

HIDING IDENTITY
IN SUSAN ABULHAWA'S NOVEL *MORNINGS IN JENIN* (2010)

THESIS

Submitted As a Partial Requirement to Achieve Strata 1 (S1) Degree



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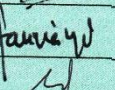
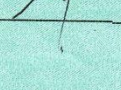

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HIDING IDENTITY

IN SUSAN ABULHAWA'S NOVEL *MORNING IN JENIN* (2010)

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Abstrak

Skripsi ini merupakan hasil analisis novel "*Mornings in Jenin*" (2010) karangan Susan Abulhawa dengan judul Hiding Identity (Menyembunyikan Identitas). Permasalahan dalam analisis ini adalah bagaimana protagonist dapat menunjukkan upaya protagonis dalam menyembunyikan identitasnya. Tujuan analisa ini adalah untuk (1) mengungkapkan seberapa jauh novel *Mornings in Jenin* menunjukan isu tentang menyembunyikan identitas (2) menemukan sejauh mana analisis terhadap elemen fiksi; karakter, seting dan plot (konflik) dapat mengungkapkan makna tentang upaya menyembunyikan identitas di dalam novel *Mornings in Jenin*. Elemen fiksi tersebut dianalisis dengan mengimplementasikan konsep mekanisme pertahanan ego, mekanisme penolakan yang dikemukakan oleh Sigmund Freud. Tokoh protagonist yang menyembunyikan identitas dalam novel ini adalah seorang perempuan Palestina, bernama Amal. Perang yang dialaminya telah menimbulkan luka dan penderitaan yang amat dalam pada dirinya. Tindakan menyembunyikan identitas muncul sebagai bagian dari upaya Amal untuk melupakan dirinya dari luka yang masih dirasakan akibat perang. Tindakan ini muncul sebagai bentuk perlindungan diri agar bisa melupakan diri dari kepedihan yang diderita nya. Tindakan menyembunyikan identitas ditunjukkan melalui dua cara, (1) mengisolasi dirinya dari lingkungan, (2) menciptakan sebuah identitas yang baru. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa protagonis menyembunyikan identitasnya agar dapat bertahan dan melupakan kepedihannya akan masa lampau. Upaya untuk menyembunyikan identitas ini bertujuan untuk membantu protagonist melupakan kepedihannya dan memblokir diri dirinya akan penderitaan yang dialaminya secara terus-menerus, dan bertahan hidup sebagai diri nya yang baru dengan cara menolak rasa kepedihannya.

Kata kunci: *Hiding, identity, Morning in Jenin*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

War has been a crucial topic among countries in the world since it comes with the acts of cruelty and violence that has resulted in the injuries and the death of many innocent victims. This threatening condition has left the victims with both physical and mental damages. The civilians or the ordinary people are usually among the victims that suffer the most.

The result of war is not just merely about the destruction of the lives of human being but also the mental damages suffered by the living victims commonly known as ‘the war survivors’. The survivors did not only experience the cruelty and horror of war themselves but also witnessed and watched how others were tortured and killed in front of their eyes. The impacts of war on the survivors’ mental condition may not occur right after the war ends, but they may become visible only after month and even years after the events. Having experienced and witnessed the cruelty of war, the victims may suffer from abundant stress and trauma. The victims frequently experience what is called *survivor's guilt* for remaining alive while others were killed. Simpson (1993) argues:

Survivor's guilt may occur because individuals feel guilty for surviving or being uninjured when others were killed or injured, they were unable to rescue someone or had to leave someone dying in the disaster, or it was not possible to overcome "the bad guys" (Simpson, 1993).

The survivors feel guilty because they were not able to help or rescue their fellow victims. This guilty feeling may stay long in the survivor's mind. The guilty feeling may become worse because the survivors were accused as being hopeless in saving other people's lives. The guilty feeling accumulated and resulted in severe depression and other mental problems such as tendency to do self-harm, self-abuse and tendency to commit suicide.

War survivors suffer from the misery of their past experiences. Therefore, they need find a way to get rid from the misery in order to survive their present lives and continue to the next stages of their lives. Misery can decrease the quality of the victims' lives as their ability to interact well with other people is disrupted. War survivors try to hide their misery by hiding their identity.

Moving to other place is one of the ways that war survivors do to forget their pain. In some cases, the war survivors even need to move out from their own country. The war survivors block their interaction with other people. By doing this, the war survivors created "a wall" to separate themselves from the society. They cover their traits and characteristics, social relations, roles and social group.

The case about hiding identity can also be found in literary works. *Mornings in Jenin* (2010) which was written by Susan Abulhawa reveals this issue. Palestinian voice has been absent from the literary scene and could not reach the world's audiences. Thus the stories of Palestine have not been heard much through the voices of the Palestinians themselves. Instead, they were told by non-Palestinian writers. It is true that there have been many research, studies, and

text books written about Palestine in English but not in literature, *Mornings in Jenin* then came to participate to fill in this gap.

It is interesting that the novel *Mornings in Jenin* (2010) reveals the issue of hiding identity. It is not only the first novel about Israel and Palestinian conflict, but also the first Palestinians literary work that received many awards. Abulhawa's novel attracts many readers because it is very affecting and fresh. It is a powerful and sensitive story is narrated by using shifting point of view. It shows how the misery that a war victim had experienced can significantly affect the victim's future life. As a result, the victim hides her identity. The acts of hiding identity in the novel is reflected by the female protagonist, a Palestinian, named Amal.

1.1.1 Israel-Palestinian Conflict

The history of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict began with the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. The conflict came from the intercommunal violence in Mandatory Palestine between Israelis and Arabs from 1920 and erupted into full-scale hostilities in the 1947-48 civil wars. The conflict continues to the present day on various levels.

According to Beinun and Hajjar (2014) the conflict between Palestinian Arabs and Zionist Jews (now Israeli) is a modern phenomenon, dating to the end of the nineteenth century. Although the two groups have different religions (Palestinians consist of Muslims, Christians and Druze), religious differences are not the main cause of the strife. The conflict instead began as a struggle over land.

From the end of World War I until 1948, the area that both groups claimed was known internationally as Palestine. That same name was also used to designate a less well-defined “Holy Land” by the three monotheistic religions. Bein and Hajjar (2014) adds that following the war of 1948–1949, this land was divided into three parts: the State of Israel, the West Bank (of the Jordan River) and the Gaza Strip.

The life under occupation is very cruel. Many observers assume that it was the Israelis who put the refugees in camps and kept them there. Moore (2001) speaks about his visit to the refugee camps in 1988 as below:

Although in my life I had already traveled through Central America, China, Southeast Asia, and other parts of the Middle East. I wasn't ready for what I saw in the refugee camps in the Occupied Territories. I had never encountered such squalor, debasement, and utter misery. To force human beings to live in these conditions – and do so at the barrel of a gun, for more than forty years — just made no sense.

The quotation above shows the situation that is faced by Palestinian when they live in camp refugee under Israel occupation. Besides of being separated with their family, the children must also face the death of their family and have violence and terror as their daily routine life. The suffering for living in camp refugee give the refugee guilty feeling for being alive while others were killed, it's hard for survive in camp refugee. It is hard for keep survive in camp refugee under occupation, and difficult to separate from inseparable pain without having survivor's guilt. They were surrounded by pain for being war survivor who witness death during the Israel occupation.

1.1.2 Hiding Identity

There are two key terms in this thesis. They are 'hiding' and 'identity'. The first word is hiding (to hide). According to Merriam-Webster (2016), hiding (to hide) means seeking for protection or evading responsibility. It refers to an active effort, an active defense - for self-preservation in order to cover one's real identity. In the context of this study the word hiding reveals the act of covering the wounds caused by war with consciousness. This action is usually done by someone who experiences suffering in his or her life in order to survive.

The second word is identity. Oyserman states in Leary (2012:69) identities are the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group memberships that define who one is. It is the qualities and beliefs that make a particular person or group different from others.

It can be concluded that hiding identity in this study refers to the acts done by The character, the protagonist who survived in the long Israel and Palestine conflict, who seek for protection of her traits and characteristic, social relations, roles and social group, membership that define who she is in order to get rid of the pain left by war she once experienced. The extent to which she suffers from the result of the war prompted her to change and fake her identity. It is difficult for The character to separate herself from the remnants of the memory of the war. Therefore, she hides her true identity by acting on her own terms, such as isolating from the community, and inventing new identity.

1.1.3 A Brief Description of The Author's Biography

Susan Abulhawa was born on June 3, 1970, to refugee parents of the 1967 war when Israel captured what remained of Palestine, including Jerusalem. Her father was expelled at gunpoint, and her mother, who was studying in Germany at the time, was unable to return. The couple reunited in Jordan before moving to Kuwait, where Abulhawa was born in 1970. Since her parents did not remain together for long, and the family was dismantled following the war, Abulhawa was sent to live with an uncle in the U.S., where she stayed until she was five years old. She was passed between various family members in Kuwait and Jordan, at the age of 10, she was taken to Jerusalem where she ended up in an orphanage. At age 13, she was sent to Charlotte, North Carolina, where she was a foster child. She has been in the US since. She majored in Biology in college and attended USC School of Medicine as a graduate student in the Department of Biomedical Science, where she completed her Master's Degree in Neuroscience. Abulhawa is the founder of *Playgrounds for Palestine* in 2000 and an NGO that advocates for Palestinian children by building playgrounds in Palestine and UN refugee camps in Lebanon. The first playground was established in early 2002.

Abulhawa has contributed to several anthologies and has published in major and minor US and international newspapers and other periodicals. *Mornings in Jenin* (originally published in 2006 as *The Scar of David*) was her debut novel. It is an international bestseller, published in at least 26 languages, Winner of National Best Book Award for Fiction History in 2007 and Winner of Edna Andrade Fiction and Creative Nonfiction Award. *Mornings*

in Jenin has held the number one position at Amazon.com and on the *New York Times* bestseller list. In 2013, Abulhawa published a collection of poetry entitled "My Voice Sought The Wind" and it has been announced that she completed and sold her second novel manuscript. Her second novel is "The Blue Between Sky and Water" in September 2015. In 2007, a live reading of *The Scar of David* was later reduced to only a book signing by the Barnes & Noble store in Bayside, New York. Barnes and Noble stated that the change was made due to "author safety and a seeming need of sensitivity to the Jewish community, so the title changed into *Mornings in Jenin*."

Mornings in Jenin is interesting because it reveals the chaotic condition in Palestine during and after war from the victim's perspective. This means that the perspective is originally a Palestinian's perspective. Abulhawa states as an author in 2014 as follows:

I wrote it. So, my rating isn't all that relevant to readers, but for what it's worth, it came from a place of love, and I put pieces of my heart in this narrative. (One goodreads.com, 2014)

From the quotation above, the author describes that she wrote the novel by working hard at it since she is the part of the Palestine community. Having experienced the war herself as well as being a war survivor, Abulhawa was able to present a story that appears very realistic. Abulhawa says in the promotional interview of her novel in 2010 that she got the idea to write *Mornings in Jenin* after she spend her time in Jenin camp in 2002. This means that she had experienced by herself how to live in refugee camp and she wanted people from

all over the world to know that living in refugee camp is very bad, not easy - not the same with the reports that people hear from the mass media.

1.1.4 *Mornings in Jenin* (2010)

The novel *Mornings in Jenin* (2010) shows the issue of hiding identity. It encapsulates the misery experienced by a female protagonist, a Palestinian war survivor, named Amal. Hiding identity in this study refers to the protagonist's actions to separate and get rid herself from her painful feelings from the past life. Jenin is a camp refugee of Jewish occupation since 1948. Despite the termination of the war, the character still suffers a lot from the pain left by the war. Not only was she hurt physically by the war – which leaves some scars on her body – but she also greatly suffers emotionally from feeling guilty as a war survivor. She witnesses how her family, relatives and friends get killed in the war while she remains alive. To forget all the misery left by the war and to continue her life and move on, the protagonist realizes that she must make some efforts such as isolating herself from community and inventing a new identity.

First, she isolates from her community. She acts indifferently towards people, especially towards boys. This prompts her to stay away from her best friend, Huda and refuses to marry at the age considered 'normal' by most Palestinian women. Then, she also deters her sense of full motherhood towards her daughter since she is afraid that her daughter will also inherit some of her bad traits and bad luck.

Second, she invents a new identity. She changes her name from Amal to Amy. She lives as Amy in America. The consequence of this action is that she must adjust her identity for being Amy. By adjusting her identity as Amy, she must leave her religious tradition while living in America. She doesn't wear *hijab* to cover her identity. She raises her daughter by playing a role as Amy, an American identity which she created. This forces her to pack away her baggage of past life and tragedy. She lies to her daughter about her husband's death. She lies to her daughter about her older brother's death. She also hides the fact about her Jewish brother, David who is known as Ismael, from her daughter.

1.2. Problem of the Study

There are several issues that can be exposed from Abulhawa's novel, *Mornings in Jenin*. Nevertheless, this study focuses on the efforts or actions of the character to isolate herself from her community by creating 'her own walls' and to invent a new identity in order to get rid of the pain that she has experienced. Hence, there are some research questions that give contribution to revealing the actions of hiding identity in this novel. The questions are:

1. How far does the novel *Mornings in Jenin* (2010) expose the issue of hiding identity?
2. To what extent do the character, setting, and plot (conflict) in *Mornings in Jenin* contribute to revealing the issue of hiding identity?

1.3. Purpose of Study

This study is intended to disclose how the protagonist in Abulhawa's novel *Mornings in Jenin* (2010) reflects the acts of hiding identity through the analysis of the elements of character, setting, and plot (conflict).

1.4. Previous Study

The analysis about *Mornings in Jenin* that focuses on the issues of hiding identity has not been found yet. However, there are two studies that give contribution and inspiration to the writer in analyzing this novel. The first study is written by Ayman M. Abu-Shomar in Australian International Academic Center (2015) entitled *Diasporic Reconciliations of Politics, Love and Trauma: Susan Abulhawa's Quest for Identity in Mornings in Jenin*. The study investigates *Mornings in Jenin* from a diasporic standpoint or position. The analysis is focused on creating diasporic spaces of negotiation and reconciliation that related with the concept of 'roots' and 'routes' from Clifford (1997) in order to show diasporic identity. Thus, the act of negotiation, where identity is involved, is no longer between two discrete positions or vistas, it is rather an inner dialogue informed by disclosed, nonpartisan middle-of-road and clinical locales.

The second study is written by Abdulrahman Al-Ma'amari, et al (2014) entitled *Strangers in My Home The Quest for Identity in Mornings in Jenin*. In this study, the writers examine the manifestations of two types of identity; the personal and the national. The main component of the personal identity construction is memory while the main factors of the national identity are the customs and rituals of everyday life. The writers scrutinize *Mornings in Jenin* as a

novel of memory and remembering. The national identity is based on the narrations of the daily life struggle, misery and resistance of the Palestinian people.

Hence, those two works have contributed and enriched this study. The first study exposes how Susan Abulhawa as the author of *Mornings in Jenin* write her novel based on her own experience and get influence by her diasporic experience in America. The second study analyzes the protagonist's personal and national identity that related to her memory and misery. Unlike those two studies, this study is focused on how the female main character attempts to hide her identity by using Freud's concept of ego-defense mechanism.

1.5. Theoretical Framework

This study deals with the acts of hiding identity by a war survivor to get rid of the pain and misery that she experiences. The analysis about the acts of hiding identity of this novel is related to Freud's concept of ego-defense mechanism. Freud in Ekstrom (2004) states that most of human thought is actually unconscious, otherwise in the sense that it operates beneath the level of cognitive awareness, inaccessible to consciousness and operating too fast to focus on. It is relation of guilty feeling of war survivors which prompted them to get rid of the pain they experienced; their behavior involves activity from the structure of personality. To hide is a deterrence to help one to do self-preservation which works beneath cognitive awareness.

Survivor's guilt occurs as a reaction to get the war survivor away from the memories of their long-term effects of suffering. As a result, they were pushed "to build fences" or to separate in other means hide themselves from their community. These are the ways the war survivor can protect their lives by keeping the guilt under the control of their consciousness. This can be seen from the acts that the war survivor shows as a result of their guilty feelings for remaining alive while others were killed. According to Klages (2006) Freud makes a famous declaration about the ideal relation between consciousness and unconsciousness, predicting that, through psychoanalysis, the 'it' or 'id', or the unconscious, will be replaced by the 'I', or consciousness and self-identity.

Freud claim that the id is made up of innate biological instincts and urges. The id operates on the pleasure principle. It is self-serving, irrational, impulsive, and totally unconscious. The id acts as a power source for the entire psyche, or personality. (Coon:471,2012)

The energy of the acts as a power source for the entire psyche or personally flows from the life instinct. Freud offered humanity's long history of wars and violence as evidence of such urges. Freud explains in Coon:

The ego is sometimes described as the "executive", because it directs energies supplied by the id. The id is like a blind giants whose power is awesome but who must rely on others to carry out orders. The id can only form mental images of things it desires. The ego winds power to direct behavior by relating the desires of the id to external reality. The ego, is guided by the reality principle. One part of superego is called the conscience, reflects actions for which a person has been punished. When standards of the conscience are not met, you are punished internally by guilt feelings. (Coon:471,2012)

From the quotation above, desires derived from the life instinct is the primary energy running the personality. Conflicts within the personality may cause neurotic anxiety or moral anxiety and motivate people to use ego-defense

mechanism. Ego-defense mechanisms may result in healthy or unhealthy consequences depending on the circumstances and frequency which the mechanism is used. In the context of the analysis of this study, it means the standard of the actions for which a person has been punished are not met, so a person is punished internally by guilt feeling, and it takes control of ego-defense mechanism.

The ego-defenses mechanism that uses to analyze the character in this novel is denial defense mechanism.

Denial is the refusal to accept reality or fact, acting as if a painful event, thought or feeling did not exist. It involves blocking external events from awareness. If some situation is just too much to handle, the person just refuses to experience it. It is considered one of the most primitive of the defense mechanisms because it is characteristic of early childhood development. Many people use denial in their everyday lives to avoid dealing with painful feelings or areas of their life they don't wish to admit. (Freud in McLeod, 2009)

The text above shows that denial is the act to avoid dealing with painful feelings or areas of their life they don't wish to admit. While defense mechanisms are often thought of as negative reactions, some of these defenses can be helpful. It can be helpful for the war survivor, the person will continue to deny its existence or truth because it is too uncomfortable to face. This can be seen from the acts that of the war survivors who feel guilty for remaining alive while others were killed and try to get rid of the pain of past life. Hiding their identity is one of the methods to be in denial with painful feelings of their past life.

Many researchers have long believed that self or identity is a product of situations and a shaper of behavior in situations. Identity theory has been used to

examine group phenomena in terms of the attitudes and values held by members of a racial group or age group. Oyserman in Leary (2012) claims that

Identities are the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group membership that define who one is. Identities can be focused on the past what used to be true or one, the present what is true of one now, or the future the person one expects or wished to become, the person one feels obligated to try to become, of the person one fears one may become. (Leary, 2012:69)

From the quotation above we can assume that identities are orienting. Identity makes up one's self-concept variously described as what comes to mind when one thinks of oneself. In the context of this analysis of the novel, identity refers to her thinking of oneself. In other words identity refers to the character's orienting, the act that she created to survive by creating the walls from other people, such as isolating from the community and inventing new identity.

Thus, hiding identity in this study refers to the acts done by The character to get rid of the pain she experienced before. The character tries to keep out of sight by blocking others to have access to her true identity. The character's action to hide her identity is not only done to get rid of the pain of life she has experienced but more importantly to heal the wounds. It is done by isolating herself from her community and inventing new identity.

The study of this novel is supported by text and context based interpretation in order to bring out the case of the act hiding misery. Guerin (2005) says that this approach focuses on the analysis and the interpretation of the text itself. Text-based interpretation means the approach that based on the analysis and interpretation to text itself, which is nothing more than what is contained within the text itself. It focused on point of view and character that related to conflict and setting. Meanwhile, context-based interpretation is the approach that

considers the historical period during which a work was written including the circumstances of culture, history political, and social. It means that the analysis is not only focused on the text itself, but it also involves the phenomenon and circumstances which are existed.

Character is important element to reveal the meaning of this novel. Madden (2002) states that character is participant in the narrative story. He explains that characterization is the creation and development of characters in a work. The author brings characters to life and lets the reader “get to know them” as we know people in our own lives. In literary works, the characters help reader to understand and catch the meaning of the works. The way to analyze the character is taking a focus into character’s action, thoughts, conversations, and the reaction toward conflicts and circumstances. Character is related with conflict. A character that is insecure and self-conscious is likely to react very differently to some situations than a character who is confident and self-absorbed. In this novel the character shows what she does to hide her identity as the impact of her experiences in the past.

The second device that is analyzed is plot by focusing on conflicts. Madden (2002) states that conflict is the struggle of opposing external or internal forces. Conflict is at the heart of every story. There are internal conflicts and external conflicts. The internal conflict is a struggle of opposing forces within a character. The external conflict may be physical (characters against nature) or social (characters against each other or against society). In this novel, the internal conflict is prominent. The external conflict can be seen through the characters and

the people and situations surrounding them. The internal conflict has caused internal conflict to the character. Her experience of living under Israel occupation in camp refugee, Jenin causes inseparable suffering for her. The internal conflicts that occur within her in the novel give contribution in identifying and examining the analysis about the act of hiding identity.

Another element of fictional device that is used to analyze in the novel is setting. Setting also gives contribution in order to reveal the meaning of this novel. Madden (2002) states that setting is more than just physical surroundings. In fiction, setting is the location and the atmosphere of the story. It includes the atmosphere, and atmosphere changes regularly. It relates to the circumstance, condition, situation, location, and atmosphere of the characters in the story. It has a direct and indirect impact on character and conflict. It support and emphasizes the story's meaning. In this novel, the setting focused on the atmosphere, condition, location, and situation of the character. The character is suffered with horrible life under occupation and in America. She lives as refugee under occupation in Jenin. She moves to America as the war survivor whom remained alive while others were killed. That is important to analyze the act of hiding identity.

1.6. Methodology

The analysis of this novel focuses on text and context based-interpretation. Moreover, it is done by exploring some part of fictional devices, such as characters, plot (conflict) and setting. Character and conflicts are used to reveal the acts of hiding identity by analyzing the efforts done by the character. Then, the

setting which deals with the atmosphere, situation, condition, and location in the stor is analyzed in relation with the characters' responses to the setting. This is how meaning is revealed. All of these elements are then analyzed by using and implementing the ego-defense mechanism by Sigmund Freud.