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Trauma, Female Body, and Self-Conceptualization in Rabih

Alameddine's I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapters (2001)

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Declaration

We hereby announce that all the ideas consisted and developed in this dissertation are thoroughly resulted from our investigation and hard work. All references and sources that have been used are faithfully provided, whenever necessary to the work.

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Dedication

This modest work is dedicated to our dear parents, our supervisor Dr. Sonia KHERIF, our lovely sisters, brothers, and all our friends.

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We would like to express our honest appreciation to our supervisor Dr. KHERIF for providing us with the useful sources and support. We wish to acknowledge our gratitude to our family who never fail to offer love, encouragement and support.

Abstract

The current dissertation probes into the traumatizing experience of the Lebanese people after the civil war through a meticulous scrutiny of Rabih Alameddine's *I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapters* (2001). Particularly speaking, this research demonstrates the repercussions of PTSD and how they are manifested through Alameddine's characters and how the novel sheds light on the healing process of the traumatized people through the character Sarah. This study is divided into two chapters. Relying on both Cathy Caruth and Renee Fredrickson's theories of trauma and repressed memories, the first chapter analyses the overwhelming and the horrific experiences that are reflected on both the body and the mind of a survivor. The second chapter, which is based on Carl Jung's concept of individuation, takes a scrupulous look at the human psyche in the process of overcoming trauma. Furthermore, the study concludes that through the characters, Alameddine has successfully represented the PTSD results and effects on Lebanese people.

Keywords: Individuation, Lebanon, Trauma, Jung, Civil War.

Table of Content

Declaration.....	I
Dedication	II
Acknowledgements	III
Abstract	IV
General Introduction.....	1
Chapter One : Trauma and Female body	
1. Trauma and its Discrepancies: Freudian Reading... ..	8
2. Cathy Caruth's Theory of Trauma : Continuities and Discontinuities....	10
3. <i>I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapters</i> : The Return of the Past	12
4. Detachment and Trauma: Sarah's Case	13
5. Silenced Grievances: Janet and Lamia's Cases	16
6. The Repressed Memories.....	18
7. Sarah's Body Finally Speaks	20
Chapter Two: Self-Conceptualization	
1. A Movement Toward the Depths of Personality... ..	22
2. The Process of Realizing the Self	23
3. Sarah's Recovery Journey	27
4. Writing a Catharsis	31
5. Disillusionment and Reality... ..	36
General Conclusion	39
Work Cited	41

Abstract (Arabic).....	46
Abstract (french)	47

General Introduction

The post-independence period in Lebanon coincided with the agreement of sharing governing authority among Muslim and Christian groups to solve the national impediments democratically. Few years later, the Palestinian war exploded due to the Israeli invasion, and the issue of refugees emerged in 1948. Palestinians were using Lebanon as fleeing assault against Israel (Mohti 50). This made the opportunity for Israel to start assaulting the Palestinian militants. As a result, the most complex, bloodshed and long-lasting war convulsed Lebanon due to the agreement's failure in 1975 considering that "the Lebanese conflict created conditions which encouraged further bloodshed" (Gaub 1). It was an accumulation of both internal struggles, that contributed the tension between Christian and Muslims and, and international conflicts, which encompassed both Syrian and Israeli occupation. Lebanon has been through a cruel and bloody war; loss of faith is mostly demonstrated through the negative sentiments of the natives. Emigration and exile were the only solution for many Lebanese people in order to overcome the abominable conditions, such as crime and rape. However, the traumas still appear in their daily lives even after changing space.

Due to wars and conflicts among the world's countries, diaspora came to light as a massive population's fragmentation from its own territory. Similarly, the Lebanese diaspora emerged during the civil war as waves of immigration: hundreds of Lebanese individuals were forced to leave their homes, villages and towns to more secure countries (Tabar 5). Among them, artists and writers were dispersed between home and exile, which led to sense of alienation, displacement and nostalgia in their writings.

Diasporic literature encompasses the idea of differentiation of a writer's 'homeland' from the 'host land', and how their writings were affected by the complex relationship between exile and homeliness (Bayeh 35). Many of the immigrants' literary products deal

with calamities, such as wars, rape and violence, which engender individual as well as collective trauma reflecting on both physical and psychological sides of the characters even after these calamities are resolved. Identically, several Lebanese literary works explore the post-civil war traumas that have been ruled by the war remnants, as Mark Twain once claimed that history does not repeat itself, it does rhyme (Larkin 626). This is effectively observed in the lives of many youth that are similarly entwined in the narrative process, transforming family stories and local histories. Rami is a Lebanese grandchild of twenty years old, who studies at the American University of Beirut; in an interview, he captures that:

it is hard to hide the effects of war. I think the war greatly affected our family from the stories i heard, my family has difficult stories from the war - maybe no one died, but it still lives in you, somewhere, and haunts you." In this context, he explains that the effects of the Lebanese civil war are not erased easily since "the war is talked about all the time- the war is always on people's tongues even though we have no memory of what happened (Larkin 619).

Indeed, even though the war has officially ended, it still exists in the post war memory through evoking images, narratives, and emotions that relive the past once again, sideways to the Lebanese post-war imagery proliferation captured in novels, TV programs, films and short stories.

The Story of Zahra (1986) is a novel by Hanan Al-Shaykh, which explores how the Lebanese women survive the civil war and make their lives bearable despite the limited options they have. *The Insult* (2017) is a movie that dramatically represent the crisis, which emerged due to the political and social struggle between a Palestinian refugee and a Lebanese citizen that eventually ends up a public-opinion issue. Furthermore, *Unreal City* (2000), by

the Lebanese-British writer Tony Honaina, showcases how the narrator makes a return to haunted memories of his country's past, wherein his mistress betrayed him in his youth.

In the same vein, Nada Awar Jarrar's *Dreams of Water* (2007) sheds light on the cruel war and the importance of family during that time. Similarly, Al-Jazeera's *The War of Beirut* is a fifteen-part documentary that presents the historical context of the significant incidents, which shaped the fifteen years of war's trajectory. Also, its ultimate goal was to chronicle a private event in contemporary Middle Eastern history for the first time in order to ensure that the anguish and suffering are not quickly forgotten, and perhaps serve it as a lesson for the future generations. Following the same steps, other writers, such as Elias Khoury, Houda Barakat and Rabih Alameddine, also dealt with the same topics, mainly the traumatic memories of the Lebanese society that are morphed into narratives designed to be post-war writings

Thus, this current study particularly demonstrates how Alameddine in *I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapters* (2001) sheds light on the situation of the Lebanese people during and after the civil war, and how trauma affected them mentally and physically through the protagonist Sarah, who suffered from traumatic experiences due to the Lebanese civil war from 1975 to 1990. It explores how Sarah overcomes her trauma through concocting artistic works.

Alameddine is a contemporary Lebanese-American writer. He was born in Amman, Jordan to Lebanese Druze-parents. He was separated from his family at the age of seventeen when the Lebanese civil war broke out. His literary work dwells on the Lebanese diaspora in America. His first novel is *Koolaid's: The Art of War* (1998), *The Perv: Stories* (1999), than *I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapters* (2001), *The Hakawati* (2008), *An Unnecessary Woman* (2014), *The Angel of History* (2016), and the recent one is entitled *The*

Wrong End of the Telescope (2021). In 2014, Alameddine won The California Book Awards Gold Medal Fiction for *An Unnecessary Woman*. In 2017 won the Arab American Book Award and the Lambda Literary Award for Gay Fiction for *The Angel of History*.

Alameddine's third novel *I, the Divine* where he offers a voice to his heroine Sarah Nour el-Din and allows her to narrate her story. Sarah is a girl from a Lebanese-American parents, she grows up in Lebanon before and during the civil war. She suffers from a horrific and traumatic memories in Beirut by witnessing bombing in the home stairwell, and having her sister killed. Her memories extended to her rape episode at sixteen. (Conrey 172-173). The narration of her story starts through moving between different incidents in her life, and implicitly focusing on her struggle against her traumatic experience.

The reason behind our choice is that many Lebanese women suffered during the civil war from social and ideological persecution on the one hand, and the patriarchal society on the other hand. Some of them were raped, others were subjected to domestic violence, but few of them had the luck to change themselves and get rid of oppression. Sarah exemplifies these women as she seeks to overcome the abhorrent experiences; her powerful desire to get released from her traumatic memories and how to start over again are epitomized through each first chapter in the novel. Her insistence and desire to be free from all traumatic and ideological shackles interest us.

Many reviews and criticism have been conducted on Alameddine's novel *I, the Divine* since its publication in 2001. In fact, several scholars and critics have studied it from different perspectives and interpretations.

Ikram Lecheheb, in her article "Fear of Intimacy in Alameddine *I, the Divine*" (2020), provides a Freudian reading through applying the concept of fear of intimacy on the protagonist Sarah. She claims that Sarah suffers because of the mixture of past traumatic

experiences. She also argues that this fear is a result of the family separation: “it is useful to highlights that Sarah's fear of intimacy begins in unconscious manner especially after being detached from [grandfather, father, mother]” (138), which ultimately leads her to an emotional disaffiliating. Lecheheb asserts that the person who disjointed from someone twice or more needs a companion stating that “[i]n her marriage, Sarah was attached to Omar as a psychological refuge from her detachment from her parents and Fadi” (139). This critic examines Sarah's traumatic experience relying on Freudian psychoanalytic concept of fear of intimacy. Our study focuses on the trauma that Sarah undergoes and how she overcomes it.

Furthermore, Youcef Awad, in his article “Bringing Lebanon’s Civil War Home to Anglophone Literature: Alameddine’s Appropriation of Shakespeare’s Tragedies”(2016), employed the approach of adaptation and appropriation to argue that Alameddine demonstrates lines, events and characters from William Shakespeare's play *King Lear* (1779) through his novel *I, the Divine*. He adds that Sarah consciously compares herself to Shakespeare’s heroine Cordelia, as she allows herself to revise her life and consequently to re-ivent herself (93). He asserts that both works depict the human suffering and cruelty (87).

In addition to Youcef Awad, Banu Akin, in his article “Exile and Desire: Nina's Bouraoui's *Garçon Manqué* and Rabih Alameddine's *I, the Divine*” (2017), compares *Garçon Manqué* (2000) and *I, the Divine*, by particularly relying on Homi Bahabha theoretical approach of hybridity. He argues that the literary works share the same background whereas heroines are considered illegitimate due to mixed marriage (111). Moreover, he discusses the third space is exemplified when “the site in which private and public, past and present [...]” are coalesced (115). Furthermore, he states that the disconnected events and chapters are because of hybridity and her trying to get riddance of her contradictions. He also asserts that she gives the power to her words to regain her lost body that she incarnates through memories (130). Her article aims at focusing on the hybridity theory.

In her article, Syrine C. Hout, “The Tears of Trauma: Memories of Home, War, and Exile in Rabih Alameddine’s *I, the Divine*” (2008), presents Sarah as an affected character by the Lebanese Civil War using Cathy Caruth’s trauma theory. She contends that Sarah took twenty-four years to accept her trauma (61). This current study, however, goes further as to demonstrate how Sarah’s individuation is a product of the inner struggle between her consciousness and unconsciousness.

The above-mentioned studies on Alameddine's novel *I, the Divine* mainly examine Sarah’s traumatic experience and post-war reflections. Since the previous studies have not analyzed how Sarah succeeds to overcome the traumatic incident she had experienced, our study attempts to elucidate the protagonist’s traumatic experience and how she achieves a breakthrough, particularly focusing on both trauma and the healing journey.

This study will rely on a number of theories, articles and books to examine and analyze Alameddine's *I, the Divine*. It employs Cathy Caruth's trauma theory. In her book entitled *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), Caruth’s theory argues that PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is often understood today as an overwhelming experience or a catastrophic event (57). Moreover, she reflects on the inescapable reality of horrific events that affect the mind directly (58). This current study hinges on this theory to show how the Lebanese civil war traumatized people, particularly the protagonist Sarah.

This study also relies on Carl Jung's theory of ‘individuation’ as conceptualized in his book entitled *The Archetypes and The Collective Unconscious* (1980). For Jung, individuation is a process that leads to “the attainment of the self” (194). Similarly, Ladkin Dona asserts that according to Jung, individuation is the process of ‘self-realization’ (6). Individuation requires the inclusion of less desirable aspects of one’s self, or as Jung calls

them; 'the shadows', which can be difficult to confront, accept, and integrate (7).

Furthermore, Jung identifies certain phases of individuation and emphasizes that the process is not linear but made up of alternating progress and regression, flux and stagnation (7).

Relying on this theory, this study will show how Sarah deals with their undesirable aspects of 'the self '. In other hand, it will highlight Sarah's individuation journey.

This study will be divided into three chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter will be entitled "Historical Background." It will deal with the Lebanese civil war. Also, it will demonstrate the past war results and how it affected people, especially writers and their literary products. It will also show the relation between the life of author and his novel.

The second chapter will be entitled "Trauma and Female Body." It will be divided into two sections. The first one will be about theoretical framework, providing a detailed explanation of Caruth's concept of trauma. The second part will be the application of the theory on the novel, especially on Sarah by examining how she is mentally and physically traumatized.

The third chapter will be entitled "Self-conceptualization". It will be divided into two sections; the first one will tackle the theoretical framework of Jung's concept and the second part will be devoted to the application of the theory. It will demonstrate the persistence of Sarah and her capacity in overcoming the traumatic memories.

The conclusion will sum up the results and findings of this study. It will showcase Alameddine's representation of the female character in *I, the Divine*. It will shed light on the traumatic experience of the protagonist, and the methods used by her to overcome such experience.

Chapter one

Trauma and Female Body

This chapter explores the theoretical framework that deals with trauma during the Lebanese civil war. It relies on Cathy Caruth's theory of trauma and the Feeling Memory by Renee Fredrickson, in order to understand the traumatic events that characters, in Alameddine's novel *I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapter*, had undergone during the civil war and afterwards.

1. Trauma and its Discrepancies: Freudian Reading

According to *Oxford Online*, trauma is defined as a mental condition characterized by intense shock, produced by stress or fear especially when the harmful effects last for a long period. It is a term descended from the Greek word that means "wound", which was firstly used in English at the mid-seventeenth century in Medicine as a physical infliction by an external factor. Later, it has been propagated in its usage, particularly in the psychoanalytical field and Freudian texts to be understood as a wound inflicted on the psyche rather than the body (Caruth 3). In other words, the body's injury is healable even if the scar remains, but a bad experience would appear unexpectedly to make the scar bleeds once more.

The idea of trauma emerged in the late nineteenth century by the Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud. The later emphasizes the mental state that includes three parts, namely the unconscious, preconscious and the conscious. While the unconscious involves all our feelings, urges and desires that are beyond the awareness but reflect our expressions, the preconscious is the thoughts located on the unconscious but available to be used in the future. As for the conscious part, it consists our own mental process, such as thoughts and reactions that we are aware of.

For instance, Freud claims that the root of women's hysteria stemmed from an early sexual abuse that caused psychological damage (410). In other words, he maintains that every time a case of hysteria based on sexual traumas is investigated, we find that impressions from the sexual period that had no effect on the kid becomes horrific memories later in life, when the girl or married woman has gained a better grasp of sexual life (Breuer and Freud 135). Breuer and Freud, in their work *Studies On hysteria* (1895), state that a sexual extortion during childhood could not be sensed early, as it has no impact when it occurs but becomes effective and apparent mentally later. Hence, the insult phenomenon remains in the unconscious and episodically announces its existence through various symptoms (Darwin and De Oliveira Moreira 2).

Moreover, Freud has developed his studies in the field of psychoanalysis to explore a new concept called the uncanny, which has been formally started with the German psychiatrist, Ernst Jentsch. Freud, in his essay "The Uncanny" (1919), defines it as an experience whereof the familiar becomes defamiliarized and the unfamiliar becomes familiar (Decker and Rivera). In other words, the uncanny is not new or strange but it is something old that is part of the mind and becomes isolated because of some repressed memories or as Freud explains that it is habitually means "the return of the repressed" (Windsor 1).

Besides, by the production of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), Freud exposes a psychic expressions, which called "repetition compulsion" and the "belatedness" gap; the first symbolizes the post-traumatic experiences of wars as repetitive dreams of soldiers, who came from battlefields; Freud claims that dreams occurring in traumatic neuroses have the characteristic of repeatedly bringing that patient back into the situation of his accident (*Beyond the Pleasure* 13). In this context, the traumatic experiences and memories incarnate as dreams and flashbacks even when the said person has no control over them. It haunts the one who suffers from it for a long time.

2. Cathy Caruth's Theory of Trauma: Continuities and Discontinuities

Freud's theories were based on historical realities and could be seen in situations following wars and conflicts. The horrific experiences still appear in survivors' lives, and how the war still considered an entity in fields of education, economic and psychology. Therefore, the Lebanese civil war is a cruel and violent one where people suffer and hold the desire to forget the scars and scares of almost two decades of violence (Hourani 287). Such scars may be incarnated through historical productions, performance of art, cinema and literary products, where producers, for instance, represent genocides, bombarded cities, weapons and dead bodies effect on human's mental health and even how they deal with the post-traumatic wars.

Formerly, the interests of the theorists and the researchers in this field took a new path; they focused on child abuse, violence, and rape. Then, the focus shifted to post-war traumas including war's negative consequences and their reflection on language and literature in general. Trauma theory has been explored several times throughout decades by many scholars among them Carl Jung, Erik Erikson and Cathy Caruth. In Caruth's book *Trauma: Exploration in Memory* (1995), the field of psychiatry, psychoanalysis, and sociology have all taken a newfound interest in the subject of trauma in the years since Vietnam war. The American association officially recognized "post-traumatic stress disorder" (PTSD) in 1980, which includes the symptoms of what had been previously called shell shock, combat stress, delayed stress, and traumatic neurosis, and referred to both human and natural disaster responses (Caruth 1).

Caruth is a significant figure in the field of trauma research. She wrote prolific books about "Trauma," such as *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), *Trauma: Exploration in Memory* (1995) and *Listening to Trauma: Conversation with Leaders*

in Theory and Treatment of Catastrophic Experience (2014). In an interview “Who Speaks From the Site of Trauma?” Caruth states that she bases her work on trauma from a close reading of Freud (Caruth 50). Meaning that most of her ideas and thoughts were influenced by her thorough and profuse reading of Freud’s works.

In the introduction of her book *Trauma: Exploration in Memory* (1995), Caruth insists that she is more interested in understanding trauma's unexpected impact than in describing it. She also attempts to examine how trauma unsettles and forces a human being to rethink about his traumatic experience (2). For her, “trauma is a repeated suffering event” (10). In short, the traumatic event or experience repeats itself into and through different ways, such as flashbacks and nightmares.

Additionally, trauma according to Caruth, is an egregious experience that the mind is unable to handle regularly. The victim may completely forget about the incident in the current moments. Even if memories of trauma resurface, they are frequently nonverbal and the affected individual may be unable to describe them verbally (Caruth 344). Briefly, the traumatized person's mind could not handle trauma or an awkward incident that the human mind encountered. He may not completely forget what happened to him, but he will be unable to talk about it because it is generally nonverbal. Trauma is then more than just a record of the past; it registers the impact of an experience that has yet to be fully owned (151). Trauma is not simply the bad experience that we faced in the past. It is deeply ingrained in our minds and automatically in our unconscious, which, in its turn, finds its trajectory to our conscious.

Caruth contends that being traumatized is being possessed by an image or experience (4). Seen from this angle, the painful experience reappearing in the dream is not an indication of direct experience, but rather of an attempt to transcend the fact that it was not direct, to

conquer what was never fully grasped in the first place. Because the survivor has never fully faced the prospect of death, he or she is obliged to confront the repeatedly. The act of survival, as well as the trauma experience, is the constant confrontation with the necessity and inability of recognizing the threat to one's own life (Caruth 25). Even though dreams could not be controlled by the traumatized person, it plays an important role in reviving such discomfiting experiences into awareness indirectly.

3. *I, the Divine; A Novel in First Chapters: The Return of the Past*

The war is one of the reasons that makes people traumatized. In this context, Alameddine describes the Lebanese civil war in his novel:

In the year 1978 was horrific. The civil war raged on. The Syrians wanted to become the major players in Lebanon, their army spread all over the country. Palestinians ran amok on Beirut. Eleven PLO fighters landed on Israeli shores and their carjacked vehicles ended up in Tel Aviv, killing Israeli civilians. In response, Israel invaded Lebanon, killing hundreds of Lebanese civilians (64).

Alameddine explores the traumatic events that the Lebanese civil war caused on both the physical and psychological sides, through *I, the Divine*'s characters. It is a novel in first chapters that represents how the war created different types of traumas, wherein psychological ramifications may continue after the guns have fallen silent, haunting the lives of survivors (Hout 59). Even after the war ends, people still suffer from the horrific images that came as consequences to the cruel war they lived. However, wars and conflicts are not the only reason behind the upsurge of trauma, but it also relates to other violent accidents, such as rape or childhood abuse that have been understood in terms of PTSD (Caruth 1). This statement indicates that a horrific incident has triggered the mental state, resulting in a series of

symptoms that will linger for months or even years. It illustrates through the case of Sarah, Lamia and Janet.

The title of the selected novel, *I, the Divine: A Novel in First Chapters* is divided into two parts: I, the Divine, which is about the divine Sarah Bernhardt, who is a French actress and the novel's heroine Sarah Nour El -Din, who was named after the actress by her grandfather. The latter claims that the divine Sarah Bernhardt and his granddaughter look similar, particularly their red hair. Moving on to the novel's subtitle, A Novel in First Chapters, which represents how the novel is written. Its structure is similar to a memoir written by Alameddine's heroine Sarah, and the way it is written is quite unconventional; the same title is regurgitated under the heading of "first chapter," "chapter one," and only a few of them have subtitles.

Moreover, the other point is that there is no chronological order. Such novelistic structure of the work scrupulously denotes how Sarah is in struggle with her past as she is unable to conjure incidents that will enable the reader to move forward in the story. In this matter, Sarah is singlehandedly concealing a major incident from the reader when the chapters are constantly written under the same heading (chapter one). It is a sign and symptom of her mind's disturbance. Every time she attempts to narrate her traumatic memoirs, she fails, and she is unable to reach the point where she can tell us about her agonizing memories that she previously experienced. The reader is mostly perplexed by the inconsistency of the chapters from the beginning of the novel, where Sarah abandons each opening chapter and begins anew. However, Sarah's writing style is influenced by her background; the traumatic allusion stems from her attempt, and thus she constantly fails to communicate her experiences to the reader in each chapter.

4. Detachment and Trauma: Sarah's Case

Sarah is presented as a traumatized character that suffers from post-trauma, caused by war, rape and violence. She surmises that she no longer belongs to Beirut due to the nefarious reminiscences that she carried from her childhood and afterwards (Alameddine 272). She traveled and stayed in the United States with her husband Omar, and even after their divorce, she refuses to return home while proceeding to live on her own. Her refusal to go back home stems from her being a witness of terrible incidents that traumatized her, as she explains to her sister Amal when the later asks Sarah why she did not return to Beirut. "Beirut holds terrible memories for me" (272).

While Sarah feels at home in the United States, Omar (Sarah's husband) feels acutely ostracized and alienated (53). She enjoys the city and makes new friends; she deals with her life normally without missing her life in Beirut. When her sister insists on returning to Lebanon, she tells her that her life is in America, not in Beirut: "My life is there. I have nothing here anymore" (272). It is understandable that Sarah's escape to America is motivated by the severity of the unnerving incidents she encounters in Beirut.

Trauma is fueled at an early age, influenced by the patriarchal society, favoring boys over girls. Consequently, Sarah, being the youngest child, is treated as a boy since all the family waited a male baby but her mother Janet fails in delivering one after birthing two girls. Sarah maintains that she was a natural tomboy, never wearing dresses and playing football better than any boy in the neighborhood (35). Later, she is more traumatized because of the abusive treatment she receives from her father and his wife; Sarah declares that "[her] father lifted [her] by collar and dragged [her] to the bathroom. He took his belt and whipped [her] so hard the welts lasted for two weeks" (33). Equally, her stepmother used to vehemence her by commending, slapping and giving her hot peppers (125).

Additionally, the worst incident that Sarah has experienced is rape. She is assaulted in an atrocious manner, which is displayed in the first chapter, "Spilt Wine", when she took the

courage to narrate her rape scene (193). The chapter's title is a conspicuous metaphor for losing her virginity, as she mentions beforehand that she is Mustapha's "only daughter who was deflowered before marriage." (128). Indeed, the incident is not experienced as it occurs; it becomes fully apparent only in relation to another place and time as Caruth maintains (8). When she escapes from Lebanon to the United States, she assumes that her new surroundings would not remind her of home, but she soon discovers that San Francisco is far too noisy, especially with the fire games. Sarah finds San Francisco as noisy as Beirut during the civil war; the fireworks there remind her of the horrific bombs in Beirut. Due to this resemblance, Sarah is obliged to take pills like Xanax, melatonin, Paxil and Zoloft to get rid of insomnia: "I changed. Paxil was knocking me out. My doctor prescribed Zoloft. It'll take some time before it kicks in, but I'm not sleeping well" (93). In other words, the noise of the fire games reminded her of the civil war, which prompted her to take sleeping pills. Sarah becomes depressed as a result of the experiences she had undergone in Lebanon. She becomes a traumatized person, who suffers from various mental and physical problems, such as anxiety, which compelled her to take medicaments. When her friend Dina inquires about Sarah and why she appears to be in poor health, she responds that she is depressed and influenced by the noise of fire games:

Are you all right? Dina asks.

Depressed.

Derive out of town, Dina says. Go somewhere far from the city where you can't hear the fireworks (Alameddine 93).

The above quotation is a direct indication of Sarah's traumas. Depression is caused by the civil war, because when Sarah hears the fire games, they directly remind her of bombs and shooting sounds.

5. Silenced Grievances: Janet and Lamia's Cases

The post traumas comprise other symptoms, such as depression, anxiety, irritability, aggressive behavior, impulsivity and ignorance (Boman 128). Lamia has completely changed since her parent divorce and mother's disappearance, becoming as a kind of anonymous attender and taciturn person (146), who holds all the hurtful memoirs and uncontrollable thoughts, that create changes over the mood and emotional reactions. She has unloaded all her emotions on letters written on hidden sheets of papers addressed to her lost mother, carrying all the pain, loneliness, and all the insanity (147). Lamia has reported everything to Janet about herself in the four hundred and fifty letters, that had been written with no address, no envelopes, and undatable. All written in nonlinear prose, broken English, which denote the disturbed and unhinged nature of her mind, as the letters stretched over thirty-seven years exhibiting the psychical tension she suffers from after her parents' divorce. Therefore, even though these letters were addressed to Janet, demonstrating her hostility and resentment towards her mother, Lamia has never talked about her or accept the gift cards she received from her mother (146).

Caruth contends that the traumatized person carries an impossible history within them, or that they become a symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess (4). From this perspective, Lamia appears to despise her mother in order to continue writing in secret and to always drop her feelings on a sheet of paper. Her sensitiveness towards her father's treatment is understood as an insult and carelessness, since he treats the Philipino nurses better than her, and keeps joking in front of all the family while contently patronizing her when it comes to her job as a nurse (152); this only fueled lamia's jealousy and lack of self-esteem compared to others. This only culminated to her horrific murder of seven patients; she explicates that they simply bothered her while working: another reason why she

despises her job as a nurse (147). She makes believe that the patients are ordering her to serve them a maidservant.

their mother Janet, who never forget what Mustapha Nour el-Din did to her, has been banished for not birthing a boy who will hold the family's name: "After the divorce, she was never strong again" (49). She used to be vivacious, outgoing, and powerful enough, but her divorce caused her to entirely alter into someone who was too weak and aimless. Janet's trauma stems from her divorce; she then returns to the United States, abandoning both her home and her daughters silently; her daughters maintain: "Our mother simply vanished. One day, she was not there" (Alameddine 146). Janet could not support the patriarchal system of Lebanon's society, in which women are marginalized and forced to be obedient to their fathers, husbands, and grandfathers as well.

One of the most noticeable similarities between Janet and Sarah's lives is the later's divorce and abandonment of her son. After years, Sarah blames herself because she abandons her son, which makes her believe she is the same as her mother: "I look at myself in the mirror and begin to chant: Mirror, mirror, on the wall, I am my mother after all." (139). Like her mother, Sarah experiences the same line of events, unconsciously following the same steps of her mother and undergoing commitment and attachment issues: becoming a divorced woman and abandoning her kid.

As previously stated, the Lebanese civil war left a variety of traumas that affected both the psychological and physical inflictions on people. One of them is Fadi, Sarah's previous love interest, who was deeply hurt by the civil war. This incident is depicted by Lamia in her unsent letters to her mother. She says:

He didn't fight but he was a member of the communist party but he never fights so he was took by the Syrians and beat so hard he lost one eye and he can no more think

right because he has no more shortterm memories and he forgets what he only said to you right away but her remembers what happened to him twenty years ago as if it was happening. (155)

This is traumatic to him of course since he was deeply affected by war physically and psychologically. In other words, the extent of Fadi's suffering from the civil war is both physical and mental as he morphs into this shell of a person who no longer distinguishes his individuality from others. In a nutshell, all the Lebanese people during the civil war were exposed to violence, torture, and other forms of abuse, which resulted in acute emotional and physical calamities.

6. The Repressed Memories

Trauma theory has taken a new interesting itinerary by researchers; one of them is Renee Fredrickson, a psychologist of the repressed recovered memory, who meticulously contrived a work, entitled *Repressed Memories: A Journey to Recovery from Sexual Abuse* (1992), maintaining the effect of trauma on a human body. According to her, there is a 'Feeling Memory,' which is the memory of an emotional response to a specific situation. Feeling memory is frequently experienced as a flood of inexplicable emotion, particularly in the context of abuse issues. A victim's search for repressed memories, according to her, is a journey of discovery and healing that leads one through times of great distress to eventual serenity. (qtd in. Yamini 555). In other words, Fredrickson demonstrates that such mental trauma can be detected through bodily movements; so when a traumatized person decides to search for repressed memories, he does so as a way of healing from the wound or trauma.

These new researches emphasize identifying and treating traumatized people, particularly those who remember their abuse. Similar to Caruth's argument, Fredrickson argues that traumatic events like war, crime, natural disasters or child abuse are emotional

reactions described by PTSD, because it is not a form of mental illness (Fredrickson 35). Subsequently, this research is focused on diagnosing and treating those who have experienced abuse, through Alameddine's characters. However, for sexual assault survivors with repressed memories, two aspects of PTSD are particularly important. These include forgetfulness and a delay in the beginning of the illness (36). Trauma, according to Fredrickson, is any shock, wound, or bodily injury that can be remembered or repressed, depending on the victim's needs, age, and the nature of the trauma (Yamini 555). So, trauma is determined by the traumatized person's ability to remember the incident, as well as the age and consequences of the incident and its impact on the person.

Abuse is a form of trauma committed by one person against another. It is a type of trauma performed on another person intentionally, wrongfully, and unjustly (Frederickson 23) Furthermore, repressed memories are more likely to be about sexual abuse than physical or emotional abuse, and they are less likely to be about physical or emotional abuse. Although any type of abuse can lead to suppressed memories, sexual assault is especially vulnerable to memory repression. Shame, secrecy, and shock are all conducive to memory repression. During a sexual attack, the feelings of shame are severe, particularly for youngsters who have no idea what is happening to them or why. The encounter is so strange and terrifying that the terrified child feels compelled to hide it deep within his or her psyche. (23). The abused child lacks the courage to tell his family about the incident, so he keeps it inside, which causes different psychological reactions later in life.

Sexual abuse is also a crime that generally goes unnoticed. Even if all of the children's family are faced the same accident, shame and secrecy prevent a child from telling their siblings about the abuse. Its explicit history also includes physical and emotional abuse. Meanwhile, sexual abuse does not (Fredrickson 23). To sum up, parents are mostly unaware or careless towards their sexually abused children; they feel ashamed about this subject.

Fredrickson mentions, in her book, the impact of repressed memories or the after effects of sexual abuse; she lists some of them, such as a deep sense of sexual shame, depression, anxiety, worthlessness, guilt and difficulties with careers and relationships (29). In other words, it has an impact on a person's quality of life, causing him to experience failed relationships, depression, anxiety, addiction, career difficulties, and eating disorders.

7. Sarah's Body Finally Speaks

Through a close reading of Alameddine's novel *I, The Divine*, Sarah has undergone several traumas that effectively shaped her personality, which are evident at various stations in her life. Including the Lebanese civil war, her rape episode, and her estrangement from her family, which extended to a complacent relationship with men. She claims: "Although I was not a virgin, I was not experienced. I was frightened at times, mostly in the beginning, simply the fear of being touched by a man again" (Alamedddine 50). She placed her wounded body under water trying to erase the traces after seeing her reflection in the mirror (199). "She was a victim. She felt soiled.][...[she placed herself under the waters of the shower, vigorously rubbing her skin, to erase the marks, the bruises, any trace" (127). Even though she is a victim, she always feels ashamed by what happened that day. The status quo plays an important role. The Lebanese society is ruled by patriarchal system where women are supposed to listen to their fathers, husbands and their grandfathers. Her secret remains hidden, as well as the blood marks, among the black flowered linen that symbolizes her young age. On the day of her rape, she was clearly wearing a black flowered linen dress; first, the flowered dress symbolized her transformation from a tomboy to a beautiful girl, as well as her young age. Furthermore, the linen can be a symbol of her virginity because it is as delicate and worthy as a girl's virginity. Furthermore, the black color aids her in concealing the abuse; only her friend Dina is aware of it. As the black keeps the traces of the accident, she saves this trauma within herself.

Consequently, Sarah “felt dispossessed of her own body” (197). Sarah tries to wipe out the traces of shame by violently scrubbing her skin after the assault where “she placed herself under the waters of the shower, vigorously rubbing her skin, to erase the marks, the bruises, any trace. She scrubbed” (199). This behavior is recurrent whenever she takes a shower or a bath after years from the incident:

She remembers trying to get clean. She scrubbed herself with the loofah, over and over, as if there was some dark stain and she Lady Macbeth. Out, damn spot. She was dirty, all of her. She wanted to rub herself raw, remove any traces of herself. She wanted out of her skin. She wanted to be different person, a better person, her tears adding salt to the bath. She scrubbed her arms, her legs. (82)

This very scene, which happens when she is older, is the same one when she was sexually assaulted at the age of sixteen. Sarah is obsessed with cleaning and violently scrubbing her skin due to her sensation that she is still dirty from the sexual assault of the past. Again, Fredrickson’s theory of ‘Feeling Memory’ is applicable on Sarah for the latter feels obliged to acutely clean herself in a strident mannerism due to her flashbacks of her dire past.

Dreams are frequently the earliest evidence of new memories forming. Persistent and violent nightmares are a warning sign. As they are frequently precursors to repressed memories surfacing dreams, pictures, flashbacks, and physiological sensations can all bring buried memories of abuse to the surface. So, dreams, images, even bodily sensations and flashbacks are a way, which the buried memories come through the unconscious (Fredrickson 44). In the same vein, Alameddine's heroine, who suffers from post-traumatic symptoms including violent nightmares, in which she describes her dream, the sound of bullets, and someone crying "Allah is great" in Arabic "Allah Akbar," dogs trying to assault a cat, and she also saw bleeding books, which are written by Danielle Steel. First, the dogs attacking a cat

in the street corner may be a direct indication of her rape scene because the cat is known for its sensibility and fragility, whereas the dogs are strong. As a result, the cat represents Sarah, and the dogs stand for the men who deflowered her.

Furthermore, the bullet sounds and men yelling, "Allah is great" could be interpreted as the Lebanese civil war that she witnessed. As she narrates in her memoirs: "In Lebanon during the war, however, all unhappy families were not unhappy in their own way. They suffered because at least one family member was killed" (Alameddine 63). Influenced by the well-known opening line of Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (1878), Sarah meticulously argues that similar to all other Lebanese families that lost their dear ones during the Lebanese Civil War, Sarah's family is unhappy due to a painful death of her little half-sister Rana (63). Indeed, Sarah dreams of bleeding books, most notably Daniel Steel's books, is an indirect reference to Steel's tumultuous life as she experiences similar circumstances to Sarah. Her parents divorced when she was seven, and she had two failed marriages. As a result, the bleeding books represent Sarah's failed relationships.

By the end of this chapter, detailed hints are given regarding to the causes, effects, and reflections of PTSD on both the body and the mind of its victims. Furthermore, it furnishes an illuminated explanation about Alameddine's novel and how people suffered during the civil war and afterwards.

Chapter two

Beyond Trauma: Individuation and Self-conceptualization

The current chapter tackles the theoretical framework that deals with the healing journey of Sarah, as a traumatized character in the novel of Alameddine's *I, the Divine*, relying on Carl Jung's theory of individuation. It emphasizes in this regard how Sarah overcomes all her past traumas and how the sense of individuality is gradually maintained throughout the novel.

1. A Movement toward the Depths of Personality:

Carl Jung is considered as one of the founders of psychoanalytical theory, along with many other theorists. However, after moving away, he founded the school of analytical psychology that examines the human psyche as an original contribution to personality theory. Indeed, this theory refers to the total personality as the psyche or the self that is made up of several separate but interacting systems (McLeod 1) as it can influence one another or identifies the person from the group and connects him with the universe (Heisler 338). These main concepts, in Jung's terms, are the ego part of the individual's consciousness, which stands in the middle of its external and internal reality, as it can know only the part of the self that is consciously accessible (Jacoby 493). Thus, it puts the person onto the path of reality, as being the functioning side of human mind.

However, the unconscious, according to Jung, contains lost memories and painful events or ideas that are forgotten on purpose (66), which their existence are denied and discarded to the psyche. In other words, it characterizes the dark materials of the self that kept detached from the ego under the name of the shadow (Colombos 3). The collective unconscious on the other hand, is the deepest level of the psyche formed by instincts and archetypes, which can

not be ruled by the person himself but by the interaction of both the personal and external factors. Thus, Jung demonstrates that the individual may produce a recognizable behavior in the basic experiences of life, besides to the fundamental aspects and the roots of the mind, which are linked to nature (Noll 118). One needs to take into consideration the interaction between both the ego and self as an assimilation of the whole personality to derive a new center, which might be called the individuation process.

2. The Process of Realizing the Self

Jung, in his book entitled *Collected Works* (1967), asserts that many of repressed contents of the mind are consigned on the unconscious part to be transformed later outside the psyche due to a psychic movement defined as "coming to selfhood" or "Self-realization" (Jung 173), through the harmonious relation between the conscious and the unconscious components, in which he argues that:

If the unconscious can be recognized as a co-determining factor along with consciousness, and if we can live in such a way that conscious and unconscious demands are taken into account as far as possible, then the center of gravity of the total personality shifts its position. It is then no longer in the ego, which is merely the center of consciousness, but in the hypothetical point between conscious and unconscious. This new center might be called the Self (45).

In other words, individuation is represented as self-discovery combined with the integration of different elements of the self that are archetypally given or phylogenetic inherited since it is present in every human being.

As such, the process of achieving individuation can never be obtained through attributing the unconscious events directly on the conscious as they are manifested (Ybañez 46) but only

by transforming the shadow into the ego through symbols that can be characterized properly and make the person eventually immersed in his depths in order to achieve psychological maturity. Similarly, in his book *Archetypes and Collective Unconscious* (1958), Jung believes that realizing the self is a natural transformation that occurs subsequently (Jung 131) on the mind of an individual, which means that simply the hidden thoughts resurface on the human psyche through a third way. This refers to the journey of moving from "persona" to "personality" in order to expose the real self that has been concealed over the public image that is presented by the "conformity" archetype. It could be the reason to uncover potentialities, abilities and talents that build the person's creativity as he accesses to a vast internal space of himself. Jung argues that the individual's psyche has a pattern of behaviors that have the ability to create original images as kind of ideogram from the shadow (340), through a healthy and co-operative connection between the conscious and unconscious, whereof inner potentialities are created. Accordingly, in his autobiographical *Memories, Dreams and Reflections*, Jung institutes that entering his second half of his psyche originate from his study of alchemy that helped in analyzing his series of dreams, which he recognizes them as alchemical symbols (Clay 294).

In short, dreams communicate wishes, desires and thoughts that are unconsciously hidden, as they reconcile both the ego and the shadow to express their inclinations in the form of imagery and symbols. Hence, dreams are given much more significance by Jung's theory, where he believes that they could disclose a person's mental and psychical sphere as well as giving insight into the operations of human unconscious. Contextually, David Edwards reviews that Jung proclaims:

Even though dreams refer to a definite psychic situation, their roots lie deep in the unfathomably dark recesses of the conscious mind. For want of a more descriptive term, we call this unknown background the unconscious. We do

not know its nature in and for itself, but we observe certain effects from whose qualities we venture certain conclusions in regard to the nature of the unconscious psyche. Because dreams are the most common expression of the unconscious psyche, they provide the bulk of the material for its investigation (1).

This statement pinpoints how dreams provide access to the deepest level of the psyche even though we may not understand the nature of the unconscious, as they are a specific references to specified situations. Also, we may not understand the nature of the psyche, but we infer certain characteristics about it from specific references that we experience.

In fact, dreams are a method that activates imagination and made it the bridge to access the collective unconscious realm, which Scott J. Hill reports that Jung characterizes dreams as "an ocean of images and figures drift into consciousness in our dream" (3). From this context, Jungian conception of dreams represents a linkage between real and imaginary, which interferes to a process of transformation and realizing the hidden aspects of the self through analyzing dreams. However, Jung adds that not only dreams but even painting is an explicit way for expressing all the repressed aspirations (Jung 341), and reformulates the active imagination of the brain (Heisler 340). Therefore, the person can create extremely intricate works of art without having a slightest idea of their true significance, since they are considered as a window to the psyche and an entrance to his unconscious.

Additionally, painting makes reference to the collective archetypal universe as a foundation for its manifestations. Historically, mandalas are among the oldest complicated symbols and works of art used by humanity around the world, as circular patterns that convey and reflect the wholeness of an individual. It serves as tools for meditation and integrating the inner experience according to Jung. In this regard, Jung claims that mandalas "express the

idea of a safe refuge, of inner reconciliation and wholeness” (9). To prove the importance of a mandala painting on integrating the psyche elements, he states:

I sketched every morning in a notebook a small circular drawing, a mandala, which seemed to correspond to my inner situation at the time. With the help of these drawings I could observe my psychic transformations from day to day...My mandalas were cryptograms...in which I saw the self—that is, my whole being—actively at work (*Memories, Dreams* 195-96).

In this passage, Jung describes how he entered the second part of his self by starting "confrontations with the contents of his unconscious" (Clay 293), while the mandala was his key to unlocking his entire system, whereby it represents the images of the full self, making him realize that all the routes he travels, all the actions he carries out were ultimately leading to the midpoint. Through that experience, he could see more clearly that the mandala is focal point and the path to a center, to individuality (Cutri 11). As a result, creating such a specific shape of paintings represents the centralizing process and attempt to self-healing, by embracing both conscious and unconscious to produce a new center of personality through the movement toward individuation.

Indeed, in his *Red Book* (1930) a series of cryptogram paintings presented by his patients have patterns of motives and colors that are a clear proof on a journey of having a new concept despite coming on a complex forms (Jung 11). Contextually, mandalas are produced spontaneously from an active mental imagery without having an idea of its real meaning, giving the right sensitivity and depths of feelings to discover what lies behind the symbols and their presentation. Jung's case study of Miss X's drawings that show her improvement in using colors and symbols, such as animals and shapes that appear to demonstrate the internal conflict (Mayhan 13).

As evidently indicated, colors and shapes are symbols that rise spontaneously from the unconscious to achieve the third part of personality, which indicates its realization along with using flowers and animals that are generally present in the foundation of the individual soul. It seems to consist something of the nature of mythological themes or images (Bounty 17), since each factor illustrates a certain feature, a feeling or an idea by stating the transformation on each picture.

3. Sarah's Recovery Journey

Painting portrays how much Sarah's psyche is disturbed, since the first painting until reaching the last. The integration of unconscious to the conscious are apparently seen through her chronological drawings, wherein she experimented with canvas, linen, and Masonite as she gains knowledge of texture. She adds that she tries with several genres of paints (103-104). Seen from this angle, it seems that Sarah's reflections and the covered darkened memories push themselves hardly toward enlightenment through her artistic career. Seemingly, the samples she draws during the entire semester in an extension class at the San Francisco Art institute are definitely commutated to what has the teacher demanded, but appropriate all the covered potentialities of her mind, wherein she used to paint nothing except black diagonals crossing solid colored canvases, black diagonals all over the place (105). Thus, comes as an interface to underscore the imprisonment ideas that are cored in her unconscious since the torment childhood in Lebanon, passing by the fact of being a raped girl with detached family, trying to survive the war. Never forgetting the shuttles among these oppressive images to correspond them with the reality of bringing them by drawing only in black.

Partly, the painting takes place in the Museum of Modern Art, motivates her conscious to delve into the repressed side and explore the real self, after affecting her mind by the

extravagant colored copy created by John McLaughlin who claims that: “These]Asian[paintings I could get into and they made me wonder who I was. By contrast, Western painters tried to tell him who they were” (John McLaughlin). In this regard, from McLaughlin view, the western paintings introduce the artist in the way that attract the observer. Indeed, the first impression of Sarah toward that copy proves that it holds some of who McLaughlin person is, since he once claimed that western paintings indicate who the painter is. Consequently, Sarah announces that opening her own work exhibition changes the whole point of view about herself (105). This matter shows that being an artist creates an opportunity for Sarah to achieve and present the third aspect that is lost between the shadow and the ego (individuation), by confronting her trauma through displaying them on her canvases colored by black, but then managed to involve other symbolic features that illuminate the exhibited gallery more than the previous ones.

All in all, they are a direct illustration from her full mind of the unacceptable experiences she keeps disorderly embeds from the very unclear instruments that consist of colors and shapes till the emergence of Jesus pieces (107). It gives a glance on losing faith among people due to the war.

I don't believe artists know half the time what they are creating. Oh yes, all the tralala, the technique—that's another matter. But like ordinary people who get out of bed, wash their faces, comb their hair, cut the tops of their boiled eggs, they don't act, they're instruments which are played on, or vessels which are filled—in many cases only with longing. The Vivisector

In this context, the artistic career of the producer is based not only about what he observes, but also serves the the attuned ideas of his belonging as an instrument that has exists.

Sarah becomes exceptional in the way she understands her personality's uniqueness as a detached survivor, after escaping her own self by moving to America and rigidly burying her Lebanese culture and society. However, it seems apparent to Sarah that through travelling to America and staying in exile are the only trajectory for her to create a new identity and bury her old Lebanese self: "I wanted to identify with only my American half. I wanted to be special. I could not envision how to be Lebanese and keep any sense of individuality. Lebanese culture was all-consuming. Only recently have I begun to realize that like my city [Beirut], my American patina covers an Arab soul" (229). The passage indicates that Sarah is obsessively consumed with the idea of new identity, whereof she is able to reach herself through burying the past and discarding her Lebanese identity. This telos of her, however, changes when she attempts to create a peaceful space for both her newfound identity and her Lebanese self.

Consequently, as an admission of the atmosphere that she lives in, she dreams of waking up in an unfamiliar room, all darkened with its ineffective bullet-blocking walls, resembles an old Beiruti house (232-233) emphasizes the repressed components of Sarah's mind, focusing on the Lebanese People's bleak way of existence during the Lebanese national war, making the unbearable memories resurface on her conscious through this dream while she surrenders to sleep. Her dream illustrates firstly her memories from the first day of the war when shells and bombs started pouring on the Lebanese buildings in 1975, to subsequently make the whole city [of Beirut] with no water, electricity, or phones (65) gradually. This psychic phenomenon explains that Sarah illuminates herself to move toward understanding its depths through refreshing her repressed memories. For instance, the family Sarah sees gathered up like a group of scared birds, paying no heed to any one (223) demonstrates and uncovers in her the wistfulness feeling of being far from everybody in their own apartment particularly her parents when she appoints that her father sat sideways, with

his back facing the wall [...] Saniya held her son close and set between her two daughters comforting them (39), plays the role of being a good mother who never leaves her children, Sarah is alienated and ostracized by everyone of her family.

Sarah looks up at the water marks on the ceilings, unleashing her imagination on whether the concierge could reconstruct it or not (40), as a way of remembering the painful surroundings that her heart never endures, however, it starts to be split from her unconscious to rise instrumentally on the conscious once she dreams the sound of dripping water coming from another room (234). That refers to her loneliness at the empty room as she is dissociated from the rest of her family during the bombardment, and associates that the peeling paints on the roof are once a slick of dripping water. Indeed, it seems that Sarah used to habituates her personality on fantasy in respect of avoiding the psychological crises she suffers.

Additionally, it is worth highlighting that her dream showcases the abominable daily life of Sarah comprising the sense of fear and repeated memory, which makes her push the unbearable explosions and shouting's sounds that are saved on her mind and resurface as a recorded scenery. This is evidently attested by the mixture of a gunfire sounds with the Arabic voice shouts that contribute unwittingly in iterating the harmful and repressed memories that Sarah has gotten from her childhood in Beirut, when the gunfire come all sides, the simultaneous explosion of canons, rockets and missiles was sufficient to awake the dead (233). As it worth highlighting that the dream portrays a section from Sarah's unpleasant life in Beirut, where peace is not concluded even for the deceased.

Identically, the harmonized relation between its collective unconscious emerges in portraying her emotional situation presented by a bleeding book of Denial Steel (235), which illustrates the acceptance of her failed relationships that is manifested in her loneliness until the ending of her memoir.

According to psychoanalysts, the implications of that color associate with the energy that creates barriers in order to enshroud the personality (Meghamla et.al 116). In a nutshell, the black diagonals lines Sarah draws illustrate the persecuted side of her personality even after leaving her home land, and showcases how the horrible thoughts combine to form the premonition of investigating her past memories typically the explosions, bombardments and power outages that Sarah witnesses in Lebanon by the age of fifteen used to harvest her soul, persecuting all the elements that may florescence her traumatized memory to produce enough samples differentiate from the one ties to her traumas.

4. Writing as a Catharsis

In the light of personality theory, the patient is supposed to tell the story of his trauma in order to heal him, as Breuer and Freud call it "the cathartic method" in which the shadow discharged (Westerink 10). From this regard, the traumatic events are recalled to be verbalized technically due to present the unaccepted improprieties of ourselves instead of just repressing them more on the unconscious. Caruth at the same vein, maintains that creative literature of figural one not the literal language, can speak trauma, while normal language is unable to do so (Caruth 59). As well as, fiction has a big role in helping the traumatized individuals by giving them a voice (334). In other words, writing and fiction play an important role in healing trauma by resurfacing it on papers as they give the person a voice and a chance to express the atrocious experiences without anxiety or fear.

Sarah attempts to explore her life between Lebanon and the United States in her fragmented memoir, omission of punctuation at the end of each chapter, makes her fails to successfully capture realities in, which the titles encourage her to try again (Akin 129), and that takes more than 20 years after she leaves her homeland. This oscillation allows her go back and forth between the events of Lebanese civil war and afterwards, emerging the hidden

connection she has toward her past and her country. Her fragmentation toward being a daughter, a granddaughter, a mother and a lover. For this, it becomes apparent that writing gradually interfered Sarah's self into coming to a greater understanding of who she is, by realizing that she is really an attaché of the larger entity that she has been fighting so frantically to escape as she writes:

I had tried to write my memoir by telling an imaginary reader to listen to my story. Come learn about me, I said. I have a great story to tell you because I have led an interesting life. Come meet me. But how can I expect readers to know who I am if I do not tell them about my family, my friends, the relationships in my life? [...] I have to explain how the individual participated in the larger organism, to show how I fit into this larger whole. So instead of telling the reader come meet me, I have to say something else. Come meet my family. Come meet my friends. Come here, I say. Come meet my pride.
(Alameddine 308).

Constantly, Sarah defines herself by expressing her family's view about her, confessing that she becomes a tomboy after the family has not accepted her since they were expecting a boy after two girls. She acknowledges the reality and dispels misconceptions about her father when: "when I finally heard what my grandfather told my mother at my birth, I was converted" (293). Through the pieces that make up Saniya's existence, her story is corrected and given coherence. She is described by Sarah as a vile and cruel fairy tale character (Akin129).

Moreover, she repeatedly retells her past ventures beyond a repeated drafting of first chapter jumping between Lebanon and USA interspersing them written in English and others in French (Conery 170), asserting her agency in owning her own story. Thus, she manages in

shifting between the first and the third person of view. Sarah, oftentimes than not, finds it difficult to discuss the unpleasant events from her past, so she switches to utilizing the third-person perspective taking the first-person to describe the whole experiences that juggle her life. In parallel, while narrating the circumstances of her rape, she explicitly states that: "I have a great story to tell you. I was there. This is what I saw" (Alameddine 136).

However, by the time she confronts her rape, she tends to refrain from speaking in any other personal pronoun than the third one. Finally, she controls and talks about her rape, combining both violence and brutality as the sky is moving (Pazargadi 53), she narrates that she raised her eyes and saw the pale sky. Blue, no cloud in sight (Alameddine 196), which means that the sky changes by the rape event gets more intense. Her suffering starts when she wonders if: "The sky was hazy, or was her vision?" (196), she gets from pain, as it is the only thing that comforts her after she left fainted there. By daring to describe the horrific rape incident, Sarah comes recover her body, which has been submerged in painful memories and shame, however, her fragmented story reveals her vulnerability and her desire to accept her pain.

Her sister Lamia on the contrary, never overcomes her trauma even though she uses to write daily letters addressed secretly to her mother Janet, which denies that she no longer belongs to Lebanon. This is apparently understood when she demands the green wool end dress of her mother, requesting to save it for her and do not give it to her sisters (156). As such, she voices out her experiences explicitly, stressing on others mostly, not her own self. She once writes that: "father loves her and always Sarah this and Sarah that thing" (152), feeling jealous for not being his favorite and feels with envy, Sarah adverts that: "I believe she hated me and always felt inferior (123). Similarly, Omar has not accept his stability in America as Sarah claims that: "I loved the city, he hated it. I felt at home while he felt like a foreigner [...]. I was having a ball, while he was counting the days until we could get back"

(53). Omar only “felt human in Beirut” (212), due to the absence of belonging he counts the days to get back to Beirut, since he has nothing there except Sarah and his job, all the friends are hers (53). He never tries to accept the life America offers for him, but admires Lebanon's war.

Janet seemingly stuck at her breakage part, since she refuses to get back along her daughters, committing suicide after she suffers the feeling of being dismissed and sent back to America. However, what the fortune-teller proclaims that her child would be the bridge (226), becomes a reality. Sarah manages at understanding herself as being both a Lebanese-American, she writes:

these contradictory [Lebanese and American] parts battled endlessly, clashed, never coming to a satisfactory conclusion. I shuffled ad nausea between the need to assert my individuality [represented by the USA] and the need to belong to my clan [located in Lebanon], being terrified of loneliness and terrorized of losing myself in relationships. (229)

From this appointing, Sarah attains herself through coming to accept her identity as a Lebanese.

5. Disillusionment and Reality

Sarah claims that many novelists are fond of the Divine Sarah such as Victor Hugo, D. H. Laurence and Mark Twin. Even Jung does not shy away from writing about this actress, maintaining that her stories equals four types of women (277). Equally, her grandfather Hammoud Nour el-Din is fascinated by her since he never stopped gushing about the moment he first met her (3). It inspired him to name his youngest granddaughter Sarah, for she owns the same red hair. However, one of most profound incidents that demonstrate individuation is how Sarah comes to understand the distorted image she has about her

grandfather. Sarah respects and loves her grandfather on a more intense manner. Her grandfather used to tell her stories of the past. She says “My grandfather [...] was a newspaperman. His mind was filled with information and trivia, which he shared with anyone who would listen, and I loved to listen” (77).

While Sarah kept the image of her grandfather as this nice man who loved her, the other family members despised him and his existence. In particular, Lamia describes him, in her unsent letters as “an evil man, a horrible human being and very stupid” (160). Her mother also curses Sarah’s grandfather for he was the reason Janet was separated from her husband; she says to Sarah: “He was evil, evil incarnate. Everybody thought he was the nicest man, but the things he did, the things he said” (284). As for the older sister Amal, she calls their grandfather a “Hitler”, “a Machiavellian asshole” who bullied Saniya through the girls (287). Their grandfather sought the unattainable and the impossible through the mythical image of Sarah Bernhardt he created for his granddaughter Sarah. Amal denies that he loved Sarah Bernhardt, and states: “he loved the myth, the unattainable myth of what a woman is. He had no clue who Bernhardt was. He apotheosized her. Her mother he called a whore, but according to him, Sarah lived *la vie galante*” (288).

After uncovering the truths about her grandfather, she finds it hard to accept them; In effect, it took her “years to accept the truth” (293). Especially, she says, “when I finally heard what my grandfather told my mother at my birth, I was converted” (ibid). She eventually accepts the truth and clears the image about her grandfather. By and by, Sarah is also disillusioned by the image she has created about her lover David. She considers him as the epitome of a male figure as well, but she uncovers the truth about his homosexuality and her opinion of him becomes less of a perfect adoration and more of disappointment in him (249-50).

To sum up, this chapter illustrates Sarah's struggle as being traumatized victim in getting over the trauma. Nevertheless, it consists on what Sarah's character witnessed along the healing journey to realize herself

General Conclusion

This thesis has discussed the Lebanese situation during and after the civil war that has took place from 1975-1990 in Rabih Alameddine's novel *I, the Divine: A Novel in First chapters*. It has shown the main reasons that have contributed its advancement, sideways, its detritus that have been left especially on the mental apparatus. All of this is through a memoir written by Alameddine's heroine Sarah, who suffers from the Lebanese civil-war.

Our study has relied on Cathy Caruth's theory of trauma, wherein she has claimed that the post-traumatic stress disorder is known as an overwhelming experience that reflects on the traumatized victim as a painful event that would be repeated through nightmares or flashbacks. To examine this topic, we applied this theory to the novel, focusing on Sarah, Janet, and Lamia.

To enrich our analysis, we have also employed Renee Frederickson's book, entitled *Repressed memories: A Journey to Recovery from Sexual Abuse*, that contains the theory of repressed memories. In order to highlight the impact of these repressed memories on the person's quality of life. We have used this theory to demonstrate that these memories reflect not only the psyche but also body of the victim. To apply this theory, we focused on Sarah's character because she is the one who suffers the most as a result of the civil war.

This dissertation has revealed that Lebanese women have suffered during the civil war due to social and ideological persecution, as patriarchal where women are marginalized. Some of them have been raped, others have been subjected to domestic violence, but few of them had the chance to get over the oppression. Janet, Sarah's mother, is a clear example in this novel of this patriarchal society, which leads to her suicide. Sarah, on the other hand, had the opportunity to escape this environment by traveling to the United States and beginning a new life.

Additionally, we have depended on the theory of individuation in Carl Jung's book entitled *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, in order to showcase how Sarah have dealt with her unbearable aspects of the self, and what has made the healing process successful. She uses writing and painting to heal and recover from her traumas.

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ملخص

تبحث الأطروحة الحالية في التجربة المؤلمة للشعب اللبناني بعد الحرب الأهلية من خلال فحص دقيق لربيع علم الدين الأول ، أنا سارة، سارة أنا (2001). على وجه الخصوص ، يوضح هذا البحث تداعيات اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة وكيف تتجلى من خلال شخصيات علم الدين كيف تسلط الرواية الضوء على عملية الشفاء للأشخاص المصابين من خلال شخصية سارة. تنقسم هذه الدراسة إلى فصلين. بالاعتماد على نظريات كاثي كاروث و رينيه فريديريكسون عن الصدمة والذكريات المكبوتة ، يحلل الفصل الأول التجارب الساحقة والمروعة التي تعكس كلاً من جسد وعقل الناجي. الفصل الثاني ، الذي يستند إلى مفهوم التفرد لكارل يونغ ، يلقي نظرة دقيقة على النفس البشرية في عملية التغلب على الصدمة. علاوة على ذلك ، تختتم الدراسة إلى أنه من خلال الشخصيات ، نجح علم الدين في تمثيل نتائج اضطراب ما بعد الصدمة وتأثيراته على اللبنانيين.

الكلمات المفتاحية : التفرد ، لبنان ، الصدمة ، يونغ ، الحرب الأهلية.

Résumé

La thèse actuelle explore l'expérience traumatisante du peuple libanais après la guerre civile à travers un examen minutieux de *I, the Divine: A Novel* de Rabih Alameddine dans les premiers chapitres (2001). Plus particulièrement, cette recherche démontre les répercussions de PTSD et comment ils se manifestent à travers les personnages d'Alameddine comment le roman met en lumière sur le processus de guérison des personnes traumatisées à travers le personnage de Sarah. Cette étude est divisé en deux chapitres. S'appuyant à la fois sur les théories de Cathy Caruth et Renee Fredrickson traumatismes et souvenirs refoulés, le premier chapitre analyse l'accablant et l'horrible des expériences qui reflètent à la fois le corps et l'esprit d'un survivant. Le deuxième chapitre, qui est basé sur le concept d'individuation de Carl Jung, jette un regard scrupuleux sur la psyché humaine dans le processus de dépassement du traumatisme. De plus, l'étude conclut que grâce à la personnages, Alameddine a représenté avec succès les résultats et les effets du SSPT sur les Libanais personnes.

Mots clés : Individuation, Liban, Traumatisme, Jung, Guerre Civile.