

**Psychological Purification as a Means of Change in the Novel "Houriyat" By Kamal
Daoud**

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Date of submission: 17/06/2025

Date of acceptance: 20/09/2025

Date of publication: 27/12/2025

Abstract:

The psychological novel is a literary genre that allows the reader to delve into the depths of the human psyche and discover its distinctive complexities and contradictions. In Daoud's novel "Houriyat," we find ourselves on a profound and moving psychological journey, as the author addresses the issue of psychological purification with depth and honesty. Since it is a complex and multifaceted process through which a person seeks liberation from pain, doubt, and fear, and attempts to find themselves in a turbulent and challenging world, this type of novel is not limited to narrative alone; it also becomes a therapeutic ritual that reshapes the self and the collective consciousness. Through the novel's characters, we see how difficult and painful experiences can lead to a process of psychological purification, bringing about change in the human psyche. We see how pain can be a source of growth and development despite the pressures of life. Therefore, in this article, we will discuss the issue of psychological purification, the factors that contribute to the development of this process, and its impact on human relationships

Keywords: Catharsis, Psychological Novel, Change of Consciousness.

Introduction :

The novel is an artistic space that allows us to explore the depths of the human psyche and experience the transformations that occur within it. When a writer addresses the subject of catharsis in his novel, he opens the door for us to explore the complex psychological processes that a person goes through when facing challenges and crises. The reader becomes a participant in the characters' journey and a witness to their transformations and developments, giving them the opportunity to reflect on their own experience and discover new aspects of themselves. Through the novel, we can see how characters can change and develop in the face of pain, and how they can reach a state of psychological catharsis. We can see through books the impact of panic, doubt, and fear on the human psyche, becoming, over time, a point of radical transformation for the better with it, reading becomes a psychological act or a psychological practice of discovery and renewal through letters when employing psychological theses and their approach to what happens in novelistic narratives and their troubled characters who live through complexes of origin, sin, virility, defeat, frustration, and failure. This requires the novelist to be able to manipulate imagination and express reality and its crises, making the narrative space an arena in which selves struggle to prove their existence in the face of a reality that rejects them, performing representational functions for their psychological crises and the manifestations of emotional, sexual, or social deprivation they suffer, or through the crisis of their symbolic or political violation.

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Thus, the writer Kamel Daoud dared to challenge the narrative imagination through the novel **Nymphs**, written in French, to bring the novel back to life in the name of historical justice. When reality was silent about telling the truth and concealed it, the truth emerged from between the letters of the novel to create a frightening world that was shattered by the writer to prove the impotence of the religious, political, and even cultural system during the Black Decade.

From here, we will attempt to answer the following questions :

- How does the novel address the issue of psychological catharsis ? What are the factors that contribute to this process ? How can it affect human relationships ? And what message does the novel want to convey to the reader ?
- How can the novel be a source of inspiration and reflection ? And how can it help us better understand ourselves and others ?

1. The idea of catharsis

The term catharsis is used in most languages of the world in its Greek form (katharsis). It is sometimes translated into words that carry the meaning of purification, cleansing, or cleansing. It appeared with Aristotle in the theory of drama. « The Greek word « katharsis » is primarily from medical vocabulary and means technique, purification, and emptying on the physical and emotional levels. The ancient medical meaning of this word was linked to the word « pharmakos, » which initially meant both drug and poison—that is, treating illness with illness and provoking a physical or emotional crisis with a treatment that is of the same nature as the illness in terms of severity. Over time, the word transformed into a philosophical and aesthetic concept related to the emotional impact that a literary or artistic work or celebration arouses in both the practitioner and the recipient for his part »(<https://noqqad.wordpress.com>, 2013). For Aristotle, the term was associated with tragedy, particularly the focus on the elements of pity and fear. When he explained the play "Oedipus the King," the psychological and moral interpretation occupied a large part of the study, deepening the external impact on the human psyche. Purification, in this sense, became the transformation of painful emotions into a state of psychological and moral balance, but through art, which gives the audience a deeper understanding of human existence and contributes to its spiritual elevation.

This is what Aristotle called in his book "The Art" of Poetry "metamorphosis," "which is the change in the hero's line from a state of misery to a state of happiness and vice versa... or the transition from a state of ignorance to a state of knowledge. It may relate to people, things, or events, leading to love or hatred from the people destined for happiness or misery. Metamorphosis and recognition are considered two main elements of dramatic action."(Aristotle)

So, catharsis is due to tragedies, « as they are an imitation of a serious, complete act in itself that has a certain length, in enjoyable language because it is accompanied by every type of artistic decoration, each of which can appear separately in parts of the play. This imitation takes place in dramatic form with events that arouse curiosity and fear, and thus catharsis occurs. »(Aristotle, p. 95)

So, catharsis is the purification of feelings from all the impurities clinging to them from past traumas, "as brutal practices that lead to psychological trauma, or fear due to the person's failure to comprehend the magnitude of the incident, leaving a deep impact that generates suffering and pain in the psyche of the one who was shocked."(Thierry Bokanowski, 2021, p. 12)

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Catharsis is based on resisting the unconscious stored in memory, including instincts, repressions, and disappointments. Healing from these is difficult and requires psychological sessions to stimulate and overcome resistance.

- How did the novel exploit catharsis in its narrative ?
- How is catharsis achieved in narration ?

2. Narration as a tool for catharsis

Reality helps create an imaginative and fertile environment for the writer, as it becomes the primary inspiration for drawing on its events, which contribute to raising awareness of it and give us the opportunity to understand ourselves and others in ways we could not have imagined. This is when the dramatic lines in the novel or story expand in a style that achieves a balance between linguistic aesthetics and intellectual depth. When the reader opens the pages of the novel, he imagines himself in worlds he never expected or imagined. Here lies the power of the novel in expanding the reader's horizons, enriching him with experiences and adventures that may not be possible in reality. Fantasy worlds reflect precise details of the creative imagination of the writer and allow the reader the opportunity to explore new dimensions of thought and imagination. Perhaps this explains the vitality of literature despite the passage of time, as the text/novel/story empathizes with characters that resemble reality, embodying suffering and breathing life into the character who I drew it when it thrusts the reader into the painful psychological atmosphere, as Jaber Asfour says, "No bear does not tame chaos, but rather makes it available for contemplation. Thus, the reader becomes involved with the characters and bears with them the burdens of their imagined reality. Thus, the act of purification becomes global, if not universal, filled with a set of burdens and dimensions that we can **limit to the following**:

2.1 Narrative purification as a complex philosophy :

Here, pain transforms from an abnormal and disturbed energy process into a process of creating balance through artistic imagination. « The great novel shows you your wound that you did not know about. You bear it. »(Milan Kundera, 1999, p. 20) Perhaps this type of narration is characterized by violence because it conjures up a scapegoat, according to Gérard René, "by depicting evil and the most extreme types of violence and simulated pain to create a theory of organizing the group, or what is called the taming of collective violence. Psychoanalysis is « a means by which the resisting force can be removed and ideas made into an emotional force after they were repressed »(Freud, 1982, p. 27)

So, the narrative is a (story or a novel) that carries the spirit of complexity with philosophical dimensions, « The most complex things are the eternal truth of the novel, but they only hear themselves with difficulty in the din of simple and quick answers that precede and exclude the question.... The spirit of the novel is the spirit of continuity »(Milan Kundera, 1999, p. 25).

Returning to the fictional reality, we will find that the rhythm of purification has been danced to by characters with multiple ideas and nationalities in novels around the world, especially the Arab world, which has called for the act of purification as a technique for sympathy or dramatic intensification. Examples of this include :

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Examples	The technique of purification	The goal of employment
The novel « The Thief and the Dogs » by the Arab writer Naguib Mahfouz. The text focused on the pain and Difficult experience in prison of the character Al-Saeed Mahran, who began searching for ways to take revenge on society. « but your sin is horrific possessor of reson and history »(Najib, 1973, p. 37)	The purification came with complex aspects, forcing the reader to sympathize with the character who suffers from a psychological rift (executioner/victim).	Dual sympathy with purification of the self/identity
The novel A Thousand Splendid Suns by Afghan writer Khaled Hosseini. The text focused on the theme of psychological purification, which came in the context of war and conflict in	The escalation of the conflict, its climax, and the postponement of the solution, which gave the purification a dimension of comfort and psychological reassurance	Dramatic postponement increases suspense and adheres to the story until the end.
Afghanistan. The reader senses this by following the events experienced by the novel's protagonists, Maryam and Layla, as the text depicts profound psychological transformations in the search for inner peace and escape from pain. « As she walks to her desk, at the front of the class, Layla thinks about the game of names they played last night..., an Afghan boy can't be called Clark. » (Hosseini, 2010, p. 411)		

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Season of Migration to the North (by Tayeb Salih). The novel focuses on the character of Moustapha Saeed, who suffers from a dual conflict between his identity and his place in exile, with the cancellation of his African identity or the preservation of origin and the entry into cultural conflicts. « His voice was as if he were praying from another world, and the man skillfully painted a horrific picture of a wolf-man who caused the suicide of two girls and destroyed a married woman. » (Salih, 1981, p. 36)	The psychological crisis develops to reach its climax, achieving the principle of rejection through self-acceptance and psychological purification.	From achieving the choice of alternatives to prove the ego.
The Dead Live by Najib Mahfoud. This novel rises to the level of philosophical literature because it addresses and depicts the existential state, as the novel focused on the principle of Doubt in the search for the meaning of life through death. As is the case in the crime novel, when he made catharsis a psychological trial of conscience. « When he regained consciousness and saw the woman sitting opposite him, he caught her looking at him in astonishment, and he immediately realized that his emotions had translated into spasms in his facial features. » (Najib, 1973, p. 84)	Purification is the shedding of the old self, its death, and its replacement with a new self, and opening the door to questioning reality, knowledge, and the truth of the conflict between faith and reason.	Symbolic resurrection as a state of existential.

It seems that the process of adopting catharsis in novel writing increased the complexity of the text and meaning, as the novel rises to the level of philosophical thinking that transforms and develops characters, and also creates internal conflicts that lead its author to the absolute truth. Catharsis is a method of transformation and change

To understand others and understand the world.

2.2 Catharsis as a mechanism for building shared memory through narration :

The novel can transform the individual experience into a collective tragedy by using the cathartic symbol to create a society reconciled with itself and with others. Individual destiny is

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linked to collective destiny. Hence, catharsis contributes to the formation of national consciousness through the following experiences :

- ✓ Reimagining and representing historical traumas to address the gaps that deepened the human tragedy, such as the issue of minorities and ethnic cleansing (the Holocaust).
- ✓ Rebuilding collective memory by filtering out historical sediments.
- ✓ Exposing social repression to enhance trust in the other, male and female.
- ✓ Collective purification by reshaping identity to escape the impasse of fragmentation.
- ✓ Transforming individual experience, i.e., novel writing, into a collective experience when visions are multiple.
- ✓ Post-revolutionary purification, to define responsibilities and create the principle of collective dialogue.

Novelistic purification, then, is the battle of the collective consciousness to understand and reshape the self.

3. Mermaids : Post-trauma narratives and existential fragility :

3.1 Mermaids :between individual memory and collective wound

The novel has portrayed the pain of the self in a complex way, bringing the experience out of the private sphere and into the collective sphere. « What do you want ? To come here and become a dead body. Do you hear the men outside in the café ? Their god is advising them to wash their bodies after our forbidden embrace in broad daylight. They call it the great ablution, for we are the great filth. What do you want ? All women are like me, even if they don't have a hole in their throats, or a stupid smile on their faces, or a tongue choked with pain. That's what it means to be a woman here. Do you really want it ?

We're going to visit my shop. I want to show you part of the world opposite the paradise from which you fell. Then I'll take the three pills. I want to show you that nothing remains of my story. Everything has been erased by laws, frowns, and threats of imprisonment. No one remembers, or dares to remember, the day they tried to slaughter me in Algeria »(Kamel Daoud, 2024, p. 52)

This narrative passage encompasses the helplessness and blurred vision of the dark reality into which the characters are thrust. The story is a reality recounted by the writer from the events of the Red Decade, which toppled Algeria's security and left behind psychological disabilities, like the heroine of the novel, who was slaughtered and stabbed with a knife of pain. However, fate willed that she not die, but rather lived without her voice, which became hoarse and did not echo so that everyone could hear it, so that individual memory became part of the collective memory. The novel's discourse served as the character's voice, allowing the reader to approach the emotional purification of repressed pain. From there, the painful individual memory acts as a bridge between personal experience and collective consciousness, allowing the novel to explore deeper human truths about history, identity, and the ability to endure. The novel thus becomes a tool for documenting what might be forgotten or suppressed in official narratives.

3.2 Mermaids : Distorting and Reconstructing Memory :

Individual memory is not an accurate archive that preserves all events and dates. It needs collective memory, « as it is a reference in which individual memories are fused. Halbwachs considers the shared memory of a particular human group an indispensable condition for the existence of this group itself, since this human group establishes its identity through the act of

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remembering. This collective identity is therefore the result of the shared interpretation of this group's particular past. In other words, the supra-individual identity is formed upon the shared recall of the past of that social group. On this basis, it can be said that collective memory is the memory of collective memories or the sum of these memories in a given human society. From here, too, the function of collective memory becomes clear, as Halbwachs sees it, namely, establishing the "identity" of a particular group and ensuring its becoming. »(Zuhair, 17/3/2019)

Memories are evoked and constructed through frames of reference, such as :

- Language : Each stage has its own historical and cultural terminology.
- Tradition : Each society has its own popular memory.
- Place /Memory : Each place has its identity.

It seems that collective memory is not fixed; it changes according to political changes even ideology will inevitably lead to the confusion of individual memory, and here the narrative discourse enters to summon marginalized events that were buried intentionally or unintentionally. The narrative discourse plays with time when it shuffles its cards between the past and the present, to reveal buried truths and bring them back to the surface, and help to arrange historical facts, « They stole from me everything, and I am unconscious for lack of anything better, for lack of a woman's body not to rape, I do not know how to walk barefoot, I limp, the sky is heading towards Oran. The attendance of the Eid al-Adha celebration, I head in the opposite direction, towards a village, which must be three kilometers away, I am a homeless wanderer now, the ideal prey for the men of this country who dream of virgins and permanent defloration. It is said that when a woman does not belong to any man, father, brother, husband, or even to her son, she is a wanderer, men speak of her as a royal wasteland that bleeds once a month, a hated currency on the earth »(Zuhair, 17/3/2019).

« My wide smile that made fun of him and his clients. I think the Imam recognized me amidst the crowd of his memories. He always knew where my wound came from. He guessed I was a victim of the nineties war and sermons sharpened on millstones dating back a thousand years, a crazy paradise, promised houris, mosques, knives, and very beautiful voices sharpening the struggle for a while. Every Friday after the major prayer, we would look at each other as we passed, and he would lower his head patiently in the face of his virgin, whom he had never seen. no one before. This is the match every Friday, and these are the months. »(Kamel Daoud, 2024).

The narrative discourse took upon itself the responsibility of re-enacting the trauma, so that the novel would become a platform for negotiating with reality/the past/the present, through modern narrative techniques, the most prominent of which are:

- ✓ Tearing apart time, which helped dismantle the trauma and the time of its occurrence, so that he could examine it up close and determine the extent of the repressed individual pain
- ✓ Reverse Narrative : It aims to encourage the victim to stand up to the executioner.
- ✓ Reproducing violence through imagination to document historical trauma.
- ✓ Repetition | Events that constituted the trauma/pain : rape, slaughter, threat, denial...
- ✓ Transforming pain through narrative into sensory material to distribute individual pain so that it becomes collective.
- ✓ The writer wears the garment of witness to this terrifying world.

4. Narrative Purification and Creating Dialogues for Recovery :

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The narrative text "Mermaids" was able, through its artistic tools, to create a spiritual balance for the novel's characters. It is a method of group psychotherapy and a means that seeks to elicit or extract the latent feelings in the traumatized human psyche. The primary goal is based on two parts :

- Psychological purification through catharsis or psychological emptying.
- Acquiring new behavioral patterns.
- Reconciliation of the self and the other

Writing about pain is not about simulating and reenacting pain, but rather about reviving the trauma in order to treat it and transform the pain into a symbol. This is what the novel's scene depicts: "I named my daughter Kalthoum. It's the name of an Egyptian singer with a great voice. She screams Kalthoum, and every scream of hers brings me back to myself, reviving me. My voice is there outside me, and inside me, my smile is nothing.

Except for a scar, I rejoice and laugh at the seagulls that do not know where they came from, nor where they fly, but I, but I do know, Kalthoum was born in pain, my cure for all pain » (Kamel Daoud, 2024)

The writer relied on the principle of psychological determinism, which in turn is based on three basic principles, which can be summarized as follows : (Jalal, 2018, pp. 57-58-59)

- ✓ **The first principle** : Psychological dynamism or effectiveness, meaning that the nervous system is always in motion and enters into endless conflicts that do not stop except with death.
- ✓ **The second principle** : The principle of balance. No force or tendency arises without a force or opposing tendency necessarily arising with it, and human behavior is the result of the sum of the two tendencies.
- ✓ **The third principle** : The principle of transformation. This principle refers to the profound and permanent changes that occur in the individual's personality as a result of the process of psychoanalysis.

Based on this psychological world, the writer proves that the novel is not a confession from the author's confessions, it is rather an exploration of what human life is like in the trap of the impossibility of the world. In return, the text degrades the space for salvation, as the other self is the author's constant concern, and the obsession with abandonment is his eternal goal. The final sections of the novel drop the existential anxiety that has loomed over the characters for a long time, so the text becomes a therapeutic space instead of hypnosis sessions to correct the original meanings of the signifiers off the selves/characters, and give them new roles, which can be explained in the following form : Victim / Houria / Pleasure / Enjoyment / Renewal of Spirituality / Recovering / Human peaceful

Positive  Negative

Or it can be explained in the multiplicity of meanings as follows :



It seems that the novel « Houriyat » sympathized with the real characters, reorganizing the traumatic memory and creating alternative endings after directing accusations at history, especially

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at the misunderstanding of religion. The characters surrendered to this new, imagined reality and absorbed the magnitude of the pain when they faced it courageously. Therefore, the writer discussed the major, unspoken themes, such as paradise, which became an aesthetic prison that appeals to the weak-souled, who are eaten away by false faith, and the earth, which became a space for psychological and physical torture and the suppression of freedoms. The general discourse adopted by the writer, which is laden with existential icons, carries a stinging critical tinge when it liberated the houris from the grip of masculinity and made paradise a feminine utopia by granting it feminine authority. In contrast, he rejected the idea of a canned paradise that rejects the freedom to choose between all the alternatives granted by divine and fertile for modernist questions about establishing a society free of fanaticism and pain.

Conclusion

After exploring the narrative and novelistic world of writer Kamel Daoud, which is based on reformulating the human experience with a philosophical tinge, we can conclude some of the following concepts :

- ✓ The novel can transform pain into meaning in an artistic way.
- ✓ Collective purification is not limited to the writer alone but extends to the reader
- ✓ Relying on the principle of empathy and collective participation gave the novelistic discourse a profound philosophical and intellectual dimension.
- ✓ Transforming suffering into aesthetics by manipulating trauma and turning it into art.
- ✓ Exploding the repressed and unspoken through language, and encouraging the characters to confess.
- ✓ Reorganizing the temporal chaos of the trauma gave the text an exciting dramatic dimension.
- ✓ The novel can be a field for recovery when it exploits pain in an artistic way. so that the text remains free

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