoid of colonial subjugation. He remains an important supporter of the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state. He extensively addresses the imperative of acknowledging Palestine as an independent state, wherein its inhabitants possess the autonomy to determine their destiny. Ultimately, Said highlights the importance of addressing Israel's suppression of Palestinian nationalism.

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