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# The Women who made Palestinian history

Abdullah Omar

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Title: The Women who made Palestinian history

Published: March 2022.

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## The Women who made Palestinian history

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# The Women who made Palestinian history

## Foreword

International Women's Day is marked yearly on 8 March. The idea of celebrating the struggles faced by women came to light during an era of industrial and demographic growth and socio-economic turmoil. At the time, transformative ideas were emerging, and the oppression of women triggered a series of uprisings. Demonstrations everywhere called for equal rights for women, just as the 1856 working women's meetings and protests did in New York, US. Since then, millions of women have fought for justice and equal rights.

The women's movement achieved several social, political, economic and scientific changes, overcoming barriers and taking pride in collective wins. However, women still need to fight for equality and fair opportunities in every scope of life. Unfortunately, these goals are still distant for most women worldwide, which is no different to Arab and Palestinian women. Notably, Palestinian women have been tireless in their struggle to reclaim their rights in several aspects of life under occupation, blockade and apartheid.

## The struggles faced by Palestinian women

Palestinian women excel despite living under oppression, political exploitation and socio-economic hardships that are arguably more austere than anywhere else. They endure life as second-class citizens in their native land and overseas, deprived of the right to return.

Since its inception, the occupation has escalated the inhumane exclusion that permeates so many women's lives worldwide, inherited from ancient, feudal or bourgeois traditions and practices - namely,

the patriarchy. Furthermore, Palestinian women suffer along with their people.

Women were the leading heroes in many historical episodes of the Palestinian issue. Since the first days of resistance, they faced the occupiers and raised generations of freedom fighters. They have carried the cause of their occupied, partitioned land, violated by the British Mandate, the Balfour Declaration and Zionist colonisation. This process annihilated the country, expelled its inhabitants, changed the names of towns and villages and deprived most Palestinians of their innate right to citizenship.

Despite such a harsh reality of inhumane socio-economic conditions, violence and abuse, Palestinian women firmly hold their position to fight the colonisation of their lands. Women lead every step forward, organising or participating in resistance efforts. For instance:

- Pacific struggle: Signing petitions and sending telegrams and letters to oppose the occupation.
- Mass struggle: Demonstrations, uprisings and collective actions.
- Cultural resistance: Preserving the national identity and customs, developing mass capabilities to train and rehabilitate other women, including illiteracy eradication, artistic and productive projects, day-care centres for children, schools and associations.
- Political armed struggle: Within and outside the occupied territories, participating in actions and brigades, transporting supplies and ammunition, providing first aid on the ground and planning and executing military operations.

## **Palestinian women's struggles: Step by step 1917-1947**

Palestinian women ignited the urge to participate in the national struggle in late 1917 when the British Mandate issued the Balfour Declaration favouring a Zionist state on Arab lands. Despite social and patriarchal traditions, Palestinian women were active during the massive public uprising that took most towns and villages by storm at the time. With independence in sight, the Palestinian people protested through strikes, clamorous marches and even confrontations. These are some of the most prominent aspects of Palestinian women's struggles:

- Women participated in the first popular revolution against the British Mandate, when 40,000 people took to Jerusalem's streets on 27 February, 1920. They were also part of the delegation demanding the annulment of Balfour.
- In 1921, Palestinian women founded their first trade union with Zulaykha Al-Shihabi as one of its pioneers.
- In 1929, Palestinian women enacted the first national conference, with 300 participants from several cities and towns.
- Women's associations, like the Arab-Palestinian Women's Union, were active and prominent.
- In the military field, women in urban areas moved light weapons through checkpoints from one point to another and women in the villages moved clothes, supplies and ammunition, primarily to the mountain resistance brigades.
- Women also worked with the media to raise awareness; Sadiyah Nassar was one of the pioneers.

## **1947-1948**

Once more, the Palestinian people had to appeal to arms in 1947, aiming to resist the Partition Plan. Palestinian women were active in opposing the United Nations resolution that gave birth to the Zionist occupation. During this stage, these are some of the notable achievements:

- Women's participation in digging trenches and building strategic strongholds.
- Forming secret teams to keep pace with the revolutionary forces, performing first aid and supplying the popular uprising.
- Conversion of social centres and hotels to military hospitals for emergency services.

## **1948-1967**

After the forceful Palestinian exodus during the Nakba of 1948, and the following conditions of diaspora and occupation, Palestinian women had to act on several fronts to protect their families and communities. The Palestinian people were a leading force in expanding the presence of Arab women in public services, education jobs and education. Palestinian women also became involved in political parties, trade unions and national movements, reaching leadership positions inside and outside the occupied lands.

Socially, women's contributions were expansive in their initiative in launching associations and communal bodies to help their people overcome the hardships of war and displacement.

## Post-1967

When the revolutionary tide gained momentum in the 1960s, Palestinian women joined guerrilla organisations and armed flanks. These are some of the most significant contributions:

- Widespread, active participation in social services, healthcare assistance, rehabilitation and training centres and mass and local media work.
- Participation in military operations within the occupied territories.
- Efforts to enter the political arena, aiming to reach public roles in parties and movements.

Palestinian women were central characters in demonstrations and marches, as well as petitions issued to the international community. Palestinian women returned to the spotlight during the first Intifada in 1987 when they joined their husbands, brothers and children to fight the Israeli occupation. Women's roles in the diaspora were equally paramount, even far from their native land. Despite distance and oppression, Palestinian women kept fighting and taught their children that Palestine is Arab land, and that the right to return is a hope to preserve. We shouldn't overlook the Palestinian women incarcerated for years in Israeli jails, whose single crime was to defend their land and rights.

In honour of Palestinian women, these are examples of determined Palestinian women who overcome barriers to leave their legacy on Palestinian history.

## Karimeh Abboud 1893-1940



[Karimeh Abboud](#) was born on 13 November, 1893, in Bethlehem. She was the daughter of Said Abboud, who served the Lutheran Evangelical Church of the Nativity for 50 years. Karimeh studied at the Schneller Centre, the highest education a Palestinian woman could achieve at the time. Her mother, Barbara, worked as a teacher. As an exceptional case of a 20th century Palestinian woman, Karimeh carried her camera with courage and determination to prove to the world that Arab women could be innovative within arenas traditionally reserved to men.

Karimeh publicised the Palestinian cause through her photography, which became a historical document of her land and people. Her work counters the Zionist claim to colonise Palestine: "A land without people for a people without a land."



As a gifted artist, Karimeh documented the sun across different hours, from sunrise to sunset, and the change of light according to the four seasons. Karimeh travelled all over Palestine and overseas with her camera in hand, notably while driving a car of her own, during a more conservative time.

Karimeh's pictures were published in newspapers like Al-Karmel, with the headline: "Karimeh Abboud, national photographer of the sun". Palestinian historian Johnny Mansour highlights her struggle against British-Zionist colonial photography, which aimed to show an empty land to legitimise the occupation settlement. Through her photographs, Karimeh showed a vibrant, populated land. As a result, Zionist militias destroyed her studio in 1948. They also confiscated her photographs. For decades, her vital work was almost a rumour.

Karimeh died in 1940 due to fever. With her early passing, the Palestinian people grieved the loss of a gifted, militant woman. Mourners at her funeral left her camera alongside Karimeh's coffin, as she wished: "I want my camera by my side to the grave, but do not bury it with me. I want my camera to see everything I cannot see anymore."

### **May Ziadeh 1886-1941**

[May Ziadeh](#) was a writer born in Nazareth, to a Lebanese father and a Palestinian mother. Her birth name was Mary Elias Ziada. Her primary education was in Palestine; later, she finished her studies in Lebanon, while living with her parents. In 1907, May moved with her family to Cairo, where she graduated in Literature.

She worked as an English and French teacher, studying German, Spanish and Italian. May also dedicated herself to the study of the Arab language. Later on, she proceeded to study Arab literature and history and Islamic philosophy at Cairo University. May became proficient in nine languages: Arabic, French, English, German, Italian, Spanish, Latin, Greek and Syriac.



Her early literary career was in French, using the pen name "Isis Cubaia", as it was usual for women of her time to use aliases. One of the most celebrated authors of the time, [Gibran Khalil Gibran](#), called her "Maryam" in love letters they sent to one another for 20 years; however, they never met in person.

For many decades, May instilled her beautiful prose and poetry in people's hearts and souls. On 19 October, 1941, she died in Maadi, Egypt, leaving behind a vast, valuable library preserved until today.

## Zulaykha al-Shihabi 1903-1992

Zulaykha Al-Shihabi was born in Jerusalem in 1903. In the early 20th century, her father decided to send his daughters to prominent institutions so that they could learn sciences and languages.

As a member of an ancient Jerusalem family, Zulaykha grew up learning her city's history from the days of the Arab-Islamic conquest to her present day, raising awareness about the dangers of Zionism. She worked to transmit to her fellow students what she heard from her parents, launching an activism career following the [Al-Buraq Revolution](#). Zulaykha was present at the first [Arab Women's Congress](#) in Jerusalem in 1929 when 300 women gathered to discuss the political scene, resulting in a letter explaining the reasons for the uprising and popular Palestinian demands.



With Milia Sakakini, she also organised a campaign to teach girls to read and write, free of charge. The Doha School then became a well-known institution for its healthcare and educational services for young Palestinian women.

During her time at the Arab Women's Committee, Zulaykha also held a leading role to organise the general strikes of the Great Revolt between 1936 and 1939. She presented herself to attend to judicial audiences and assist

political prisoners, particularly revolutionary women who needed a morale boost to maintain their resistance in front of oppression. Zulaykha's initiative also showed the occupation authorities that these heroic women had unwavering support from the public.

In the 1940s, Zulaykha doubled the unionist cultural campaigns, often inviting writers and artists to give scientific lectures to Palestinian workers. After the Nakba, she moved from Jerusalem to Amman several times but always returned home. In 1959, Zulaykha became president of the [Union of Charitable Societies in Jerusalem](#), adding another achievement to her historical legacy.

Zulaykha participated in several international women's forums, travelling to Russia, Great Britain and Arab capitals, representing Palestinian women and their cause.

Zulaykha was one of the first women to be deported to Jordan after the Zionist takeover of the West Bank and East Jerusalem in 1967. However, an international campaign, including efforts at the United Nations, pushed Israel to allow her return, and she continued her active role as a union leader. Zulaykha worked actively until her death at 89 years old. Her burial site is next to Al-Aqsa Mosque, a place usually reserved for preeminent national figures.

## Hind al-Husseini 1916-1994

Hind Al-Husseini was born in Jerusalem in 1916. She received her primary education at the Islamic Girls' School next to Al-Aqsa Mosque. At 16 years old, she entered the English Girls College, graduating five years later. Hind continued learning about Arab

and English literature in the following years. Hind then worked as a teacher at the Islamic Girls' School but had to interrupt her career due to the Second World War.

Afterwards, she continued tutoring young Palestinian women until 1946. In 1948, Hind decided to volunteer for social work, co-launching the Women's Solidarity Society in Jerusalem, whose 22 branches were spread all over Palestine. Her association also created several day-care centres and organised literacy campaigns and embroidery workshops.



In April 1948, on the way to a meeting in the Old City, Hind saw a group of homeless children on the streets after the Zionist massacre in Deir Yassin. The oldest child was just nine years old. Hind decided to take them to her family's home. This tragic episode led her to establish a charity for orphaned and marginalised children called the [Arab Children's House](#). The small organisation became a renowned education centre during the 1950s and early 1960s.

In 1982, Hind and her colleagues bought late writer [Issaf Nashashibi's house](#) to host an Art and Culture Centre named in his honour. The place became a prominent institution of Islamic research and academic studies. Hind and Ishaq Musa Al-Husseini also founded a local library with thousands of books. In the same year, the Islamic Conference Organisation helped her enter Al-Quds University, and in 1995, she graduated in the arts.

Hind was one of the most successful Palestinian pioneers in educational, charitable and social services. Several awards recognised her work, including a medal from Pope Paul VI during his visit to Jerusalem in 1964. Hind died in her home town; her body rests in Jerusalem until this day.

## Sadhij Nassar 1900-1970



[Sadhij Nassar](#) was born in Haifa in 1900 and graduated from the Nazareth Sisters School. Her career as a writer began in 1923, publishing articles for local newspaper Al-Karmel, founded by her husband [Najib Nassar](#) in 1908. She also worked in the early editing and management of their media outlet.

In 1926, Sadhij launched The Women's Newspaper, which focused on social issues. Six years later, she had two columns in her family's gazette: one about women and another about general social issues.



Her articles were well-known for their liberal tone, urging Palestinians to raise their children based on gender equality and fair access to education and job opportunities. She vehemently tackled social discrimination and encouraged Palestinian women to enter the political arena against British-Zionist colonial influences.

Sadhij participated in several Arab women's forums, including the Eastern Women's Conference for Palestine, in Cairo, October 1938. Six years later, attending an Egyptian Feminist Union event, she made a speech urging Arab workers to mobilise and save Palestine "before it was too late".

Sadhij was the first Palestinian woman arrested by the British Mandate for her national activism. The British authorities detained her in late 1938, under the accusation of sending weapons to Palestinian revolutionary cells, describing her as a "very dangerous woman" and an "influential instigator". She spent 11 months in jail. However, she was able to organise a local and international campaign to reclaim her freedom. Sadhij's husband wrote a letter at the time, saying they would go down in history, not for creating their newspaper, but for her struggle.

After the Nakba in 1948, as a refugee in Lebanon, Sadhij published a series of articles about the Palestinian tragedy and the newspaper Al-Youm's gradual degradation. She then moved to Syria, where she published several articles in local outlets.

Sadhij was a persistent freedom fighter and a feminist pioneer, one of the first women to engage in the political arena and have a career as a journalist. With a very cultured background, she was proficient in four languages. She died exiled in Damascus, where she rests until today.

## Samira Azzam 1927-1967

[Samira Azzam](#) was born in Acre in 1927 to an orthodox Christian family. At first, she attended a public school in her native town and concluded her secondary education at the Nuns' College in Haifa. Later, she worked as a teacher at Acre's Greek Orthodox School between 1943 and 1945. In the early 1940s, she started publishing several articles for Palestinian newspapers.



After the Nakba in 1948, Samira had to move with her family to Lebanon, then to Iraq, where she taught girls in the city of Hilla. Two years later, she returned to Lebanon and launched a series of literary initiatives, such as the magazines Al-Adib and Al-Adab.

In the 1960s, several secret fronts gained stature in the national movement, and Samira took an active role in building the very core of the Palestine Liberation Front in 1961.

She was the only woman at the militant group gathering to create such prominent campaigns, including its first internal bulletin in 1963. Samira continued working tirelessly and became the leader of the women's branch until she died in 1967.

Samira attended the first Palestinian National Council (PNC) that gave birth to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on 28 May, 1964. During this historic event, she was one of eight women representing her equals. She also participated in a ground-breaking forum held by the [General Union of Palestinian Women](#) in Jerusalem.

Samira was a pioneer among Arab-Palestinian women's activism. She wrote five short story collections, reviews and literary studies. Egyptian critic Raja'a Al-Naqqash called her "the princess of the Arab tale". [Ghassan Kanafani](#) referred to her as "my teacher" and praised her work equally for its feminist approach and national, comprehensive coverage.

### **Samiha Khalil** 1923-1999



[Samiha Khalil](#) was born in Anabta and engaged in social and national efforts in the early 1950s. In 1952, she founded the [Women's Arab Union Society](#) in Al-Bireh and became its president. She co-established the General Union of Palestinian Women and attended the first Palestinian National Council in Jerusalem in 1964 as part of its delegation.

Samiha earned prominence within the Palestinian arena, particularly after the Israeli takeover of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967.

At that time, she played an essential role in the national resistance leadership. In 1980, the occupation authorities put her under house arrest and banned her from travelling for 12 years. During this period, she could not embrace her relatives while grieving the passing of her sister and grandson.

Samiha represented Palestinian women in several international forums, but Israel barred her from many others for "security reasons". She founded and attended a myriad of associations and unions since 1965. Samiha was director of the Family Revival Association and a collaborator of the Christian Ladies Association and the Jerusalem Charity Union. She also presided over the Union of Volunteer Womens Societies, a federation comprising 55 West Bank and Gaza Strip bodies.

Samiha was a pioneer and became a humanitarian and feminist symbol for the national struggle. She crafted a prominent role within the Palestinian cause and contributed actively to face social injustices. She was the only female candidate for the presidency of the Palestinian Authority in the 1996 elections.

### **Fadwa Tuqan** 1917-2003

[Fadwa Tuqan](#) was a poet and writer born in Nablus in 1917. She undertook her primary education in the city, but her family forced her to drop out due to conservative views about women's roles. Fadwa, however, became a self-taught intellectual. Her brother, poet Ibrahim Tuqan, helped her through this journey by tutoring her and encouraging her to publish her work in journals.

Many tragedies engulfed Fadwa's life after her father's passing; she also lost her brother and mentor in the following years. Then, the

Nakba in 1948 expelled her from her land. These successive ordeals affected Fadwa's psyche, evident in her first poetry book, *Alone with the Days*. Nevertheless, the same woes strengthened her to partake in the political arena during the 1950s.



Fadwa reached a prominent position among Palestinian writers. She defied archaic traditions that longed to erase her brilliance and silence her voice. She fought with her pen to defend the rights of her stolen land, craving liberation and justice. Her poetry was a powerful cornerstone to women's experiences of love, revolution and objection to an oppressive society. In the early 1960s, she travelled to London, where she lived for two years. This opened her eyes to new horizons.

After the 1967 setback, Fadwa decided to engage in public life, particularly in Nablus. She attended conferences, meetings and symposiums held by Palestinian poets like Mahmoud Darwish, Samih Al-Qasim and Tawfiq Ziyad.

Fadwa dedicated her life to literature, published several collections and books, held academic positions and became subject to countless studies on Arab literature. Furthermore, she was vastly awarded and honoured by her peers. She was called the "poetess of Palestine". Mahmoud Darwish described her as the "mother of Palestinian poetry". The intellectual, Widad Sakakini, added: "Fadwa Tuqan conveyed the feminist poetry message in our contemporary

generation, allowing her to dominate a classic language eloquently, beyond fabricated poetry of sorts."

Fadwa passed in 2003; she was an 86-year-old freedom fighter through her words. Her grave displays a [poem of her own](#): "Enough for me to die here, be buried here, to melt and vanish into her soil. Then sprout forth as a flower played with by a child from my country. Enough for me to remain in my country's embrace, be in her close as a handful of dust, a sprig of grass, a flower."

### Shadia Abu Ghazaleh 1949-1968



[Shadia Abu Ghazaleh](#) was born in Nablus in 1949. She attended primary and secondary school in her hometown and graduated from the Fatimid School for Girls. In 1966, she entered Ain Shams University in the sociology and psychology department. After this time in Cairo, she decided to return to Nablus and finish her education at An-Najah National University. Her family's efforts to discourage her were unsuccessful, particularly after the 1967 setback. Amid these unfortunate circumstances, Shadia felt the urge to engage in politics.



In 1962, she joined the Palestine-based Arab Nationalist Movement. After Israel occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, from June 1967, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine emerged as a beacon of resistance, rooted in the Arab Nationalist Movement.

[George Habash](#) was its first leader, supported by comrades like Wadih Haddad, Abu Ali Mustafa and Ahmed Al-Yamani Abu Maher. Later, the young Shadia became one of the most prominent members of the national body.

Shadia was not only a fierce guerrilla freedom fighter, but she also earned respect for her utmost dedication to her studies, her quiet demeanour and her caring for children. She was passionate about poetry and used to sing an eloquent verse: “If I fall, my comrade in arms, please take my place.”

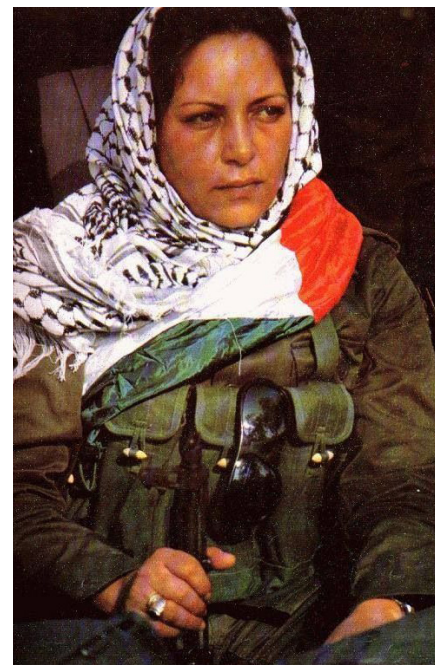
Shadia participated in several command operations against the Israeli military occupation. On 28 November, 1968, she was preparing a bomb at home when the device exploded in her hands. She passed away but became the first female Palestinian martyr of the 1967 setback.

### **Dalal Mughrabi** **1959-1978**

[Dalal Mughrabi](#) is one of the most notorious Palestinian activists, born in 1958 in the Beirut refugee camps. Her family was from Jaffa but had to move to Lebanon after the Nakba in 1948.

Dalal was still a student when she decided to join the revolutionary ranks and work with Fatah. She attended several military courses and took training in armed devices. Dalal was known for being fearless, audacious and devoted to her land.

Her militant peers chose her as chief of an operation group tasked with responding to a series of murders against resistance leaders. The operation was named “[Kamal Adwan](#)”; her group became known as “Deir Yassin”.



In the early morning of 11 March, 1978, Dalal and her group got off a boat on the Palestinian coast, then, they boarded two other vessels. The landing process was successful; the Israeli operatives failed to locate the group, as they underestimated Palestinian fearlessness.

Dalal and her squad reached Tel Aviv and confiscated a military bus. The fight was still ongoing outside, but the group detained several soldiers inside the vehicle. Casualties occurred on the Israeli side.

The occupation regime sent a special squad led by Ehud Barak to stop the bus and execute the freedom fighters, aiming to preserve an image of strength. The Zionist army employed warplanes and tanks to surround the fedayeen, forcing Dalal to detonate the bus and its passengers, killing the Israeli soldiers and her brigade.



## Leila Khaled



[Leila Khaled](#) is a renowned Palestinian freedom fighter and member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. She was the first woman to hijack a plane in August 1969, when this kind of action was a relatively common strategy to release or exchange prisoners.

Leila deflected an aircraft of the Israeli company El Al to Syria, aiming to free Palestinian citizens held in Israeli jails. Her secondary goal was to give the Palestinian issue a global spotlight. Later, for the same reason, she hijacked a US TWA airliner that landed in London when the local authorities arrested her and her comrades.

Leila was born in Haifa in 1944 under the British Mandate. The Nakba events forced her family to seek asylum in Lebanon four years later. When she was 15 years old, Leila joined her brother in George Habash's Arab Nationalist Movement, which would result in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in 1968.

Leila studied at schools managed by the Evangelical Church Federation of Tyre in Lebanon and graduated from high school at the Sidon School. In 1963, she entered the American University of Beirut but had to drop out after a year due to the high cost of education. During

this brief academic stint, her colleagues elected her as a member of the Administrative Committee of the General Union of Palestinian Students in Beirut.

Between 1978 and 1980, she studied in Moscow and Rostov but dropped out once again when the PLO summoned college students abroad to contribute to the Palestinian revolution. Leila actively helped the resistance during the Israeli offensive against Lebanon in the summer of 1982 by accommodating displaced families and taking care of wounded people in the local hospitals.

In early 1969, she joined the Popular Front training camps in Jordan. On 29 August, 1969, aided by Salim Issawi, Leila hijacked the TWA Flight 840 connecting Los Angeles and Tel Aviv. Both militants boarded the plane in Rome. Half an hour later, they diverted the route to Damascus, where they safely landed the 116 passengers and exploded the aircraft.

On 6 September, 1970, Leila tried to hijack another plane en route to Frankfurt with Nicaraguan Sandinista Patrick Arguello. Leila and her comrade boarded the Israeli flight as part of a complex operation to take control of two other airliners in Zurich and the US. The mission ended in disaster because two fellow militants failed to proceed. Arguello was shot and killed by guards on board during the emergency landing at Heathrow Airport in London, while Scotland Yard operatives arrested Leila. A month later, Leila was released through a prisoner exchange deal when other militants hijacked a Pan Am flight. Nowadays, she is a member of the Palestinian National Council, living in Jordan with her husband and two children.

## Susan Abulhawa



[Susan Abulhawa](#) is a Palestinian-American writer and human rights activist born on 3 June, 1970. She wrote the best-selling novels *Mornings in Jenin* and *The Blue Between Sky and Water*, published in 2010 and 2015, respectively. As a resident of Yardley, Pennsylvania, she also founded the NGO *Playgrounds for Palestine*.

Susan's parents were born in Tur, a town in Jerusalem. According to her father, the family was expelled from their land in 1967 at gunpoint. Her mother was studying in Germany at the time and was not allowed to return. Later, the family reunited in Jordan before proceeding to Kuwait, where Susan was born. However, the family disintegration due to war sent her to the US, where she lived with an uncle until she was five. Eventually, Susan returned to Jordan and Kuwait under the care of other relatives. At ten years old, she was living in an orphanage in Jerusalem. Three years later, a North Carolina family adopted her. Since then, she has lived in the US, where she graduated in biology with a master's degree in neuroscience.

Susan also engaged in journalism and fiction writing, collaborating on collections printed by US and international newspapers. Her first novel, *Mornings in Jenin*, became a global best-seller, translated into 26 languages. In 2013, she published an anthology of poetry named *My Voice Sought the Wind*. She published her second novel in the UK on 4 June, 2015, and in the US three months later. *The Blue Between Sky and Water* was translated into 19 languages.

Susan founded the NGO [Playgrounds for Palestine](#) for children with a similar story to hers. Her organisation helps build playgrounds for children in Palestine and the Lebanon-based United Nations refugee camps. Several awards have honoured Susan's work regarding historical fiction, creativity and fantasy during the last few years.

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