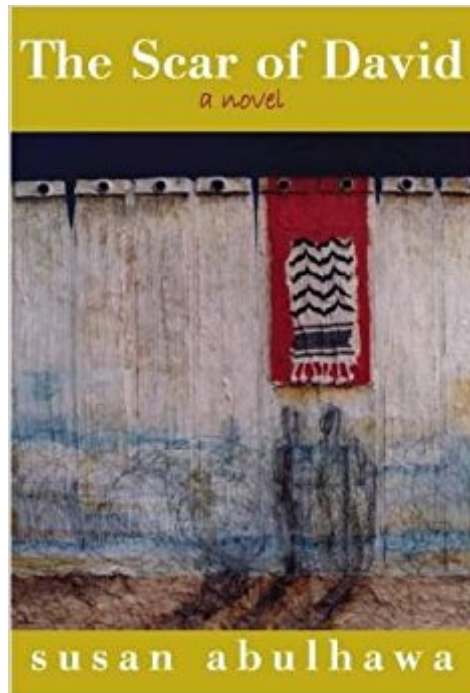




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# The Scar Of David



## Synopsis

The Scar of David is historic fiction about a Palestinian family from the village of Ein Hod, which was emptied of its inhabitants by the newly formed State of Israel in 1948. It is told in the first person by Amal, who is born into that family in a UN-administered refugee camp in Jenin, where her family would eventually die waiting, or fighting, to return to their beloved Palestine. Set in lap of one of the 20 th century's most intractable political conflicts, this novel weaves through history, friendship, love, frayed identity, terrorism, exhaustion of the spirit, surrender, and courage. Three massacres and two major wars provide five corners to this novel: 1. Sabra and Shatila, Lebanon, 1982; 2. US embassy bombing, Beirut, 1983; 3. Refugee camp of Jenin, West Bank, 2002; 4. The Naqbe , Mandate Palestine, 1948; and 5. The Six Day War, Middle East, 1967. During the family's eviction from their ancestral village, Ishmael, Amal's brother is lost in the mayhem of people fleeing for their lives. Just a toddler at the time, Ishmael is raised by a Jewish family and grows up as David, an Israeli soldier. During the 1967 war, Yousef, Amal's eldest brother, comes face to face with David, his brother the Jew. Yousef recognizes his brother by a prominent scar across David's face. The title of this story takes its name from this scar, and assumes other layers of meaning as it is told. The end is the beginning: terrible suffering packaged by Western press into perfidious sound bites, like "the Middle East Conflict," and "War on Terrorism." But through the course of this story, a suicide bomber is given a name, face and life of a man pushed to incomprehensible limits; An Arab girl of pious and humble beginnings escapes her destiny and lives the "American Dream," which her soul cannot bear; An Israeli man becomes tangled in a truth he cannot reconcile, and his identity can find no repose but in the temporary anesthetic of alcohol.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 352 pages

Publisher: Journey Publications; First edition. edition (December 11, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0977207889

ISBN-13: 978-0977207886

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.3 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars 19 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,062,290 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #65 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Literature & Fiction > Biblical Fiction #1862 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre

Fiction > Religious & Inspirational > Historical #3273 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Military

## Customer Reviews

Abulhawa's first novel is an earnest but heavy-handed depiction of the 20th century through Palestinian eyes. The book opens in the Arab village of Ein Hod, outside Jerusalem, as a farmer named Yehya witnesses the destruction of his home in the war following Israel's founding in 1948. The book then follows Yehya's granddaughter, Amal, from her youth in a refugee camp to America (strange but full of opportunity), then her reunion with her family in Lebanon. There she falls in love with a doctor named Majid and becomes pregnant, but returns to America as many of her loved ones become enmeshed in the brutal Lebanese civil war of the 1980s and the Israeli occupation. With the Oslo peace accords, Amal finally returns to the country of her birth, but finds that the situation there remains tense and violent. While Amal's story is undeniably tragic, Abulhawa surrounds her with paper-thin characters, Arab and Jewish alike. The Palestinians want "only to live on their land as they always had," while the Israelis are murderers and baby-snatchers who use the Holocaust to justify their actions. Equal parts clumsy history lesson and melodrama, this book does little to shed light on one of the world's most complex conflicts. (Sept.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

Every now and again a literary work changes the way people think. Abulhawa, 2003 winner of the Edna Andrade Fiction and Creative Nonfiction Award, has crafted a brilliant first novel about Palestine. The book opens in the 1940s, in the small village of Ein Hod, before the forced relocation of residents to the Jenin refugee camp. Once in the settlement, a young girl named Amal Abulhawa becomes the story's focus. Through Amal's eyes, readers see the daily routines of generations of refugees and glimpse the indignities imposed on Palestinians by the Israeli army; they'll also see people fall in love, have babies, and develop an appreciation for poetry and scholarship. While some readers might see this novel as anti-Semitic, it is not. Indeed, Abulhawa goes to great lengths to highlight the universal desire of all people for a homeland. Furthermore, Abulhawa's compassion for American victims of 9/11 and for those who suffered in the Holocaust illuminates what it means to be humane and spiritually generous. The Pennsylvania-based Abulhawa, herself Palestinian, has crafted an intensely beautiful fictionalized history that should be read by both politicians and those interested in contemporary politics. Highly recommended. --Library Journal, June 1, 2006

Susan Abulhawa provides a gripping narrative spanning three generations of Palestinians and with a very impressive interplay of various characters the author puts a human face on the tragedy that has befallen the Palestinians after 1948. Though the book: *Scar of David*- is a novel , one can clearly relate and connect the various events described to the historical facts that have transpired over the past fifty years. I found the character Yousef particularly illuminating. He personifies what can happen after years of humiliation, discrimination, oppression, torture and how when one loses hope they--male or female--can kill others with impunity. This phenomenon was well described in the book: *Dying to Kill* by Robert Pape and I recall watching a documentary of the female Tamil Tiger suicide bomber who blew up the former prime minister of India Mr Rajiv Gandhi. She had also gone through years of humiliation, abuse, seen her family killed and was a willing recruit for the Tamil Tiger suicide brigade. This book is a must read for those who are serious about addressing the long festering Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Helping the Israelis and Palestinians end the conflict will go a long way in reducing the current violence we all suffer from.

At no time in my life has a book had such a firm grip on my heart and soul. The most intriguing aspect of Susan Abulhawa's writing style is her innate ability to make you feel you are in every scene as a witness, resulting in a vast range of emotions including love, joy, sadness, horror, anger, forgiveness, wonderment, but never indifference. Though fictional, the characters soon become real, as if you've known, spoken, and walked with each of them. Susan Abulhawa has an exceptional talent and has given the world a beautiful gift, *The Scar of David*.

Everyone should read Susan Abulhawa's *The Scar of David*. This story of a Palestinian family's journey through four generations of Israeli occupation offers beautiful, balanced, and intensely humanistic insight into the experience of both Palestinians and Israelis. Abulhawa artfully demonstrates how both occupier and occupied fall victim to this conflict, yet she paints a clear picture of the magnitude of its effect on Palestinians - that over and over again Palestinians find themselves at the [...] end of an Israeli or American rifle, in the groping hands of soldiers at checkpoints, and as the targets of missile massacres, always looking over their backs at a homeland razed by bulldozers and overrun by soldiers and settlers. However, what is most impressive is that she attains this degree of complexity around the Palestinian experience without dehumanizing Israelis or minimizing their fears and suffering. Rather, by telling the story as a series of first person narratives punctuated with third person accounts, Abulhawa is able to connect the

personal with the political and give readers the sense that we are all ensnared in the same terrible situation, though its impact is certainly felt differently on each side. Anyone who seeks to understand how this conflict affects the real people who live it every day must read this book, as Abulhawa leaves us with the hope of change and a strong sense of the vastness of what it means to live under and within occupation. But it is not merely the structure and the story of the book that makes it such a good read. Abulhawa's masterful narrative voice, splendid poetic prose, and dialogue that dances alive in a reader's head glued the book to my hands, and I was unable to put it down, often overcome with strong emotional reactions to the characters' experiences. I finished this book in just 24 hours - it is rare to encounter such a compelling read!

susan has woven together the human thread i have never been able to express when sharing my amazed and appalled passions about palestine. the pages of my honored volume are strewn with tears of compassion, heartbreak, primal rage and primal love...but, more importantly, an entrenched awareness of strengthened hope in that, as dr. said desired, a narrative has emerged that will bring a new voice to the ancient, twisted ironies of this deformed oppression. may that voice light in the ear of receptive hearts...for the way to protect the hearts of those yet to be born is to break the glass cover over those who live now in shallow sleep.

This beautifully-written book is based on a true story that reflects the history of Israel and the ethnically-cleansed indigenous population.

SOVIET RUSSIA THE CREATORS OF THE PLO AND THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE by Wallace Edward Brand; <http://www.think-israel.org/brand.russiatheenemy.html> It all started with the creation of a fictitious "Palestinian People" who allegedly demand political self determination. This collective noun was created by the Soviet disinformation masters in 1964 when they created the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the "PLO". The term "Palestinian People" as a descriptive of Arabs in Palestine appeared for the first time in the preamble of the 1964 PLO Charter, drafted in Moscow. The Charter was affirmed by the first 422 members of the Palestinian National Council, handpicked by the KGB. Article 24 of the 1964 PLO Charter addressed to UN stipulates: "Palestinian muslims do not exercise authority over West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and Gaza territories".

•Confessions: Arab leaders like Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi told the Peel Commission in 1937: "There is no such country as 'Palestine'; 'Palestine' is a term the Zionists invented!" In 1946, Arab historian Philip Hitti testified before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry that "there is no

such thing as Palestine in history. In 1977, an executive committee member of the PLO Zahir Muhsein confirmed that there is no such thing as a separate "palestinian" people of Arab descent. In an interview with the Dutch newspaper Trouw in March 31, 1977, he stated the following: "The palestinian people do not exist."

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