International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT)
ISSN: 2617-0299 (Online); ISSN: 2708-0099 (Print)
DOI: 10.32996/ijllt
www.ijllt.org

Original Research Article

The Father-Figure in Fadwa Tuqan's and Yael Dayan's Autobiographies

Dr. Mohammed Hamdan[1], Atheer Zeyada[2]* & Lara A'teeq[3]
[123] *Department of English Language and Literature, An-Najah National University, Nablus, Palestine*
Corresponding Author: Atheer Zeyadah, E-mail: atheerzyadeh@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Article History
Received: May 13, 2020
Accepted: June 28, 2020
Volume: 3
Issue: 6
DOI: 10.32996/ijllt.2020.3.6.15

KEYWORDS

Autobiography, Palestinian women, Social father, Political father, Patriarchy

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the father figure in the autobiographies of the Palestinian poet Fadwa Tuqan (1917-2003) and the Israeli novelist Yael Dayan (1939-present). In the early half of the twentieth century, Nablusi women, exemplified by Fadwa, did not have the chance to participate in the political life until the nakba in 1948. Women subsequently became freer and could gain more access to the social and political life which normally monopolized by patriarchs. In the same year, i.e. 1948, Tuqan's father died, so he was not present later to share the success of his daughter. Hence, the picture of the father that Fadwa draws in her autobiography A Mountainous Journey (1990) is mainly bounded to the domestic life. Dayan, unlike Fadwa, was given the infinite freedom to experience life since childhood. Although most Jewish women in the Israeli community obtained the same opportunities at the time, she was more privileged because she was the daughter of the famous Israeli leader Moshe Dayan. In her autobiography My Father, His Daughter (1986), Yael talks extensively about her father's political position and how it affected her life negatively and positively. This paper henceforth sheds light on dominant social and political patriarchal ideologies in the two autobiographies and how they are represented differently, that is: Tuqan's social father and Dayan's political father.

Introduction

Complete devotion to one's country is usually combined with the feeling of superiority over other countries, namely, nationalism. Oxford Dictionary defines nationalism as the strong feeling of love or pride that one feels for their own country (1998, 495). The notion of nationalism, however, has opponents and proponents. Peter Joseph (1979-present), an American film producer, opposes the concept of nationalism and according to him nationalism is "just racism with flag" (2009, 129). To Joseph, a nationalist is not dissimilar to a racist who considers the people of his ethnicity as the one and only race that deserves to live in this universe. The superiority of the racist generates a feeling of animosity toward the other races and eventually leads to destructive wars. Another opponent is Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), a British philosopher and social critic, who defines nationalism as "the willingness to kill or to be killed for trivial reasons" (1928, 153). Russell sees nationalism as a means for legitimatizing killing, and this legitimacy is geared by the extreme love for one's nation. Unfortunately, this intimate love leads to unreasonable killing.

On the other hand, some remarkable political figures such as Mummer Al-Gaddafi (1942-2011), the former President of Libya, support the extreme loyalty to one's nation. Al-Gaddafi insists on the importance of national feelings and considers nationalism as the basic pillar in the foundation of a strong nation as he sees that "nations whose nationalism are subject to ruin" (1988, 78). As noted, views vary amongst opponents and advocators of nationalism. However, there is a third group which prioritizes humanity over the ideology of nationalism. One of these people is the English writer Bryant H.G Wells (1866-1946) who neglects nationalism as a form of unity and replaces it with humanity by shortly saying: "our nationality is mankind" (2004, 644). A supporter of Wells is the American author Bryant H. McGill (1969-present) who criticizes nationalism and focuses on its fatal

results which destroy humanity. He demonstrates the previous point by saying that "extreme nationalism objectifies and dehumanizes those from other countries" (2012, 27).

Regardless of the previous different views towards the ideology of nationalism, nationalistic individuals still deeply love their motherlands and continue to glorify their national symbols such as the national anthem and the flag. Mostly, this strong affiliation to the motherland is more crystal clear among the occupied nations; the existence of an intruder who wants to occupy the land and its people increases their belonging to the country even more. A Palestinian sets a case in point for the absolute devotion for one's nation. The Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish writes about the relation between a man and his motherland in his poem *Mudhakarat Jurh Filastini* ("Memories of a Palestinian Wound") by saying:

My homeland is not a travelling bag	وطني ليس حقيبة
Nor I am a passing traveler	وأنا لست مسافر
It is who am the lover	إنني العاشق والأرض حبيبة
The land is my beloved (1984, 153-157)	

In these lines, Darwish depicts his excessive love towards his motherland by referring to it as his beloved. Khalid A. Sulaiman points out that in the poetry of Palestinian poets such as Darwish's "the symbol of the beloved [Palestine] has developed still more and become fussed with that of the mother and that of the land in such a way that the three become one" (1984, 157). Referring to the Palestinian woman (mother or beloved) as a symbol of the land indicates that both are closely associated. According to Shella K. Katz, productivity is the shared characteristic between the land and the female figures. She concludes her book *Women and Gender in Early Jewish and Palestinian Nationalism* that

> when nationalists imagined the sacred connections of men to land, they feminized the land as a mother, lover, and bride. Both Palestinian and Jewish men imagined a female land and a barren land, in need of their blood and sweat to become productive. As a (male) people became wedded to the (female) land, sacrifice of individual men's lives morphed into rebirth of an entire people (2003, 93).

By studying Palestinian and Israeli societies from the second half of the nineteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century, Katz suggests that in early Jewish and Palestinian nationalisms Israeli and Palestinian men share the same attitude towards women. They believe that a woman is only an object and her role is limited to the domain of motherhood. In the Palestinian patriarchal society and the Israeli masculinist community, women's lives should only be dedicated to their houses, children, and husbands. The majority of women submitted to the social ideology and continued their lives as dictated by male figures, whilst others defied the patriarchal and masculinist society by adopting different means of self-expression, and one of these means is writing. Writing is a mode of self-escapism from the bitter reality by which the writer reveals what is suppressed inside herself. Autobiography, as a genre, is the most self-expressive form; Gusdorf defines it as "the mirror in which the individual reflects his own image" (1998, 148).

Among those who choose the autobiography as a means of self-portrayal are the Palestinian poet Fadwa Tuqan (1917-2003) and the Israeli writer Yael Dayan (1939-present). Tuqan's and Dayan's autobiographies, *A Mountainous Journey* (1990) and *My Father, His Daughter* (1986) respectively, typify the status of Israeli and Palestinian women who lived through that period of time. Through their autobiographies, one can find the differences between how the society defines women and how they define themselves. During the time the life of Israeli and Palestinian women was governed by the patriarchs of the family, so they occupied a reasonable space of their writing since men had a large impact on their lives. Hence, this paper aims at comparing the two autobiographies focusing on the symbolism of the father as the supreme authority in the traditional family. Fadwa and Yael lived in a time where the father was positioned as the center and the leader of the family. The father monopolized the process of decision-making and ignored the desires of the other members especially female dependents.

By observing the titles of the two autobiographies, it can be inferred that Fadwa's and Yael's fathers had a numerous influence on their daughters' lives. Fadwa chose *A Mountainous Journey* as a title to describe the obstacles she had to face every day by living in a patriarchal community. Dayan, likewise, picked the title *My Father, His Daughter* to imply that her father had a great impact on her personality, and she used the phrase *his daughter* to express her attachment to him in a way or another. Such a comparative study aims at finding some cultural communication among both societies. The rarity of studies which discuss the

cultural similarities and differences between Israeli and Palestinian communities is the reason that shaped our primary thought of this subject.

Methodology

This paper is based on the reading of two autobiographies: the first is *A Montanans Journey* (1990) by the Palestinian poet Fadwa Tuqan (1917-2003), the second is *My Father, His Daughter* (1986) by the Israeli novelist Yael Dayan (1939-present). The paper aims at comparing between the different representations of the father figure as portrayed by the two female writers. This research is divided into two parts; Tuqan's social father and Yael's political father.

Tuqan's description of her father is mostly a generic reflection of the traditional Palestinian family in the mid-twentieth century, in which the father practices severe authority over the family members especially women. Unlike her Palestinian counterpart, Yael violates the norms of the social ideology and gets access to the political life taking advantage of her father's military position in the state. Despite the differences between Palestinian and Israeli societies, Tuqan and Yael achieve a mutual cultural understanding through their writings, particularly through their autobiographies. Tuqan is an oppressed woman who asks for freedom and self-identification. Yael also asks for equality between males and females in the Israeli society. They both rebel against the patriarchal society and refuse to be marginalized in the domestic life. Thus, feminist autobiographies or self-writing, in this case, serve as a tool of examining the status of the Israeli and Palestinian women within their patriarchal societies. Throughout this research, we employ a comparative methodology to read and analyze cultural similarities between both writers.

Tuqan's social father

> Writing autobiography means violating privacy, and in Arab-Islamic society, where private life, family life, inner feelings and thoughts are sacrosanct, this is a risky undertaking particularly for woman (Odeh, 1998, 263)

Being an insurgent woman in an Arabic society is not easy where everything is monopolized by men. Tuqan's autobiography is one of the most important autobiographies in modern Arabic literature; people were surprised when a woman like Tuqan wrote and published her life in a book since it was considered as a rebellion against her patriarchal society. Yet the lack of freedom induces women's writings as a technique of self-defense. Therefore, Tuqan wrote her autobiography as a way to invite readers to take a look into her experience, suffering, and resistance of choiceless life. Often, women's autobiographies reveal things which are beyond the writer herself; she talks about the reality that women have experienced in her society.

In her autobiography, *A Mountainous Journey*, Tuqan shows the struggle of women in a conservative society which always gives the superiority to men over women in all domains. Men are allowed to think, learn, and work, whereas women are isolated from the outside world. Despite the fact that Tuqan was born to a wealthy family which can offer all of her material needs, her family could not give her what she really wanted; they lived in a spacious home, but this home was cramped for Tuqan, the men owned everything in that home even women themselves. Katherine Whitehorn argues that

> Women have real difficulty in knowing if anything is their own exact territory. In one sense a woman controls the whole house: but in another she may feel she owns nothing personally but her side of the wardrobe. (1987, 6)

According to Tuqan, her home was like a prison "in this house, within its high walls that shut off the harem society from the outside world, where i was buried alive, my oppressed childhood, girlhood and a great part of my youth were spent" (1990, 36). Women were not allowed to go outside their homes without men's permission, and being imprisoned made her want to fly to prove herself.

Living in a community which treats women as objects and ignores their existence was a major reason behind Tuqan's suffering in her life. Dalya Abudi said that "in Arab societies if we are asked about the identity of a certain woman, we would reply that this is the wife, the daughter, or the sister of so and so… what is a woman? She is the female of the man" (2010, 5) In such a patriarchal society, women do not have an independent identity because their identity cannot be defined without referring to the "man". In her autobiography, Tuqan mentions her family male figures, the father and brothers, who affected her life positively and negatively. The father plays the main role in her suffering; he uses his paternal authority to control all women in his family. Tuqan starts her autobiography by saying: "I emerged from the darkness of the womb into a world unprepared to accept me. My mother had tried to get rid of me during the first months of her pregnancy. Despite repeated attempts, she failed" (1990, 12). Tuqan's suffering started even before she came to life or became conscious of it: her mother tried to get rid

of her before birth. Unfortunately, Tuqan was born to a mother who considered her as a jinx, a person who brought bad luck, since many terrible accidents happened to the family in the same year of Tuqan's birth. Tuqan states:

> I sensed a hidden thread of unhappiness running through her. After I had grown up, I realized that the source of that hidden unhappiness was the social restraint and subjugation imposed on the women in our household. (1990, 22)

Tuqan might have thought that her mother contributed to her misery, but the mother was similarly a victim of the patriarchal society in which giving birth to a girl was a bad omen. Tuqan's mother also suffered from the restrictions imposed on her by the men of the family, and she was prevented from having her own opinion. Accordingly, the mother's personality affected her daughter's personality; the mother raised her daughter in the same way she was raised, the deprived has nothing to offer. Later on, some changes happened inside the Palestinian society which allowed women to remove their veils. Tuqan's mother was the first woman in her society who removed it: "mother was the first woman of her generation in Nablus to remove the veil, and from that moment she began to breathe the air of freedom" (1990, 25). Her removal of the veil, in the metaphorical sense, is a feeling of liberty and being rebellious against the society which burdened her with many restrictions. No one can deny the importance of the father in his daughter's life; he is the only one who can encourage her to develop her identity. Linda Nielson, a Danish professor, describes how a father influences his daughter:

> the father influences his daughter's academic and vocational success in both direct and indirect ways. Indirectly, by promoting her self-confidence, he enhances her chances for success. Directly, he mentors her, conveying and modeling skills that promote her success at school and work. (2012, 77)

However, in Tuqan's case, it is completely different. Her father was part of a patriarchal and unfair society which did not give women their right of self-expression and creativity. Like other men at that time, the father did not speak to her directly; "often when he wanted to tell me something, he would use the third person, even if I were there where he could see me" (49). The father did not call his daughter by using her name. Victoria Cook argues that "names are capable of providing verification; they have the power to distinguish, substantiate and confirm, and above all they confer identity and establish identification. To be named, therefore, is to belong, to be located" (2005, 8). Tuqan's father, however, eliminated her identity. The relationship between the father and his daughter was abridged on asking her to write political poetry which she did not fancy, because she was deprived of any political freedom and voice. As a result, the relationship between Tuqan and her father was dominated by silence. The father treated her as if she was nothing; he did not listen to her voice and she was not allowed to say "no". Education in that era was really difficult for women: Tuqan's father allowed her to join school but an incident affected her life. When a sixteen-year-old boy gave her a flower, her brother Yusuf deprived her of going to school where she wanted to prove herself. All of these actions promoted repression and objectification in Tuqan's life. She looked for her self-identification which could not be found without taking actions, but how could a woman living in such conditions act when she was even prevented to step outside the door?

A war started between Tuqan and herself which affected her to have a dual personality. On the one hand, she submitted to the traditions of her society and she was afraid of what people might say about her. On the other hand, she wanted to rebel against that society: "anyone who grows up in an environment of secret police surveillance and oppressive family authority will emerge with a dual psyche" (1990, 28). When a woman goes against the flow, the first obstacle she will face is the family especially the men of her family. Nawar Al-Hassan Golley, a professor in English and gender and women's studies at the American University of Sharjah, points out:

> in fact, Tuqan raises a vital issue that many feminists, even today and even in the west have not been able to resolve. It is the dilemma that women face when wanting to rebel against the very source of their oppression, only to find out that the first people they are estranged from are family members, those supposedly closet to them. (2010, 121)

All the roads leading to Tuqan's freedom were thus closed and she had no choice. Tuqan's only way to get rid of her family tyranny is by committing suicide as a way to revenge: "suicide was the only way I could take back the personal freedom that had been taken from me. I wanted to express my rebellion against them by committing suicide" (50). It is worth mentioning that in all of Tuqan's autobiography she did not say the name of her father, due to the fact that her father's role throughout her life was nothing more than a biological father who shared nothing with Tuqan but his genes. Tuqan's ideology about men remained the same: they were all despots and oppressors. This was what her father represented for her, until the return of her brother Ibrahim who changed her thought. In this respect, Tuqan writes:

> my love to Ibrahim remained a constant source of inward distress throughout my attachment to him during his short life, my joy at the presence of this loving brother in my life sometimes made me tremble with fear, from my exaggerated dread of his dying young. (1990, 104)

Ibrahim was the turning point in Tuqan's life, since he was the only one who listened to her and noticed her existence. Ibrahim not only taught her how to write poetry but he was also an intellectual brother and friend at the same time. Despite the presence of the father in her life, he did not show any affection when he dealt with her, so Tuqan started searching for another substitute father: "the child searching for another father to clasp her close in his arms, found the lost father in the first present and the first kiss accompanying it" (1990, 52). Tuqan found in Ibrahim everything she had always wanted to be. Therefore, Ibrahim replaced her present absent father.

All human beings experience some difficult life-times and lose their loved ones in life. Tuqan is a poet who speaks about death and loss in her poems, and this is due to the difficult circumstances where she lived. In 1941, Tuqan lost her dear brother Ibrahim which affected her life hugely; she cried days and nights and wrote many elegies to project feelings of sadness. She articulated that "something inside me broke, the agony of orphan hood overwhelmed me" (103). Many critics such as Wael B.Hallaq, Kamal Abdel-Malek and Issa J.Boullata, a group of prominent scholars of Arabic literature, found similarity between Tuqan and Al-khansaa. In their edited collection of essays, Terri DeYoung argues that

> All modern Arab women writers would have found it difficult to avoid confronting at one time or another the ambivalent legacy of al-khansaa. But one, in particular, has been challenged by the paradigm because of certain incidental similarities between her own life history and the life of al-khansaa. This is the contemporary Palestinian poet Fadwa Tuqan. (2000, 51)

Losing her brother makes the poet lament him uniquely , thus idealizing them. After a few years, in 1948 specifically, Tuqan's father died. However, the death of Tuqan's brother's was more painful than her father's death. She considered herself like an orphan after Ibrahim's death: "at the time father passed away I was going through a deep psychological crisis caused by the severe emotional repression that I had endured all these years…however, I missed him severely later on when the winds of the family problems began to blow our way" (112). After many attempts to write an elegy to her father she managed to write "A life" (1948):

At night a phantom appears
My father cleaves the curtain of the unknown,
His eyes shadowed by sorrow,
When my tears pour out,
He leans on me, we weep together
I beg him, 'Come back
In your lingering absence –
Who'll shelter us?' (1990, 207)

In her poem entitled "A life" (1948), Tuqan expresses her need for the presence of the father in her life although she didn't love him. Yet she did hate him, too. To her, the father is a "tent" to protect the family from humiliation; after her father's death, Tuqan started writing political poetry. She declares: "eventually my tongue was freed. I wrote the patriotic poetry to which Father had so often wished to see me dedicate myself in place of Ibrahim" (1990, 113). As if her father's death freed her.

In her difficult journey, Tuqan has become a symbol for the ambitious and independent woman who manages to prove herself despite of severe social circumstances in her life. Tuqan overcomes the traditions in her patriarchal society and turns socially imposed isolation to rebellious poetic actions.

Her aristocratic family represented by her father made her life wretched, and this affected her to be quiet, antisocial and silent. In the end, Tuqan confirms that silence doesn't imply weakness; silence is a sign of power.

Dayan's political father

Yael's *My father, his Daughter* is not only an autobiography that throws light on the writer's character or on her father's character but also on the father-daughter relationship which brought both together politically. From the beginning, Yael addresses the reader and clarifies her intention behind writing her autobiography that is ''an attempt to depict a relationship of four decades between a father and a daughter, from birth to a mature emotional and spiritual connection'' (Dayan 1985, 2).

Through her autobiography, Yael tries to encapsulate Moshe Dayan's life from birth to death focusing on the 42 years of fatherhood. As a participant in Moshe's life, she gives a subjective description of him. This subjectivity provides an intimate portrait of her father which might clash with the portrait drawn by others. By giving her one-sided truth in describing her father, Yael provides the readers with a new portrait of Moshe Dayan, the father and the leader.

On writing about her father, she describes the social and political incidents altogether. Political events, mainly, are more dominant in her autobiography. She shows that her father's great indulgence in the political and military domains did not happen overnight. He was born to one of the pioneering families who established the state of Israel. S. Giora Shoham describes the pioneers as '' hardy, rugged and tough'' and ''their only strength was their will, the will for self-fulfillment through hard annual labor, and their single-minded battle to implement the goals of Zionism'' (1979, 139). Therefore, at the age of fourteen, the concepts of military and self-defense were engraved in his mind after joining the Haganah (literary translated as "defense"). When the Haganah was formed in 1920, The Labor-Zionists viewed it as

> an inseparable part of a wider ideal of reconstructing Jewish life in the Land of Israel, based on humanistic-socialistic principles of justice, righteousness and social solidarity. Along with their commitment to stand armed against any hostile attacks, they also saw their mission as that of creating a new society of farmers and workers who would subdue the land by the sweat of their brows. (Gal 1986, 3)

So, as an Israeli teenager who lived during that era, Moshe was obliged to learn how to be a farmer and a soldier. Dayan explains: ''he was lost in the intricate romances of Dostoevsky's characters rather than in farm chores'' (1985, 27). While his involvement with the Haganah and the military service was growing with the passage of time, the devotion and hard work in military reached its peak by 1967 when ''the 1967 Six-Day War turned the charismatic general into an international hero'' (Rosenthal, 2003, 335). Hence in *My Father, His Daughter*, Yael describes her life as the daughter of a national hero within the Israeli masculinist society.

Luckily, Yael was born to a family who welcomed her genially. She was given enough attention and space to discover and express herself. She got her education like other children did, and was thus privileged because of her father's position. Moshe was unable to separate his social life from the political one as Yael writes: "we were his family, this was his life, and he didn't wish or know how to separate the two" (1985, 70). Yet Moshe's disability in distinguishing between the two lives exposed Yael to a larger world that opened the horizon for her, a world governed and ruled by males. The older she gets the more she wants to be a part of this world. In order to occupy a place within the masculinist space, Yael takes her father's side and associates herself with him by identifying herself as *His Daughter*. On the other hand, she devalues her mother and connects her personality with "lack of confidence" (1985, 29). Talking mother side, Yael would never live the excitement that she experienced with her father. One of Yael's most influential experiences was when she accompanied her father on military excursions in the desert of Negev where she was "the only female, the only child around, and I felt honored, as if allowed a glimpse of the world of giants'' (1985, 79). In the desert, Yael was the only woman who experienced what was denied to other women and only monopolized by males. By observing her father's job as a commander of the army where he practiced power on the soldiers, Yael considered her father as a "model of subjectivity that valorizes autonomy and separation" because he introduced her to the world of patriarchy. (Bina Freiwald, 2005, 183)

Though she admires her father as the person who opened horizons of freedom for her, it was not easy at the same time to live under the shadow of Israel's most famous soldier. When she was a child, she could not resist to be referred to as Moshe Dayan's daughter, but when she became an adult and financially independent, she wanted separation from her father's identity. Through writing, Yael searched for independence and hoped to change the familiar portrait of the Israeli women as a mere gun-holder or a soldier. When her first novel, *New Face in the Mirror* (1959) was published, Yael wrote: "I was referred to as the "general's daughter", the "Israeli Sagan", and the "woman-soldier-writer", all irrelevant titles where my writing was concerned, but door opens" (1985, 152). Feldman explains the truth behind all the titles mentioned by Yael by suggesting that Yael's novel "projected a female macho stereotype that in reality was neither "feminist" nor that common" (2000 ,267). Yael tried to show the world her new reflection in the mirror, but all she was offered was another familiar portrait of an Israeli dependent female. The success she experienced after the publishing of her novel in the United States did not receive attention among Israeli critics. Yael states: "I was anything from a "traitor" to a ''deserter'' (1985, 155). Ayala Emmett points out that "in countries such as the United States individualism and self-reliance are exemplary citizenship, in Israel communal approval and collective legitimating are socially, culturally, and psychologically crucial for the individual" (1996, 14). Yael's choice of identifying herself apart from the Israeli community classified her as a traitor and the novel written in English was dismissed as ''kitsch for export'' (1985, 155). Meanwhile, Moshe supported his daughter and encouraged her.

The image of Moshe as a national hero and a loving father is always distorted by his infidelities. Yael certainly blames her father for betraying her mother. She writes: "history often blames women for everything" while men are the ones to be blamed, since they choose to be cooperative "victims'' (1985, 220). By connecting her father with freedom of choice, she associates him with subjectivity while her father objectifies the woman he used to date. Yael suggests that her father's objectification of women is due to his nature and upbringing:

> My father was a patriarch. He didn't mind who was in the kitchen, as long as somebody was there, and he didn't resent the ideas of women working at anything. He wasn't concerned with questions of equality and took it for granted that the last word was his. Not because he knew better, or felt superior, but being in charge was natural to him and unquestionable. My mother's lack of confidence and natural humility served both of them well. He was the master, the supportive shoulder, the shelter, while she was able to assert herself, work, and be independent. They both knew that his needs, his desires and comforts and plans would come first with her. (1985, 75)

Moshe as a patriarch categorizes women as secondary in the society and is guaranteed authority over them. In this patriarchal society, men see themselves as controllers, while women exist to be only beside them. Therefore, females are not allowed to obtain the same opportunities as men. Yael expresses her suffering from being a part of the Israeli patriarchal society by saying "[Though] I was in my last year of high school, alert and political-minded, […] father didn't seek my opinion, or consult with me or treat me as an equal" (1985, 105). Though Moshe loved his daughter and was proud of her, he never waited or wanted her opinion, because by nature he did not see her as equal. He considered himself as the center while Yael and her mother were only supporters of the hero's future. Simona Sharoni explains the origin of the unequal distribution of roles in the Israeli patriarchal society by saying:

> historically, the constant need to guard against military attacks has positioned ''National Security" as the leading imperative in Israeli collective identity, in which men are portrayed as the protectors of the state and the women only as supporters to the superior male role, in the image as the dutiful mother keeping the home front. (1995, 147)

The need to protect the country militarized women, but this militancy is limited to protecting the home front. Males, participated in the battlefield and were rewarded and glorified. Females were however marginalized and stayed in the shadow of the family males: their role was symbolic in which they produced national heroes to protect the nation. Sasson-Levy explains the previous argument, holding that "as women are barred from expressing their commitment to the state through performance on the battlefield, they are not perceived as men's partners in the ultimate obligation to the state, and therefore, are not entitled to the same rights and privileges" (2003, 442). When Moshe led the victory of the Six-Day War in 1967, all of his mistakes were gone with the wind; he was crowned as Israel's national hero. Yael writes: "it was not a mere coincidence, that the nation's and my father's finest hour, which was a turning point, produced my happiest moments and days'' (1985, 194). Freiwald examines the both the daughter's and the father's autobiographies (*The story of my life*, 1975):

> in Yael's narrative (as in her father's), the highest peak is the victorious ending of the Six Day War, representing a convergence of personal and national high points: her father's great military; her most intense experience of national service (as a war reporter); and meeting her husband to be, an army officer many years in her senior. (2005, 184-85)

Regardless of her father's domestic personality in objectifying women, Yael acknowledges that one of her happiest moments in life was the moment which brought her together with Moshe. Moshe was a hero for Yael and the state at the same time. The former Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, highlights the importance of Dayan as a political figure by saying that ''Moshe Dayan undoubtedly had a veto right on political issues, and then was no chance of clarifying matters without reaching an understanding with him" (1979, 183). Moshe was able to hold the title of Israel's hero until 1973, the Yom Kippur War. After the war, he was detained as a "murderer" by the families of war victims. In describing the impact of the Yom Kippur War, Yael says: "the Yom Kippur War caught us off-guard. Bathing in self-indulgence and carrying the self-image of 1967 supermen to untoward extremes, we were not ready for the earthquake that struck us" (1985, 221). On describing the effects of the 1973 War, Evans likens the Israeli defeat in The Yom Kippur War with the disastrous attack on Pearl Harbor in which both the Israelis and the Americans faced an unexpected defeat (1993, 213). Unlike 1967 War, which turned Moshe into a hero, the Yom Kippur War transferred Moshe into a villain. Coinciding with the war, Moshe got married to Rahel who was one of his mistresses while he was still married to Yael's mother. The war and his new wife changed Moshe's personality. Yael was one of those who were

surprised by Moshe's transformation. In Moshe's last days, he turned into a materialistic person who cared about a future which might exclude him. Yael writes: "money became a near-obsession at a time when he needed money least" (1985, 254). On October 16, 1981, Moshe passed away leaving behind many questions to answer. He, in other words, left Yael pondering why he made his second wife a priority over his children. Her search for answers does not have to do with her father's money; it is rather an obsession with knowing how much Moshe loved her.

My Father, His Daughter is Yael's way of describing the life of an Israeli woman in search for self-identification. Through the pages of the book, she shares the ups and downs of being the daughter of a well-known military hero who stands as an example of subjectivity. She exemplifies how much the journey towards subjectivity can be difficult due to social and political constraints. By sharing her life with the public, she encourages women to rebel against the social and political suppression in order to achieve women's independence.

Conclusion

This thesis aimed at making comparisons between the role of the father in Tuqan and Dayan's autobiographies and the impact he had on their lives. The status of the woman in Palestinian and Israeli societies is, to an extent, similar. What is similar here is that women in both societies struggle with and fight against deprivation and oppression. This paper's main purpose was to analyse the two autobiographies *A Mountainous Journey* and *My Father, His Daughter*, focusing on the symbolism of the father in both and how the father affected his daughter's life. The father played the main role in both writers' lives. To Tuqan, her father was responsible for her suffering in life by neglecting her existence whilst Dayan's father was a special father who always supported his daughter and showed her affection, despite his infidelities. Tuqan's and Dayan's writings call for the elimination of sexual discrimination. The two female writers textually affirmed the empowerment of women and their vital presence through turning themselves into subjects via autobiographical writing.

As mentioned before, Tuqan felt free after the death of her father. Based on the findings of this study, further research could make comparisons between Tuqan's writings before and after the death of her father to see how these writings differ in style and to see if this freedom could be reflected in her writings.

References

[1] Abudi, D. (2010). *Mothers and Daughters in Arab Women's Literature*. The Family Frontier. BRILL.
[2] Boullata, I. J., Abdel-Malek, K., & Hallaq, W. B. (2000). *Tradition, modernity, and postmodernity in Arabic literature: Essays in honor of professor Issa J. Boullata*. Leiden: Brill.
[3] Cook, V. (2005). *Exploring Transnational Identities in Ondaatje's Anil's Ghost*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.
[4] Darwīsh, M. (1994). *Diwan Mahmoud Darwish*. Beirut : Al-Awda.
[5] Dayan, Y. (1985). *My father, His Daughter*. London: George weidenfeld and Nicolson.
[6] Emmett, A. (1996). *Our Sisters' Promised Land: Women, Politics, and Israeli-Palestinian Coexistence*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
[7] Evans, E. N. (1993). *The lonely days were Sundays: Reflections of a Jewish southerner*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
[8] Feldman, Y. S. (2000). "From the Madwoman in the Attic to the Woman's Room: The American Roots of Israeli Literary Feminism". *Israeli Studies* 5 (1): 266-286.
[9] Freiwald, B. T. (2005). "Gender, Nation, and Self-Narration: Three Generations of Dayan Women in Palestine/Israel." Eds. Marlene Kader et. al. *Tracing the Autobiographical*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier UP. pp. 165-189.
[10] Gal, R. (1986). *A portrait of the Israeli soldier*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
[11] Golley, N. (2010). *Reading Arab Women's Autobiographies: Shahrazad Tells Her Story*. Austen: University of Texas Press.
[12] Joseph, P. (2009). *The Zeitgeist Movement: Observations and Responses: Activist orientation guide.*
[13] Katz, S. H. (2003). *Women and Gender in Early Jewish and Palestinian Nationalism*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.
[14] McGill, B. (2012). *Voice of Reason: Speaking to the Great and Good Spirit of Revolution of Mind.* Sarasota, FL: Paper Lyon.
[15] Nielsen, L. (2012). *Father-daughter relationships: Contemporary research and issues*. New York: Routledge Academic.
[16] Odeh, N. (1998). "Coded Emotions: The Description of nature in Arab Women's Autobiographies." Robin Ostel, Ed de Moor, and Stefan Wilds, eds. *Writing the Self, Autobiographical Writing in Modern Arabic Literature*. London: Saqi. pp. 263-271.
[17] Qaddafi, M., & Christman, H. M. (1988). *Qaddafi's Green Book*. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Book.
[18] Rabin, Y. (1979). *The Rabin memoirs*. Boston: Little, Brown.
[19] Rosenthal, D. (2003). *The Israelis: Ordinary people in an extraordinary land*. New York: Free Press.
[20] Russell, B. (1928). *Sceptical Essays*. New York: W.W. Norton.
[21] Sasson-Levy, O. (2003). "Feminism and Military Gender Practices: Israeli Women Soldiers in "Masculine" Roles." *Sociological Inquiry, 73* (3): 440-465 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1475-682X.00064/pdf>
[22] Shoham, S. G. (1979). *The myth of Tantalus: Ascaffolding for an ontological personality theory*. St. Lucia, Q.: University of Queensland Press.
[23] Smith, S., & Watson, J. (1998). *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A reader*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

[24] Sulaiman, K. A. (1984). *Palestine and Modern Arab poetry*. London: Zed Books.
[25] Ṭūqān, F., Kenny, O. E., & Nye, N. S. (1990). *A mountainous journey: An autobiography*. St. Paul, MN: Graywolf Press.
[26] Warn, H. (1998). *The Oxford dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[27] Wells, H. G. (2004). *Outline of History: The Roman Empire to the Great War*. New York : Barnes & Noble.
[28] Whitehorn, K. (1987). *What's ours is really mine*. Observer, 4 October.