

**TRANSLATION, CONFLICT, AND MEDIATION: HOW TRANSLATORS "RE-NARRATE"**

**THE CONFLICT**

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## Abstract

The story of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has had multiple narrators and re-narrators over the past seventy-three years. This thesis discusses how translators and interpreters re-narrate this conflict according to their positionality within and outside the narrative. In a comparative analysis of the Arabic and French translations of *Footnotes in Gaza*, a journalistic graphic book by Joe Sacco (2009), we will see how Mohammad Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, a Palestinian activist translator, and Sidonie Van den Dries, an external translator, re-narrate this conflict. We will also explore how the “in-between” translators, those who belong to one side of the conflict but work with the other, re-narrate the same events. Since translators in conflict zones deal with conflictual and competitive narratives, we will also find out whether they can act as mediators. The theoretical framework used in this analysis consists of the narrative theory by Mona Baker, cultural theories by Eva Hoffman and Edward Saïd, the re-writing theory by André Lefevere, and Critical Discourse Analysis by Van Dijk. The findings show that translators re-narrate the Palestinian-Israeli conflict differently. While the Palestinian activist translator - who considers translation as a “site” of resistance - radically detaches himself from the source text, the French external translator - who adopts a “neutral” stance towards the conflict - fully re-embodies the source text. The findings also suggest that “neutrality” in translation does not necessarily lead to a successful mediation between the conflictual narratives. On the contrary, “neutrality” perpetuates the imbalance of powers. A successful mediation is, therefore, one that “empowers” the less powerful and “gives voice” to the less heard.

### **Dedication**

To my beloved parents: Zahra and Jamal (RIP)

To my brothers: Khaled and Issam

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## Introduction

We live now in a world dominated by armed conflicts. This climate of conflicts that “cuts across national boundaries” affects, in a way or another, our life, our identity, and “forces itself into our consciousness” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 1). The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is one of the world’s most enduring and life-shaping wars. This conflict, which continues to the present day, keeps affecting the lives of its victims since 1948. The issue of the Palestinian refugees is an excellent example of how refugeeism – being a direct consequence of this conflict - shaped the Palestinian national identity. Martin Bunton (2013), in his book *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Very Short Introduction*, explains that the suffering of these refugees, who were dispersed throughout the Arab region, in the aftermath of the 1948 war, “set the primary context for the evolution of [the] Palestinian national identity” (56). Rosemary Sayigh (2011) develops this idea further in her article “Palestinian Refugee Identity/ies; generation, class, region,” She states that, before 1948, the Palestinian “peasant” identified himself through his “occupation, social status, way of life and his village” (Erni 24). After 1948, the “peasant identity” has changed to become a “refugee identity” (24). It is only when the Palestinian revolution was launched in 1965 that the “refugee identity” has become a “national identity,” and the “victim identity” of refugees has changed to indicate an “identity of struggle” (24). The idea of “national resistance” became central to Palestinians' self-identification (24).

This social and political change, that followed the 1948 war, was accompanied with a literary change. The Palestinian writers and poets saw the necessity to adopt new modes of “committed” writings “to legitimate the cause of their people and their history, to counterbalance the colonial threat” (Mir 110). Indeed, in the 1950s, a “poetry of resistance” emerged with poets such as Mahmoud Darwish and Samih al Qasim (110). Similarly, a “literature of resistance” has emerged with authors like Fadwa Tukan and diasporic writers such as Jabra Ibrahim Jabra and Ghassan Kanafani, among others (110). “Committed”

translation has also been used as a “tool” to promote the narrative of Palestinian national identity and to support the Palestinian national project (Al-Hirthani 116 -117).

Indeed, in conflictual situations, translation becomes a central tool for both sides of the conflict to legitimize and even to foster their own narrative of the conflict (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 1). Translation becomes, thus, a “political activity” in which the translators’ *habitus* changes from the “traditional position of supposed neutrality and invisibility” to a willingness “to assume responsibility for their cultural, social and [political] practice” (Wolf 136). This change in the translator’s *habitus* was called by Michaela Wolf (2012) “the activist turn” (136).

The impact of conflict on the translation activity was mainly studied by Mona Baker in her book *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account* (2006) and many other studies (2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2010; 2013). Baker, who draws on the narrative theory, examines how translation functions in conflict areas and explores how “the discursive negotiation of conflictual and competing narratives is realized in and through acts of translation and interpreting” (*Translation and Conflict* 1). In sum, Baker considers translation as a “space of resistance” or “an alternative space for political action” where activist translators can use their linguistic and paralinguistic skills to serve “a political agenda” and to “empower voices” that have been silenced for a long time (Baker “Translation as an Alternative Space” 23). In this regard, translators no longer position themselves “purely as neutral, unengaged professionals who stand in some ‘liminal’<sup>1</sup> space between cultures and political divides” (24). They do not “reproduce the texts” but “construct cultural realities” through their intervention “in the processes of **narration** and **re-narration**” (24). Translation is not an “innocent act of disinterested mediation” but a “site” where

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<sup>1</sup> I use “**bold technique**” in certain cases, in order to emphasize a word or a phrase.

committed translators can exercise their “agency,” elaborate their “individual and collective identities,” and “negotiate the conditions of history” in which they find themselves (25).

This relationship between activism and translation was the starting point of this thesis. Initially, my intention was to study how activist translators, in conflict zones, use their linguistic skills to re-narrate (re-frame) the conflict in order to serve a specific political agenda; a national agenda. But this thesis has evolved, throughout the way, to adopt a broader view of the translation activity in war zones. Indeed, I will study three types of translation scenarios (activist, “in-between,” and external translators), and I will discuss how each of them participates in the re-narration of the conflict, as well as how their re-narrations vary according to their “narrative locations”; to use Baker’s terms. What I mean by “narrative location” is the position that translators adopt vis-a-vis the conflict they are re-narrating. This position is usually determined by their “**distance**” and “**proximity**” to one of the sides of the conflict. Indeed, the “activist translators” belong ethically, linguistically, and ideologically to one of the sides of the conflict and consider translation as a tool of resistance against oppression. The “in-between translators” belong ethnically and linguistically to one side of the conflict but work for the other side; “the enemy” side. As for the “external translators,” they belong to neither side and often produce a “neutral” translation.

Since these translators are dealing with two conflicting and competing narratives, they need to act as “**mediators**” to “tune the distance” or “bridge the wide gap” between them. Throughout their mediation, they use several translation strategies that range from the most neutral to the most engaged ones.

In sum, this research will try to find answers to the following questions: How do translators, whether they are “activists,” in the “in-between space,” or “external,” re-narrate the Palestinian-Israeli conflict? How their re-narrations vary according to their “narrative location” vis-a-vis the conflict? To what extent do traumatic experiences form and inform translators’ re-narration? How can they act as

“translators-mediators” to adjust the distance between both conflicting narratives? How can their re-narration affect the outcome of mediation? Which type of translators can participate in a “successful” mediation?

In order to find answers to the above-mentioned questions, I will analyze the comic-book *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009) by Joe Sacco and its Arabic and French translations carried out respectively by Mohammed Tawfiq AL-Bujairami (as an activist translator) and Sidonie Van den Dries (as an external translator). The “in-between” translators will be studied in a separate section in the third chapter; where I focus on the Druze translators in the Israeli army and the Iraqi translators working for the US forces in Iraq.

I chose *Footnotes in Gaza* for three main reasons: first of all, this book narrates the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, mainly the 1956 war in Gaza, in an innovative way. As we will see in chapter two, this book belongs to the genre of comics journalism (the speech balloons are actual testimonies of survivors, and the illustrations are real representations of towns and refugee camps). Second, from a translation perspective, this book enabled me to study two layers of translation: the “internal translation,” which means the act of translation that is represented in the source text, consisting of the translation of testimonies from Arabic into English, and the “external translation” consisting of the two published translations of the book, one into Arabic and the other one into French<sup>2</sup>.

The last motive for choosing this book is personal. I still remember my mother’s voice when she narrated the massacre of Rafah - one of the two massacres discussed in *Footnotes in Gaza*. Indeed, my mother, who was living in Rafah Refugee Camp in Gaza at the time, said: “We heard an announcement done via loudspeaker asking all men who were between the age of 15 and 50 to go to the public school in Rafah. My father and our neighbors were among them... we women and children, stayed at home.”

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<sup>2</sup> *Footnotes in Gaza* was translated into 14 languages in total.

Although my mother does not remember the exact details of what happened, as she was young, she does remember the feelings of “fear and hope.” The fear that her father will not come home and the hope that he will. Therefore, when I read this book, I felt that I was hearing her voice again.

The methodology that I will be using for this research is a qualitative approach defined by Saul Mcleod (2019) as “the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting non-numerical data” (Mcleod)<sup>3</sup>. More precisely, I will apply a comparative method to a selection of examples from *Footnotes in Gaza*, the source text, and its two translations in French and Arabic to explain how the conflict was narrated by the author and re-narrated by the two translators.

This thesis is divided into four chapters: the first chapter is dedicated to the theoretical and conceptual framework where I explore the connection between conflict, forced exile (or refugeeism), ideology, and translation. The second chapter is devoted to the analysis of the source text *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009), the third chapter is dedicated to the analysis of translation as mediation where I shed light on the “in-between” translators with particular attention to the Druze translators in the Israeli army, and the Iraqi translators who worked for the US forces in Iraq, and the fourth chapter is devoted to the analysis of the French and Arabic translations of *Footnotes in Gaza*.

My aim with this thesis is to look at translation from various perspectives. In other words, my objective is to adopt a “multidisciplinary approach” that enables me, and hopefully the reader, to explore the complexity of translation, mainly in conflict situations, as a process that goes beyond the simple linguistic transfer. In this thesis, many concepts were studied as factors that may influence translation such as conflict, ideology, forced exile, nationalism, imagined nation, loss of identity, self-censorship, and patronage. I do hope, throughout this research, to demonstrate that translators in conflict zones are not

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<sup>3</sup> For more info about the difference between qualitative and quantitative methods, please consult: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/qualitative-quantitative.html> .



just “bridge builders” but “agents” who affect, through their re-narration of the conflict, the outcome of mediation between the two conflicting narratives, no matter how neutral their re-narration may seem. Therefore, translators and interpreters in conflict zones must assume an “ethical responsibility” for their re-narration more than translators in any other field or situation.

I learned from this research experience that “neutrality” - when we deal with an armed conflict in which we are involved - is “impossible” and even “unethical.” It is very hard to separate between the researcher’s perspective, beliefs, traumatic experiences, and his/her research. Indeed, when I started this research, I decided to deal with it in an “objective” and “neutral” way. But when I analyzed *Footnotes in Gaza* and read about the wars of 1948, 1956, and when I considered the subsequent consequences of wars such as refugeeism and forced exile, I felt that I was reading the stories of my parents, my grandparents, and millions of Palestinian refugees. Therefore, I think that it is my duty to convey the voice of those people who are rarely heard. Consequently, in this thesis, I am not claiming to be “neutral” or “objective.” On the contrary, my interest in the topic, “Translation and Conflict,” and even in the book itself, *Footnotes in Gaza*, was shaped by my background and by my personal motives. This research has, thus, been carried out from an activist perspective.

## Chapter One: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

As I indicated in the introduction, the impact of major armed conflicts on the translation activity was mainly studied by Mona Baker (2006) in her book *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account* and many other studies (2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2010). While Baker, throughout her book - which draws on the narrative theory - tries to find out how translation functions in areas of conflict and how translators can become discursive negotiators of conflictual narratives (*Translation and Conflict* 1), I am trying, in this chapter, to find out why these translators would interfere and take positions in the translation process. What traumatic experiences would form and inform their re-narration of the conflict, and why they would renounce the idea of “neutrality of the translator,” which was for a long time a characteristic of a “good translation.”

This chapter is an exploration of the inter-connections among conflict, forced exile, ideology, and translation. I will show how “conflict” and its most severe consequence, “forced exile” (refugeeism in this case), would form and inform translators’ national narrative. And how these activist translators resort to nationalism as an act of activism and resistance. However, the nationalist ideologies (nationalism), that are willingly embraced by activist translators, are not the only ideologies studied in this chapter. Since activist translators do not work in a vacuum but in a society, I will also shed light on ideologies that are imposed on them by the regulatory bodies, known as “patrons,” as well as the ideologies imposed by the culture and discourse of the target language. These ideologies are usually reflected by actions like patronage and self-censorship.

As illustrated in the following diagram, this chapter consists of three pillars (sections): the first one is “conflict, narrative, and translation,” the second one is “exile, nationalism, identity, and translation,” and the third one is “ideology and translation.”

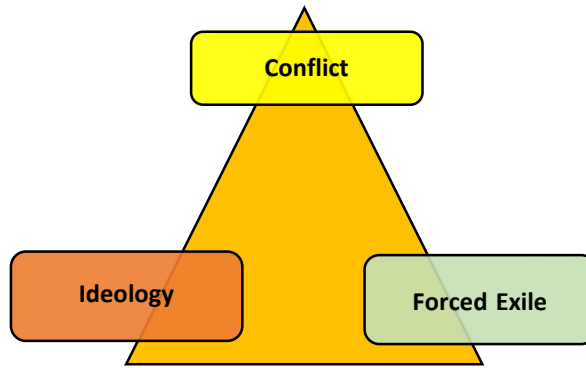


Figure 1. 1: Representation of the Three Sections of the First Chapter

### 1. Conflict, Narrative, and Translation

According to Baker, conflicts in the broader meaning refer to “a situation in which two or more parties seek to undermine each other because they have incompatible goals, competing interests, or fundamentally different values” (*Translation and Conflict* 1). Conflicts, in that sense, are a part of our everyday life (1).

In this research, however, I am adopting the political meaning of the term, i.e., “conflicts,” which lead to severe consequences such as deaths of civilians, forced migration, refugees, poverty, exile, loss of identity, destruction of infrastructure, etc. I am referring, here, to major armed conflicts defined by Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg (1998) as “a contested incompatibility concerning a government and/or territory,” where armed forces are used between two parties, at least one of them is the government of a state (633). Dan Smith (1997) defines wars - which is classified according to Wallensteen and Sollenberg (1998) as the most severe level of major armed conflicts - as “open, organised, armed and deadly conflict between two or more centrally organised parties over political issues of control of government or territory, involving some continuity between clashes, with a death toll of at least several hundred” (Dan Smith 191). Both terms “conflict” and “war” will be used interchangeably in this research.

The examples throughout this thesis will draw mainly on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, one of the longest and most controversial major armed conflicts in the world. They will demonstrate how translation, being a “part of the *institution* of war,” as Baker argues, participates in “shaping the way in which [this] conflict unfolds” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 1).

### **1.1. Language, War, and Translation**

The relationship between language and war was discussed by Paul Chilton (1997) in his article “The Role of Language in Human Conflict” and Dan Smith’s article (1997) “Language and Discourse in Conflict and Conflict Resolution.” Chilton (1997) confirms that language does play a role in situations of conflicts/wars:

First of all, the decisions made by politicians to mobilize military forces and even to carry out the relevant military operations - after a war has been launched - can only be executed through a verbal activity that actually constitutes actions (Chilton 174-175). Chilton believes that “a declaration of war is a linguistic act” (175). These verbal activities need to be translated to other parties’ languages in order to inform civilians in the countries involved and the whole world that a war is coming. As Baker argues, “there is no point in the USA declaring war on Iraq without ensuring that the Iraqis and the rest of the world ‘hear’ that declaration” (*Translation and Conflict* 2).

Indeed, translation, in such conflictual situations, intervenes heavily to maintain the communication between the civilians of the country, subject to the war, and the military officials. And most importantly, between the military officials and the international community. We can, for instance, consider the Arabic-language military leaflets dropped by Israeli Air Forces drones over the Gaza Strip in 2018. These leaflets were warning Palestinians that any participation in protests, organized by *Hamas*, a “militant Palestinian nationalist and Islamist movement” (Britannica), against the move of the American embassy to Jerusalem will put their lives in danger: “Don’t get near the fence and don’t take part in Hamas’

show, which endangers you" ("Israel Drops Leaflets on Gaza")<sup>4</sup>. It is clear that a work of translation has been carried out here; because of the wide circulation of these leaflets in the international media such as *The New York Times*, *The Independent*, and others. The necessity of translation stems from the fact that these leaflets are a part of a broader narrative. Indeed, although they are framed as a warning to civilians, the ultimate recipient of these leaflets is the broader regional or international community (Cotter 57). Indeed, the language used in these leaflets places the responsibility for the safety of civilians onto the shoulders of civilians themselves (62). And this would legitimize military actions in the conflict (59), as stipulated by Protocol I, Article 57 of the Geneva Conventions ("Geneva Conventions Act").

Second, Chilton (1997) confirms that what makes a concept of 'war' legitimate, can only be established in linguistic activity, such as all the propaganda and narratives justifying the human and economic sacrifice (175). War's discourse is implicated in beliefs and ideologies in order to sustain the sovereignty of a state and, therefore, the wars between states (179). Just like the discourse used by the president George Bush to justify the 1991 Gulf War. This discourse, which was inspired from the "just war" theory, used the idea that it was totally "just" to go to war to defend a weaker state (180). War's discourse needs to be legitimated and justified not only at the domestic level but also at the international level. Translation is a central tool to circulate these discourses to an international audience; Baker (2006) confirms that "contemporary wars have to be sold to an international and not just domestic audiences, and translation is a major variable influencing the circulation and legitimation of the narratives that sustain these activities" (*Translation and Conflict* 2).

Finally, I think that the most important factor in the relationship between war/conflict and translation is "resisting the narratives that create the intellectual and moral environment for violent

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<sup>4</sup> For more information, please consult: [www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israel-gaza-us-embassy-protests-opening-jerusalem-border-fence-leaflets-a8350511.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israel-gaza-us-embassy-protests-opening-jerusalem-border-fence-leaflets-a8350511.html).

conflict” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 2). Indeed, translation can detect a hidden agenda in a text and refute it. The example provided by Baker (2007) of the Israeli military attack on Jenin Refugee Camp in April 2002 perfectly reflects this idea. This military operation, which left the camp in ruins, was described in the international media as a minor military “incursion” which was too “euphemized” (Baker “Reframing Conflict” 164-165). The Palestinian translator resisted this narrative and compared this operation to “the war of Vietnam” to refute the idea indicating that what happened in Jenin was just a “minor incursion” and to confirm that the consequences were as severe as the Vietnam War. An old Palestinian man expresses his anger saying in Palestinian Arabic (Baker “Reframing” 164; *Translation and Conflict* 99; *emphasis added*)<sup>5</sup>:

- The old man: انا عارف، والله العظيم، والله العظيم، بيتنا ما صار بيت  
Back translation: [What can I say, by God, by God, **our home is no longer a home**].
- English translation: What can I say? **Not even Vietnam was as bad as this.**

In sum, translators/translation, in conflictual situations, may adopt a specific discourse which is, in its turn, implicated in beliefs and ideologies. The translation may either promote a “patriotic discourse” or construct an “enemy image” (Chilton 179). According to Dan Smith (1997): “adversaries and enemies have to be simultaneously recognized and named as such. Not only are they constructed in discourse but a discourse is constructed about them” (190). Dan Smith also confirms that the escalation or (de)escalation of a conflict is often associated with key changes in discourse about the enemy (190). In other words, “discourse enters conflict and war at many points, from the depiction of an enemy to the construction of a martial tradition, to the conceptualisation of war itself” (204). The discursive choices of every party in a conflict reflect certain preferences in terms of how to depict the conflict (204).

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<sup>5</sup> In this thesis, I use “**bold**” technique in certain occasions to emphasize a term or a phrase.

## 1.2. Narrative Theory: A 'Site' for Activism in Translation

French structuralists, especially Roland Barthes (1977) and Claude Bremond (1973), were credited with emancipating the concept of “narrative” from literature and fiction and recognizing it as “a semiotic phenomenon that transcends disciplines and media” (Herman et al. *Routledge Encyclopedia* 344). The narrative was liberated not only from literature but also from any form of textual support, mainly with the concept of “Grand Narratives,” which was introduced by Jean Francois Lyotard (1984), to refer to “collective beliefs rather than the message of particular texts [...]” (Herman et al. *Routledge Encyclopedia* 344), which paved the way to certain narratives of contemporary cultural studies like the “Narratives of Gender” or the “Narratives of Identity” and others (344).

The concept of “narrative,” in its contemporary meaning, has become widespread in diverse fields such as historiography, medicine, law, psychoanalysis, and ethnography (Herman et al. *Routledge Encyclopedia* 344). The use of narrative in translation studies draws on the social theory, which has come to be known as the socio-narrative theory (Baker “Narrative Analysis and Translation” 179). The meaning of the narrative that I will adopt in this thesis is the one suggested by Baker as “public and personal ‘stories’ that we subscribe to and that guide our behaviour. They are the stories we tell ourselves, not just those we explicitly tell other people, about the world(s) in which we live” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 19). The term “story” here means a “mental image, a cognitive construct that concerns certain types of entities and relations between these entities” (Herman et al. *Routledge Encyclopedia* 347), just like the story we construct in our minds when we observe a fight in the subway in order to tell it to our family (347). Both terms narrative and story are used interchangeably in this thesis.

There are three reasons why I chose to adopt the socio-narrative theory:

First, the socio-narrative theory emphasizes the power and function of the narrative more than the structure or make-up of a text alone (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 19). In fact, it studies how the narrative “shapes people’s views of rationality, of objectivity, of morality, and of their conceptions of themselves and others” (Bennett and Edelman 159). The narrative, in this approach, is actualized through various media. According to Donald E. Polkinghorne (2006): “Stories exist independently of a particular expressive form. The same plot and its events can be presented through various media, for example, through an oral telling, a ballet, a motion picture, or written document” (Polkinghorne 8). Indeed, the corpus I am analyzing for this research is realized through textual, paratextual, and visual elements.

Second, the Socio-narrative theory considers “narratives” as the principal mode by which we experience the world. The everyday narratives construct reality and not only represent it (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 180). The idea of “constructedness of the narrative” involves that “no narrative can represent the ultimate, absolute, uncontestable truth of any event or set of events, we have to accept that events do take place in real time and space and hence are verifiable by a range of means that are always extendable and open to refinement and reassessment” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 18). In fact, we cannot assume that a narrative can be separated from the perspective of its narrator (17). Hence, narratives are constantly constructed/re-constructed every time they are re-told/re-narrated. In sum, we have to accept that there are multiple versions of any narrative, i.e., multiple truths, which obviously participate in challenging any hegemonic narrative in the world (17). Translation may, then, be seen as a form of **re-narration** that also “participates in constructing the world rather than merely a process of transferring semantic content from one language to another, accurately or otherwise” (Baker “Narrative Analysis and Translation” 180).

Third, the socio narrative theory in translation can be a site for “activism.” The theory suggests that reality/real events need to be narrativized to be meaningful (Baker “Narrative Analysis and Translation”



180). This narrativization is usually informed by “our own location within a variety of public and personal narratives and reflects the inescapable prejudices and limitations of that location” (180). Herman describes narratives as vehicles of dominant ideologies and instruments of power (Herman et al. *Routledge Encyclopedia* 345). As I indicated earlier, any narrative, mainly a political narrative, can circulate in many different versions, usually informed “through various processes of reinforcement and contestation” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 21). People try to contest a present situation of oppression or injustice through the re-narration of their traumatic past (21). For instance, the African Americans re-tell collective narratives from their past to contest continued oppression, Israelis re-tell stories of the Holocaust to support their narratives of the present (21). Similarly, Palestinians re-tell their past experiences to contest an ongoing situation of oppression, displacement, and homelessness. Hence, people adhering to one of the versions of the narrative in conflictual situations are not willing to any adjustment of their version, which can cause them a “major personal trauma,” and obviously, they are not willing to agree on a resolution of a conflict informed by the competing narrative (21). In sum, we can say that every time a narrative is re-narrated, elements from the circulating public narrative or the personal narrative of the re-narrator are injected and added to the original version (22). These elements are based on the public or personal ideologies of the narrator, and they either reject or support the original version of the narrative.

Therefore, activist translation helps in contesting the dominance of the powerful by giving voice to the less powerful, mainly in the 21 century “with its globalized economies and aggressive resurgence of colonial empires” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 25). Indeed, activist translators “create connections which are not present in the ST and socio-politically reframe the narrative for others” (Dubbaty and Abudayeh 149). This can be achieved by employing several linguistic and para-linguistic techniques<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> These techniques are called “reframing strategies” and will be explored in the following section.

Therefore, activist translators re-narrate “the story to activate and elicit certain reactions from TT readers” (149). Many examples can be given in this regard, such as the two Arabic translations of Samuel Huntington’s book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996). The translators did not intervene in the ST, but they included extended introductions within the text, in which they rejected Huntington’s theory which highlights “a panorama of differences” (Baker “Reframing Conflict” 153). This type of activist translation is one of the main pillars of this research.

### **1.3. (Re)framing Narratives: How Activism is Actualised in Translation**

According to the narrative theory, every translator faces an ethical choice either to reproduce existing ideologies imbedded in the ST or to dissociate himself/herself from them (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 105). When turning down an assignment is not a feasible option, translators usually resort to various sets of strategies to either undermine a narrative (to dissociate themselves from the narrator’s position) or to strengthen the narrative (to declare their empathy with the narrator’s position) (105). Translators can renegotiate, exploit and manipulate the features of narrativity in order to produce a “politically charged narrative in the target text” (105).

Baker discusses many features of narrativity in her book *Translation and Conflict* (2006). For the purpose of this study, I will discuss the four core features: temporality, relationality, causal emplotment, and selective appropriation. The other features will be used as needed in the analysis of the corpus. *Temporality* means that “narratives are embedded in time and space and derive much of their meaning from the temporal moment and physical site of the narration” (Baker “Reframing Conflict” 155). *Relationality* means “every element in a narrative depends for its interpretation on its place within the network of elements that make up the narrative; it cannot be interpreted in isolation” (155). *Selective appropriation* means “narratives are necessarily constructed according to evaluative criteria that enable and guide selective appropriation of a set of events or elements from the vast array of open-ended and

overlapping events that constitute experience” (105). The final and most important feature is *causal emplotment*; it “allows us to make moral sense of events, because it enables us to account for why things happened the way a given narrative suggests they happened” (Baker “Narratives in and of Translation” 8). Two people can agree on a set of events but disagree on their interpretation (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 67). For instance, in the Israeli narrative, the raids launched on the Gaza strip are a response to rocket attacks carried out by Palestinian militants, while, in the Palestinian narrative, these attacks are a response to the severe blockade imposed on the Strip and to the forced displacement of Palestinians from their homes.

Baker (2006) classifies the reframing strategies into five categories: **A)** Framing ambiguity and framing space. Framing ambiguity refers to the fact that any ambiguity in the narrative can be exploited by activist translators to promote their version of the narrative (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 107). Framing space: refers to activist translators, who are supposed to stay within their frame space, but find ways to “evade or challenge these limits” and “to inject the discourse with their own voice (...)” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 110). **B)** Temporal and spatial framing: “involves selecting a particular text and embedding it in a temporal and spatial context that accentuates the narrative it depicts and encourages us to establish links between it and current narratives that touch our lives...” (112). **C)** Selective appropriation in translation: “is realized in patterns of omission and addition designed to suppress, accentuate or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative encoded in the source text or utterance, or aspects of the larger narrative(s) in which it is embedded” (114). **D)** Framing by labelling: “any discursive process that involves using a lexical item, term or phrase to identify a person, place, group, event or any other key element in a narrative” (122). This reframing strategy includes the reframing of rival names and titles according to our position in the narrative such as: West Bank/Judea and Samaria (125). **E)** Repositioning of participants: In translation, participants can be repositioned in relation to each other,

within the narrative, and in relation to the hearer/reader outside the narrative (in paratextual elements), “through the linguistic management of time, space, deixis, dialect, register, use of epithets, and various means of self- and other identification” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 133).

Consequently, reframing strategies can be carried out by activist translators in “the body of the translation” or/and “around the translation” (Baker “Reframing Conflict” 158). They were summarised by Baker (2007) in the following lines:

Processes of (re)framing can draw on practically any linguistic or non-linguistic resource to set up an interpretive context for the reader or hearer. This may include exploiting paralinguistic devices such as intonation and typography, visual resources such as colour, image and layout, and of course linguistic devices such as tense shifts, deixis, code switching, and the use of euphemisms (Baker “Reframing Conflict” 158).

Overall, translators are not passive linguistic mediators, they are responsible for any text they produce as they “participate in creating, negotiating and contesting social reality” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 105).

## **2. Exile, Nationalism, Identity, and Translation**

I believe that we cannot study the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and its impact on the translation activity without studying the impact of its ongoing consequence: forced exile (and refugeeism). In this section, I will study the relationship between exile and translation. We will see how intellectual exiles such as writers, novelists, and translators, after losing their homeland, past, and identity, attempt to overcome this traumatic experience by building nations in their writings. This nation-building process is achieved through the construction of a “narrative of nationalism” (a narrative of resistance and activism). This narrative, in its turn, is constructed in language through the use of linguistic and discursive strategies.

This relationship between exile, nationalism/nation-building, and translation was overlooked in translation. Only few studies deal with the role of translation in constructing nationalism/nation in exile.

These studies are usually focused on either the Palestinian or Israeli contexts, such as Gordon (2002), Woodsworth (2019), Al-Hirhani (2017). However, I found many works dealing with the nation-building process and translation without any reference to exile: Corbett (1999), Bermann and Wood (2005), Selim (2009), Jones (2010), and Tahir- Gürçağlar (2001, 2003).

In this section, as illustrated in the following diagram, I will first define exile and exiles according to the meaning adopted in this research. Second, I will look into the relationship between exile, imagined nations, and nationalism. Then, I will show how nationalism is constructed in translation. And finally, how lost identity is restored in translation.

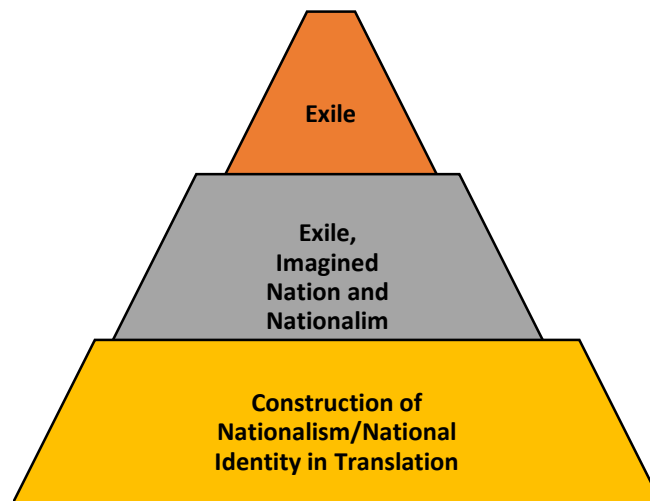


Figure 1. 2 Representation of the Three Components of This Section

## **2.1. Definition of Exile**

Exile, according to Edward Saïd (2013), “is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted” (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 180). Exile in the twentieth century has been changed from the punishment of

specific persons, the banishment of certain persons in pre-modern times, to a cruel punishment of whole communities as a result of war, famine, and disease (Saïd “Intellectual Exile” 113).

Exiles are those who are trapped between places and often not able to establish roots anywhere (Stroinska 13). They are referred to as refugees, émigrés, émigrants, and expatriates depending on the political, social, and cultural circumstances surrounding their migration and whether they chose to leave their countries or were forced to do so (Hoffman “The New Nomads” 40). The exiles I am referring to in this research are the millions of refugees of our time: the time of mass immigration and displaced people who were forced to exile. They are defined by Edward Saïd (2013) as: “the uncountable masses for whom UN agencies have been created [...] the refugee-peasants with no prospect of ever returning home, armed only with a ration card and an agency number” (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 182). Those who were bundled out of their homes, cut off from “their roots, lands, and past” and left with nowhere to go (183). I am talking here about the Palestinian refugees who, according to the UNRWA (The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), amounted up to 750.000 in 1950 (“Palestine Refugees”). According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), in 2018, the UNRWA-registered-refugees amounted up to 6 million; and they constitute almost half of the Palestinian refugees in diaspora, which are about 13 million (“The International Day of Refugees 2019”).

These exiles are also trapped in time. They long for what they have lost forever (their past), are uncertain about their future, and feel suspended in the present in which they live but can never fully integrate (Stroinska 13). They are like the Roman God Janus, the God of gates and doors, beginnings and entrances, who is usually represented with two faces looking in two directions, backward and forward, into the past and the future (13). The third face representing the present always remains invisible (13). This shattering feeling or state of “in-betweenness” is inescapable for exiled people; some of them may get accustomed to this situation (Saïd “Intellectual Exile” 120). But for those living in refugee camps, they

will find a way to resist this forced situation through activism (nationalism); as Theodor W. Adorno (1974) put it, “a wrong life cannot be lived rightly” (Saïd “Intellectual Exile” 187).

## **2.2. Exile, Imagined Nations, and Nationalism**

### **2.2.1. Exile and Imagined Nations**

No matter how well an exile may be doing in adapting to the new environment, he will always have a feeling of difference and eccentricity (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 187). In order to compensate for this terminal loss, i.e., the loss of homeland, exiles create a world (nation) to rule and to live in (187). This constructed world is usually unnatural, imagined, and resembles a homeland that was left behind forever (187). The lost homeland, according to Eva Hoffman, is “sequestered in the imagination as a mythic, static realm” (Hoffman “The New Nomads” 52). She gives the example of Polish refugee camps in England that were set up during the WWII. The inhabitants were living in virtual isolation; many were never able to learn English and always hoping for that magic moment of return to Poland (52).

This may explain why so many exiles are “novelists, chess players, political activists, and intellectuals” as these professions require “a minimal investment in objects and places, a great premium on mobility and skill” (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 187). Translation, obviously, falls into this category of professions. I am talking here about exiled translators who consider and exercise translation as an intellectual activity that can have an impact on the social and political world, and not only as a mere interlingual transfer. These exiled translators, just like novelists, who no longer have a homeland, attempt to construct one in their writings/translations. According to Theodor W. Adorno (1974): “For a man who no longer has a homeland, writing becomes a place to live” (qtd. in Saïd “Intellectual Exile” 120).

### 2.2.2. Exile and Nationalism

Exiled intellectuals reclaim their lost homelands/nations by resorting to nationalism and adopting a national narrative in their writings. According to Edward Saïd: “Nationalism is an assertion of belonging in and to a place, a people, a heritage. It affirms the home created by a community of language, culture, and custom” (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 182). Nationalism, according to him, is an act of “resistance” to exile and homesickness: “it [nationalism] fends off exile, fights to prevent its ravages” (182). The relationship between exile and nationalism is similar to Hegel’s dialectic of servant and master; they are opposites, but they inform and constitute each other (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 182). It is a life-death struggle as each one considers the other as a threat to itself.<sup>7</sup> Nationalism means belonging to a group. However, exile, whether actual (moving to a new place) or metaphoric (the feeling of estrangement in one’s home), means the loneliness and solitude experienced outside these groups (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 183). The only way to surmount and overcome this loneliness is to adhere to a “language of national pride, collective sentiments, group passions” (183). Nationalism is, therefore, an “ideology” that involves individuals’ feeling of belonging, attachment, and loyalty to a particular nation which overrides all other loyalties (Alter 4).

To emphasize further this relationship between exile and nationalism, I note that, throughout history, all the nationalisms in the world were the result of exile or a feeling of estrangement (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 183), such as the Palestinian nationalism or Algerian nationalism, among others. Indeed, the members of these nationalist movements felt exiled, even if they were inside their homelands, as they were prevented from exercising what was considered “to be their rightful way of life” (Saïd

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<sup>7</sup> For more information about Hegel’s dialectic of servant and master, please consult: Feilmeier, J.D. “Hegel’s Master-Slave Dialectic: the search for self-consciousness.” *Writing Anthology*, 1992, <https://central.edu/writing-anthology/2019/07/08/hegels-master-slave-dialectic-the-search-for-self-consciousness/>.



“Reflections on Exile” 183). For instance, the Palestinians living in Israel, those who were not expelled from their native hometowns and villages in 1948, are considered exiles in their home country because it lacks sovereignty. Eva Hoffman explains this metaphoric exile by giving the example of Joseph Conrad’s father who wrote to his son, saying: “tell your self that you are without land, without love, without fatherland, without humanity - as long as Poland our mother is enslaved” (Hoffman “The New Nomads” 41).

### **2.3. Construction of Nationalism and National Identity in Translation**

#### **2.3.1. Construction of Nationalism in Translation**

Nationalism in exile is constructed based on an “imagined nation.” I draw here on Benedict Anderson’s theory of “imagined community.” Anderson (1983) defines the nation as “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson 6). Imagined because members of this nation will never know most of their fellow members, and in the mind of each of them lives an image of their community (Anderson 7). Anderson considers “nationalism and nations as cultural artifacts that were mainly based on a **narrative...**” (Calvet 66). This narrative can be analyzed linguistically and para-linguistically.

Indeed, the nationalism of exiles aims to assemble an imagined nation through the establishment of “reconstitutive projects” which involve “constructing a national history, reviving an ancient language, founding national institutions like libraries and universities” (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 189). Every nationalism has its own narrative, which is based on a “selectively narrated history”: “all nationalisms have their founding fathers, their basic, quasi-religious texts, their rhetoric of belonging, their historical and geographical landmarks, their official enemies and heroes” (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 183). Collectively, these *Ethos* form what Pierre Bourdieu, the French sociologist calls “the *habitus*,” which is “the coherent amalgam of practices linking habit with inhabitation” (183).

As seen earlier, the construction of nationalism and imagined nation in exile is a “discursive formation.” Translators attempt to construct an imagined nation through the use of a range of discursive strategies which are similar to the “reframing strategies” proposed by Baker (2006). Translation, as mentioned in the previous section, is considered an essential instrument of re-narration that constructs realities (Baker 2006, 2013, Harding 2012, Al-Hirhani 2017). It is, therefore, not only “a bridge between cultures and civilizations as was assumed for a long time” but also “a scaffolding for a myriad of ideological and other political and social ends” (Al-Hirhani 117). It helps in the construction of major narratives that are informed by political and social ideologies, such as nationalism being one of those major narratives of our time. Among the strategies used to construct nationalism and national identity is the “poetics of erasure,” discussed by Neve Gordon (2002) in his study “Zionism, Translation and the Politics of Erasure,” which explores the connection between nation-building and translation. Gordon claims that the process of erasure that was carried out in the Hebrew translations of John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty*, John Locke’s *Two Treaties of Government*, and Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, was meant to serve the formation of a Zionist identity (Gordon 811). As demonstrated by Gordon, the discursive formation of this identity involved the omission of passages that “may hinder the fabrication of a unified identity” (811).

In the Palestinian context, Al-Hirhani (2017) emphasizes in his article “Nation and Translation in the Arab World” the crucial role that translation has played in constructing the Palestinian nationalism in exile. “The Palestinian translation movement is generally driven by a sense of “nation-ness” (Anderson 1983), that informs the selection (and deselection) of texts for translation” (Al-Hirhani 116). The construction of a narrative of nationalism or national identity was mainly carried out through “translation [of the selected texts] into Arabic; translation from Arabic into other languages, primarily English; and writing original material in world dominant languages” (116).

Palestinian intellectuals, like writers, translators, publishers, who were motivated by a national agenda, were heavily involved in the nation-building process (Al-Hirhani 118). Most of translators started to produce works related to the Palestinian nation during the era of the British Mandate (1920-1948); and intensified their efforts after the *Nakba*<sup>8</sup> (129). This can be explained by the fact that the Palestinian liberation movement started in Palestine during and against the British Mandate and gradually strengthened and intensified after the establishment of Israel in 1948 (129). Indeed, after 1948, Palestinians, who became refugees, were scattered all over the world, and Palestine, which vanished from the international map, became “a nation of translators and educators” in exile (122). A “country of words,” as Mahmoud Darwish called it (Bowman 2). Al-Khatib (1995) argues in his book *the Palestinian Translation Movement* that “the 20th century was “a century of translation as well as a century of renaissance and independence” (qtd. in Al-Hirhani 122).

The concept of the nation as an “imagined community” constitutes a good basis for the construction of Palestinian nationalism in translation. Indeed, the non-existence of a sovereign Palestinian state led Palestinians, in general, and translators, in particular, to rely on their imagination and collective memory to construct “an imagined homeland,” which is sovereign and with defined borders. A homeland “where the nationalist imagines his or her identity becoming fully realized” (Bowman 4).

Therefore, translators “discursively construct images of themselves, their homeland, and the antagonists that have prevented them from achieving the national fulfillment which grounds their identities” (Bowman 2). To do so, they start with a very selective process in order to translate only the works that participate in constructing the Palestinian imagined nation. Al-Hirhani classifies the works that were selected for translation from other languages, mainly from English into Arabic, into three categories:

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<sup>8</sup> Al-Nakba literally means “the catastrophe” or “the disaster,” and “it is the Arabic term for the events of 1948, when many Palestinians were displaced from their homeland” (Oxford Lexico).

a) texts from regions around the world that had similar experiences, b) texts promoting Palestine as a cause, and c) texts that explore Zionism and Israel (130). There was also a movement to translate from Arabic into English, but this “was, and still is, not as abundant as translating into Arabic” (132).

Another strategy used by Palestinian translators is the exclusion of texts that constitute a threat to the national identity, described by Homi Bhabha (1990) as “counter-narratives of the nation that continually evoke and erase its totalizing boundaries [...] disturb those ideological maneuvers through which 'imagined communities' are given essentialist identities” (300). These texts are subject to suppression either through complete exclusion (non-translation), or deletion of some parts of the text (Al-Hirhani 125). The non-translation is usually carried out by translators in three cases: a) cultural incongruity, b) political incongruity, or c) ideological incongruity (Al-Hirhani 126). The lack of translation from Hebrew is an example of non-translation because of the “discordance between the Palestinian national project and the Zionist project” (127). This discordance nourishes, however, the Palestinian national identity as it was, first and foremost, provoked by the Zionist project (127) and its subsequent consequences (conflict and exile). Edward Saïd explains this discordance as follows: “Palestinians feel that they have been turned into exiles by the proverbial people of exile [...], but the Palestinians also know that their own sense of national identity has been nourished in the exile milieu...” (Saïd “Reflections on Exile” 184).

Finally, other intellectuals, who possess the linguistic skills, opt to write directly in English, which may be considered as a form of translation and self-translation (Al-Hirhani 121), as it gives voice to Palestinian narratives that are usually distorted and/or suppressed when translated/written by non-Palestinians (Khalidi 45). It is a kind of representation of the self in the language of the other (Al-Hirhani 123). According to Green (2008), “the act of writing [...] could not **but** be an act of translation” (Green

331). Therefore, “the indigenous writing of history [...] was clearly an important element in the preservation of [...] identity...” (Khalidi 46).

### 2.3.2. Construction of National Identity in Translation

We can conclude from the previous section that national identity is the result of nationalism and the nation-building process. According to Anthony D. Smith (1993), “in the ‘modernist’ image of the nation, it is nationalism that creates national identity” (71). While nationalism can be seen as a group of individuals who feel they belong primarily to a nation, whether actual or potential (Alter 4-5), national identity is “[this] group’s definition of itself as a group – its conception of its enduring characteristics and basic values... its past history, current purposes, and future prospects” (Kelman 171).

National identity, as a collective phenomenon, is intimately related and formed by collective memories (a shared past and historical experiences). Mier Litvak (2009) writes that “no group identity exists without memory ...” (1). Collective memory “unifies the group through time and over space by providing a narrative frame, a collective story, which locates the **individual** and his and her biography within it...” (Eyerman 161; emphasis added). This means that both collective and individual memories/narratives inform and form each other, and so do the collective and individual identities. National identity as a collective product is, then, assimilated by each member of the group through two steps: First, the adoption of the elements that make up the national identity, such as the beliefs, values, assumption, and expectations (Kelman 172), and second, the involvement and attachment to the nation (173).

We usually do not think to re-construct our national identity until it becomes vulnerable or threatened (Jarczok 25). We do not pay much attention to the narrative we create about ourselves (the self-narration), and which plays a central role in the formation of our sense of identity (Eakin *How Our Lives* 124). Moreover, only when our ability to construct a narrative is unpaired, or our identity story is

disrupted, we recognize that our identity has been damaged (124). Indeed, there is an intimate linkage between both notions: narrative and identity. Together they form what Paul Eakin calls “narrative identity”; i.e., the narratively construed and produced self (Eakin *How Our Lives* 100). Whenever we talk or write about ourselves, “we perform a work of self-construction” (Eakin *Living Autobiographically* 2).

Forced exile and the unchosen transition to another country can lead to an identity crisis and to the disruption in the identity story (Jarczok 26). One’s identity is defined by one’s role and place in society; to lose that is to lose a large portion of one’s self (Hoffman “The New Nomads” 40). Palestinians, after 1948, found themselves, overnight, belonging to a country that had ceased to exist. They, according to Edward Saïd, were facing a suppression of history, of identity, and they had to prove over and over again that they had once existed, and they needed every time to articulate a history of loss and dispossession (Saïd “No Reconciliation” 105). Eva Hoffman also explains this huge disruption in her identity story: “Poland was abruptly sundered from me by an unbridgeable gap...I felt, indeed, as if I were being taken out of life itself... it [this abrupt rupture] ...is a powerful narrative shaper; it creates chiaroscuro contrasts, a stark sense of biographical drama” (Hoffman “The New Nomads” 45).

Translators, who are forced into exile, attempt to reconstruct their lost identity, whether collective or individual, in their translations through the use of linguistic and discursive strategies<sup>9</sup>. These activist translators try to create narratives about themselves and their lives that become intertwined with the source text. These identity narratives are created through language that can, in its turn, be used in two ways: language as a grammar and language as a discursive action (Jarczok 23). Language as a grammar concentrates on grammatical features of the language such as the use of pronouns, word choice, the use of active/passive voice, etc., while the language as discursive action focuses on “how discursive practices

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<sup>9</sup> I insist, here, on translators who were exiled out of their country because of major armed conflicts or political reasons, such as Palestinian translators, and not those who left their countries, voluntarily, looking for a better future.

constitute the subject and what can be said in a given language” (Jarczok 23). Both approaches are merged together to construct an identity narrative which is produced using specific grammatical rules and specific discursive actions (Jarczok 23). To understand better how an identity narrative can be re-constructed in language, in general, we can consider Edward Said’s experience in re-constructing the Palestinian identity in his writings after the 1967 War:

Inevitably, this led me to reconsider the notion of writing and language, which I had until then treated as animated by a given text or subject...what concerned me now was how a subject was constituted, how a language could be formed – writing as a construction of realities that served one or another purpose instrumentally. This was the world of power and representations, a world that came into being as a series of decisions made by writers, politicians, philosophers to suggest or adumbrate a reality and at the same time efface others (Saïd “No Reconciliation” 106).

We recognize a particular national identity, in translation, through the markers included in the text that form the national narrative. According to Herder (1969), “a nation is constituted through its language and culture” (Poole 271). He emphasized “the significance of the practices, customs, and rituals of everyday life, and of the stories, folk beliefs, and myths in terms of which people make sense of their lives” (271). Through language and cultural symbols, “we become aware of ourselves and of others” (271).

We can take the example of the anglophone novel *Mornings in Jenin* (2010) by the writer Suzan Abulhawa, and translated into Arabic by the Palestinian translator Samia Shannan-Tamimi. The translator added features of the Palestinian national/collective identity that do not, in most cases, exist in the ST. For instance, the translator rendered the conversations in the ST into the Palestinian dialect instead of the Modern Standard Arabic. The use of vernacular provided the translation with a distinct Palestinian identity as it makes the reader feel “a shared sense of belonging to the same community” (Poole 272). The title of the original novel *Mornings in Jenin*, which refers to the mornings in Jenin Camp when the father of the protagonist “Amal” used to read poems to her, was translated into Arabic as *When the World*

*Sleeps*(عندما ينام العالم) . This title was reframed to refer to the massacre that happened in Jenin Refugee Camp in 2002, and which was ignored by the western media and the world (Al-Areqi 142).

Throughout the Arabic translation of *Mornings in Jennine*, we can hear the translator's voice as an activist and a witness. Activism and collective memory are among the foundations of the Palestinian national identity. The translator is clearly condemning the world for its silence. But at the same time, she relies, for the interpretation of the title and all the changes that she carried out, on the collective memory of the massacre; a memory that she shares with the Palestinian readers. In her translation, she is not only constructing a collective identity based on collective traumatic memory, but she is, at the same time, constructing her self, her personal identity based on individual traumatic memory. I call this process a "translation of the self": not in the meaning introduced by Eva Hoffman in her memoir, *Lost in Translation* (1990), as a translation of her Polish self into the new Canadian/American world, but as the construction, representation, and narration of the self that is embedded in a collective narrative/identity. This interplay between the personal and the collective will be explained further in the analysis of *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009).

### **3. Ideology and Translation**

In the two previous sections, I was mainly focusing on activist translators who develop "voluntary ideologies," nationalist ideologies, as a result of traumatic experiences such as conflict and forced exile. I call them "voluntary ideologies" because activism/resistance to a situation of oppression is usually a chosen path, driven by the translator's convictions and beliefs (an individual agency), such as feminist translators or political activist translators, who chose to resist and implement their own agenda using their words. In this section, I would like to shed light on the ideologies that are "imposed" on translators either by themselves, i.e., in the case of self-censorship, or by institutions or "patrons" such as publishers,



editors, and regulatory bodies, and which translators are obliged to obey “at least if they want to have their translations published” (Lefevere *Translation/History/Culture* 19).

André Lefevere was one of the first translation theorists to study the role of ideology in translation (Boyd 19). Although his work *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992) was mainly concerned with translating literature, I think his views might be valid for most types of translated texts. He states that two factors determine the work of literature as projected by translation: **a)** the translator’s ideology (whether this ideology is personal, i.e., embraced by the translator, or is imposed on him as a result of some form of patronage), and **b)** the dominant poetics in the receiving literature (Lefevere *Translation, Rewriting* 41). Poetics are closely linked to ideology. Indeed, poetics are composed of two components: the first one is an “inventory of literary devices,” and the second one is the role of literature in the social system, known as “the functional view” (26-27). The latter is concerned with the selection of themes that must be relevant to the social system at the time of translation (26-27). This selection is closely tied to ideology and similar to the re-framing strategy discussed by Baker (2006) under the name of “selective appropriation.” Poetics are, then, dominated by ideology. According to Lefevere: “it is ideology that dictates the basic strategy the translator is going to use” in his translation (*Translation, Rewriting* 41). Indeed, translators, according to Lefevere, are classified into two categories: “conservative” and “spirited” translators. The “conservative” translators work on the level of words and sentences, and the “spirited” ones work on the level of the culture as a whole, and the functioning of the text in that culture (*Translation, Rewriting* 51). He also points out that “faithful” translations are often inspired by a “conservative ideology” (51). In other terms, conservative translators work “out of reverence to the cultural prestige that the original has acquired” (50), such as in “foundation texts” where conservative translators opt for “faithfulness” and add “explanatory notes” to ensure that the reader gets the translation in the “right” way (50).

According to Lefevere (1992), literature is subject to “a double-control factor” from the inside and outside of the literary system (*Translation, Rewriting* 14). This double-control factor can be applied to most types of texts. The control in the inside is fulfilled by the professionals themselves (translators, teachers, critics...) (ibid), or what we call self-censorship. Translators “rewrite the works of literature until they are deemed to be acceptable to the poetics and ideology of certain time and place” (14). The self-censorship can be conscious or unconscious: conscious such as the example mentioned by Lefevere, of Karl Gutzkow (1835), who re-wrote the work of Georg Buchner’s *Dantons Tod*, which is a play in German about the French revolution. It was written in the *Vormärz* period (1830-1848) and was prevented from being published. Gutzkow (1835) adapted the work, in German, to the dominant ideologies as he wanted this work to be published and read, and he did not want to “give the censor the pleasure of striking passages” (14-15). The self-censorship can be unconscious when it is related to “the taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs and value systems” (Munday *Style and Ideology* 44). For example, when translating taboo words into a conservative culture like the Arab culture, translators automatically resort to techniques such as euphemism and omission.

The second control factor operates mostly outside the literary system and is called by Lefevere the “patronage”; defined as “the powers (persons and institutions) that can hinder or further the reading, writing, rewriting of literature” (*Translation, Rewriting* 15). Patronage, according to Lefevere, is composed of three components: ideological, economic, and status elements (*Translation, Rewriting* 16). The ideological component acts as a constraint on the choice of the form and the theme of the text to be translated (16). The economic one means that the patrons assure the living of the translators (16). The status implies that those translators, who accept the patronage, are offered a certain position/status in society (16). The patronage can be differentiated or undifferentiated. We have to note that the degree to which the imposed ideologies are capable of influencing the production of translations, depends on the

category of patronage (Hadley 711-712). In the differentiated patronage, translators acquire money, status from distinct sources and are comparatively free from the direct control of the patrons. In the undifferentiated patronage, the translators are entirely reliant on a single patron, which, therefore, exerts “relatively direct control over the translator and the work produced” (Hadley 711-712). This is usually linked to the “totalitarian forms of government” (Hadley 712).

I would like to draw attention, here, to the fact that patronage is not always a repressive power. According to Foucault (1979): “power produces; it produces **reality**; it produces domains of objects and **rituals of truth**” (qtd. in Haj Omar 142; emphasis added). Indeed, patronage may help in shaping and re-shaping the national identity of a state; as we saw in the previous section, the Palestinian translation movement was driven by a sense of nationalism. We saw how patrons such as publishers and editors were engaged in selecting and deselecting texts to support the Palestinian cause and to construct the Palestinian nation and nationalism.

Although Lefevere’s theory of rewriting liberates the translation activity from being a mere linguistic activity as it adopts a cultural approach, yet it has its own limitation. First, translation, according to this theory, is mostly determined by ideologies and poetics imposed by “patrons” in the target context. This “top-down model”<sup>10</sup> gives little attention to the subjectivity/agency of the translator. Second, it gives little attention as well to the micro-level translation practices; the text study (Shen 3). Indeed, factors at the macro level, those hiding behind texts such as patrons, poetics, ideology, are paid much attention by this theory (Shen 3). This gap was somehow bridged with sociolinguistics and the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). While Lefevere points out that translation should be analyzed “in connection with power

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<sup>10</sup> This term was used by Martin Boyd in his MA thesis (2012): *A Conflict of Narratives: The Influence of Us Ideological Constructions of Mexican Identity in The Translation of Mexican Literature into English*.

and patronage, ideology and poetics" (*Translation, Rewriting* 10), CDA focuses on "the connections between language, power, and ideology" (Fairclough 5).

According to Van Dijk (2001), CDA is "a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk "Critical Discourse" 352). Critical discourse analysts "take explicit positions and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality" (352). Unlike the rewriting theory, CDA rejects the idea of a 'value free' science, mainly scholarly discourse which is influenced by social structure and produced in social interaction" (352). Powerful groups have power because they can access specific forms of discourses such as politics, media, science...etc. And, since the actions of the dominated groups are controlled by their minds, the powerful groups try to influence people's minds (their knowledge, opinions...) and, therefore, control their actions through manipulation and persuasion techniques (355). The dominated groups, in their turn, may "resist, accept, condone, comply with, or legitimate such power..." (352).

Translation, according to CDA, is analyzed mainly in two stages: Micro (structure of the text) and Macro (context) levels (Van Dijk "Critical Discourse" 354). These two levels form a unified whole; for example, a racist speech in the parliament is a discourse at the Micro-level (linguistic level) and, at the same time, may be either a part of legislation against racism or a reproduction of racism at the macro-level (354). Fairclough (1995), from his part, proposes a tripartite model and makes clear that any discourse must be analyzed in a three-dimensional model: **First**, a language text (spoken or written); **second**, a discourse practice (production and interpretation of discourse); and **third**, sociocultural practice (Fairclough 97-98). The first dimension corresponds to the Micro level, and the second/third dimensions correspond to the Macro level.

The Macroanalysis can be carried out through the analysis of its constituent categories such as the overall definition of the social situation, the setting (time and place), the ongoing actions (discourses, topics, genres...), the participants in various communicative, social, or institutional roles, as well as their goals, knowledge, opinions, attitudes, and ideologies, which are reflected in the discourse (Van Dijk "Critical Discourse" 365). It usually covers "a whole host of historical, social, cultural, literary, and education factors that have affected the translation process" (Munday *Style and Ideology* 50). The Microanalysis consists of exploring the textual strategies used by the author/speaker in a text/talk to find out the power dominance and manipulation (Amoussou and Allagbe 16-17). Among the issues that can be studied are transitivity, mood, and modality, vocabulary, interactional control features, topicality, presuppositions, vagueness, implication (16-17).

CDA, therefore, "addresses the prevailing social problems by opposing dominant ideological positions" (16-17). Among the scholars who adopted textual approaches to explore the relationship between ideology and language in translation are Ian Mason, Basil Hatim, and Jeremy Munday.

Munday (2007) thinks that the linguistic toolkit of critical linguistics and CDA is relevant to carry out "a close textual analysis of the translator's ideological mediation" ("Translation and Ideology" 197), as this critical analysis identifies "the link between ideology and the language in which that ideology is expressed and reproduced in specific social situations" (197). Language, and therefore, translation may "reproduce the ideology" of the ST and even the "asymmetrical power" between the writer and the reader if the reader [translator] is unaware of the ideological load of the writer's lexico-grammatical selections (199). According to Fairclough (1995), "texts do not typically spout ideology. They so position the interpreter through their cues that she brings ideologies to the interpretation of texts – and reproduces them in the process!" (qtd. in Munday "Translation and Ideology" 198). This point was further clarified by Mason and Basil in their book *Translator as Communicator* (1997), where they show how linguistic devices

function in a different way according to the context (Munday “Translation and Ideology” 199), and how, language users, including translators, “exploit the potentialities of the language system for particular purposes” (Hatim and Mason 19), such as: the phenomenon of transitivity which is usually used to attribute responsibility and/or blame (19).

In his turn, Mason (2010) thinks that “the individual choices made by language users [specifically translators] on the surface of the text (texture) may provide evidence of underlying ideologies” (92). Indeed, ideology is, according to him, expressed/realized through the semiotic systems: genre, text, and discourse (86-87). Language users have their own discursive histories that shape their own perception, interpretation of events, and their discursual features (86). Munday (2008) refers to the presence of the translator in the text (his/her ideological position) as the “voice” (Munday *Style and Ideology* 19). The only way to hear/detect that voice is through studying the language of the text, i.e., the “style” (19). The style can be individual “linguistic habits of a particular writer,” or collective “specific to a genre,” or refer to a period of time, for example, “the Latin American Boom of the 1960s” (20).

That being said, I think I need a multidimensional model in order to examine ideologies in the translations of *Footnotes in Gaza*. The theory of ideology proposed by Van Dijk (1998) can constitute a good basis to create a model for the purpose of this thesis. Van Dijk’s theory is composed of three elements: **i)** society (group interests, power, and dominance), **ii)** discourse (language use), and **iii)** cognition (thoughts and beliefs) (Munday *Style and Ideology* 44). Indeed, the translator works in a social setting interacting with publishers, editors, and agents with greater power. He/she works on the discourse of the ST, bringing her/his cognitive processes, i.e., his/her ideological beliefs (44).

Therefore, the model I will adopt in this research needs to encompass the three following aspects:

- a) **The textual (linguistic/non-linguistic) aspect:** an analysis of the language in which both imposed and voluntary (adopted) ideologies are reflected and reproduced. Ideologies remain “concealed until the ST and TT are confronted” (Munday “Translation and Ideology” 197).
- b) **The agency of the translator:** is reflected through the “voluntary ideologies” adopted by the translator, and which are formed and informed by the traumatic experiences such as oppression, injustice, conflicts, forced exile... and which result in the formation of activist, engaged translators (feminist translator, for instance). A thorough study of the background, beliefs, values of the translator would help in explaining the translational choices. Voluntary ideologies can be individual and collective.
- c) **The “imposed ideologies”:** reflected by the social and discursive ideologies such as patronage (positive/negative) and self-censorship (conscious/unconscious).

I think the combination of CDA (with its Micro and Macro analyses) and the narrative theory (with its re-framing strategies) will encompass/tackle all the elements mentioned above.

## Chapter Two: Analysis of the Source Text: *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009)

In the previous chapter, I attempted to delineate the theoretical and conceptual framework that will be used in this research. I discussed the inter-connections among conflicts, forced exile, ideology, and translation. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the source text, *Footnotes in Gaza*, with particular attention to the features of the book's genre, "comics journalism," being a "site" to narrate conflicts.

*Footnotes in Gaza* is a journalistic comic-book by the American cartoonist and journalist Joe Sacco. It was published by the American publishing house Metropolitan Books in 2009. It revolves around the two massacres that happened in Gaza Strip during the Suez Crisis (Tripartite Aggression) in 1956. Sacco re-constructed (re-created) the Palestinian towns and refugee camps according to what they looked like in the 1940s and 1950s. He also illustrated the memories of the witnesses and survivors based on the description they provided, and on the documentation available for consultation.

This chapter is divided into three sections: The first section is the rhetorical context of *Footnotes in Gaza*, in which I will discuss elements such as the author, the historical background of the two massacres (the War of 1956), the methodology of the author, the genre of comics Journalism, the issues of subjectivity and objectivity in comics journalism. The second section analyses the features of comics journalism based on examples drawn from the book. The third section, which constitutes the main section of this chapter, discusses the role that translation and interpretation play in the production and construction of comics journalism. Here, I do not mean the actual translation of the book into other languages like Arabic or French, which will be studied in the third chapter. What I refer to are the "internal" translation and interpretation that occurred while writing the book. Indeed, the field research for this book took place in a non-English-speaking country, and the author had to collect testimonies from non-English-speakers. Therefore, without translation and interpretation, the realization of this book



would have been impossible. Among the points studied in this section, I cite the polyphonic nature of *Footnotes in Gaza*, the voice of the interpreter, interpreters in war zones, and the author as a translator.

## **1. Rhetorical Context of *Footnotes in Gaza***

The rhetorical context consists of all the circumstances surrounding the act of writing *Footnotes in Gaza* such as the author's biography, the purpose of the book, the historical background of the two massacres, the methodology of the author, and the genre of the book.

### **1.1. Joe Sacco: A Narrator of Conflicts**

Joe Sacco was born in Malta in 1960. One year later, in 1961, his family immigrated to Melbourne, Australia. In 1972, his family moved to the United States, where he majored in journalism from the University of Oregon in 1982 (Worden 4-5). He held several jobs until he co-edited and co-published the *Portland Permanent Press* in 1985 ("Artist Bio"). Then, he received an offer to work for *the Comics Journal* published by the Fantagraphics Books in 1986 ("Artist Bio"). It is in his comic-book *Yahoo* that Sacco began to develop his political focus that would inform his longer works (Worden 5).

Today, Joe Sacco is considered a pioneer of comics journalism. Throughout his books, he demonstrates that comics can be used as a journalistic medium to cover true-life events and, mainly, armed conflicts. His work deals with some of the recent conflicts starting from the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the Bosnian War to the insurgency in Chechnya and the Iraq War (Worden 4). He also dealt with many issues of our time, such as poverty, human rights violation, illegal immigration and so on (4). Among his masterpieces in comics journalism, I cite *Safe Area Goražde* (2000), *Palestine* (2001), *The Fixer* (2003), and *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009).

Sacco has always been criticized for giving more attention to one side of the conflict at the expense of the other. In many instances, he confirmed that he was trying to give the less powerful a chance to tell

their story. He wanted to give a voice to those who "seldom get a hearing" (Sacco *Journalism* XIV). According to him, "the powerful are generally excellently served by the mainstream media or propaganda organs" (*Journalism* XIV). The powerful should be mentioned in order to "measure their pronouncement against the truth and not to obscure it" (XIV). However, Sacco's comics "neither romanticize suffering nor legitimate violence" (Worden 3). In an interview with Matt Weiland for C-Span Networks (2010) on his book *Footnotes in Gaza*, Sacco says: "I do tend to give voice to Palestinians because I don't think they have had much voice in the American media, but I don't 'sugar-coat' Palestinians ... It is important to do an honest reporting" (Sacco "Footnotes in Gaza: Interview with Matt Weiland"). In the same interview, Sacco explains his purpose for writing the book:

What I hope this book can do is to give a face to these people ... as people who have had a very hard history... perhaps there may be some understanding of the other...that's what a journalist or historian should strive for ... to make us understand what we don't understand (Sacco "Footnotes in Gaza: Interview with Matt Weiland").<sup>11</sup>

### **1.2. Historical Background of *Footnotes in Gaza*: The Suez Crisis or the Tripartite Aggression (1956)**

The Suez Crisis is also known as the Tripartite Aggression in the Arab World. In late 1956, Egypt was invaded by Israel, followed by the United Kingdom and France. The basic outline of this war was the rise of the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdul Nasser (Bass 6). The pan-Arab nationalist president, who came to power after the 1952 coup that toppled King Faruq, was hoping to unify the Arabs under one major, non-aligned one united state; as a response to the western hegemony in the region (6). The United States and Great Britain, aiming to control Nasser through economic aid, offered to finance a high dam on the Nile River at Aswan; a city in the south of Egypt (Mayer xliii). This proposal encountered resistance in the USA (xliii). When the USA and Great Britain decided to withdraw the offer, Nasser responded by nationalizing

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<sup>11</sup> For the full interview, please consult: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?292729-1/footnotes-gaza>.

the Suez Canal Company and declared that he would use the revenues from the Canal's operations to finance the Dam (xliv). France and Britain immediately contemplated military actions against Nasser (xliv). France had an additional reason, which is Nasser's support for the Algerian revolution against the French colonization (xliv). They entered an agreement with Israel to take military action against Egypt to regain western control over the Suez Canal and to topple the Egyptian leader (xliv). On October 29, 1956, the military actions started. Soon after, the USA, through the UNO, imposed a cease-fire on all parties. Israeli forces halted their operation on Nov. 4, 1956, and the British and French ceased fire on Nov. 5, 1956 (xliv). Nevertheless, the complete withdrawal from Egypt was not completed until March 1957 (xliv).

During this war, Israel has taken full control of the Egyptian-ruled Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula by Nov. 5, 1956 (Yazid Y. Sayigh 65). Shortly before the attack on Gaza, in the early hours of Nov. 2, 1956, the Israeli radio announced that the identity of the *Fedayeen*<sup>12</sup> is now known and will be punished for their raids on Israel (Yazid Y. Sayigh 65). Indeed, on Nov. 3, 1956, in the town of Khan Younes, a city in the southern Gaza Strip, "at least 275 Palestinians" were killed during a "house-to-house search for weapons and *Fedayeen*" (Chomsky 102). The other bloody incident took place in the neighboring town of Rafah, and occurred around the same time, on Nov. 12, 1956, where "111 Palestinians" were killed (Chomsky 102),<sup>13</sup> after being assembled in the central square of Rafah<sup>14</sup> (Yazid Y. Sayigh 65). These two massacres constitute the subject of *Footnotes in Gaza*.

### **1.3. The Methodology of Joe Sacco in *Footnotes in Gaza***

At first, Joe Sacco was intrigued by the first bloody incident that took place in the town of Khan Younis, and which he learned about during his first trip to Gaza Strip, to carry out a different assignment for

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<sup>12</sup> Fedayeen: a term used to refer to national fighters.

<sup>13</sup> Noam Chomsky drew his information from a comment of the General Eedson Louis Millard "Tommy" Burns, commander of the UNTSO (p. 102).

<sup>14</sup> For more information concerning the numbers, please consult the book: *Israel's Border Wars, 1949-1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War*, by Benny Morris (1993).

Harper's magazine, together with his friend Chris Hedges (Sacco *Footnotes in Gaza* ix). Sacco believed that such a tragedy does not deserve "to be thrown back on the pile of obscurity" (ix). After doing some digging, Sacco found out that almost nothing has been written in English and decided to go back to Gaza Strip for further research and data collection (ix). Through his research process, he learned about the massacre of Rafah, and, again, only "a couple of sentences in a U.N. report were all that saved the incident from outright oblivion" (ix). This clear marginalization explains Sacco's choice of the title of the book, *Footnotes in Gaza*, as these massacres were like "the innumerable historical tragedies over the ages that barely rate a footnote status in the broad sweep of history" (ix). Therefore, the book consists of two sections: one about Khan Younis and the other one about Rafah. Rafah's section is considerably longer because, as Sacco put it, "many survivors would be still alive. At Khan Younes, only a handful of those involved survived being lined up and shot" (x).

Sacco carried out field research for this book during two visits to the Gaza Strip between November 2002 and March 2003 (Sacco *Footnotes in Gaza* x). He started by recording oral testimonies of survivors and eyewitnesses to the events in Khan Younes and Rafah. Then, he scrutinized (filtered) the testimonies to avoid any blurring of memory through three phases: **a) comparison phase:** he compared the details of testimonies with each other, **b) documentary evidence phase:** since records and reports were unreachable, Sacco employed two Israeli researchers to go through many archives dealing with these incidents such as the Israel Defence Forces Archives, Israel State Archives, the Knesset Archives, a press archive, and the *Kol Ha'am* newspaper archive, and **c) the visual interpretation phase:** Sacco relied heavily on the photographs available at the UNRWA archives in Gaza City to draw the Palestinian towns and refugee camps in the 1940s and 1950s (*Footnotes in Gaza* x).

*Footnotes in Gaza* not only focuses on the past (i.e., the War of 1956 in Gaza), but also interweaves both the past and present events. This interplay between the past and present will be studied in more

detail while examining the features of comics journalism. The present-day stories that took place at the time of Sacco's stay in Gaza, also made their way into the fabric of this book (Sacco *Footnotes in Gaza* xi), such as the demolition of Palestinian houses in Rafah and Khan Younes, the death of Rachel Corrie, and the reaction of Palestinians to the War in Iraq. It is not an easy task to separate past and present for Palestinians. As someone in Gaza told Joe Sacco: "Events are continuous one after another" (Sacco *Footnotes in Gaza* 252). Another one said: "every day here is '56" (253). However, Sacco thinks that we need to shed light on the past events not only because they were "a disaster for the people who lived them but might also be instructive for those who want to understand why and how 'hatred' was planted in hearts" (xi).

#### **1.4. Comics Journalism: A New Form of Journalism**

Comics journalism, also known as graphic journalism, is "an emerging field that combines the journalistic approach with comics to produce news stories" (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 376). This genre is also known as 'visual reporting': as comics journalists use both texts and illustrations to cover real-life events and narrate non-fiction stories (Hodara).

This genre is not to be confused with political cartoons, usually a "single-panel illustration" that provides an opinion on a specific topic (Harvey "Comics Journalism"). This opinion-oriented medium [political cartoons] is usually found on the editorial pages of newspapers and other journalistic outlets, whether in print or electronic form (Knieper "Political Cartoons"). Political cartoonists usually adopt a caricaturist style using techniques such as exaggeration, labeling, symbolism, analogy, and irony ("Cartoon Analysis"). Characterized by both "metaphorical and satirical language," political cartoons "may point out the contexts, problems, and discrepancies of a political situation." (Knieper "political cartoons"). Comics journalism is also different from non-fictional graphic novels, which primarily belong to the genre of memoir, such as Spiegelman's *Maus* (1996), Pekar's *American Splendor* (2003), Satrapi's *Persepolis* (2007),

Bechtel's *Fun Home* (2007), as well as other graphic novels of first-person accounts of real events (Schack 109 -110). Comics journalism approach is "to compile all the information and research about a story, then sequentially illustrating it with short bits of information..." (Harvey "Comics Journalism").

In sum, what differentiates this genre from other forms of comics is that comics journalism is a "sub-field of journalism," in which comics are only used as a "medium" to cover serious events. Indeed, what sets Joe Sacco apart from other cartoonists and graphic novelists is his "ability to first act as an information-gatherer (i.e., to report, to physically get into the field, to interview subjects, to document both text and visual-based information, etc.) and, then, to act as both writer and artist" (Schack 110). Weber and Rall (2017) think that comics journalists are just like "radio and TV reporters"; they go "to witness events, to research on-site, interview people, collect information and documents. However, instead of reporting verbally, they draw" (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 377). For instance, in the book *Footnotes in Gaza*, Sacco's drawn images are based on actual scenes (such as refugee camps, towns in the 1940s and 1950s), and speech balloons are composed of testimonies of actual witnesses.

### **1.5. Comics and Journalism: Subjective vs. Objective**

Comics journalism is about "mastering the art of storytelling in two respects: text [testimonies] and images [comics]" (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 383). However, "comics" and "journalism" are widely considered to be entirely distant fields. Comics are usually about "fiction, drama, emotions, exaggerations and funny pictures," while journalism is based on "facts, news, and reality, with the associated values: accuracy in reporting, truthfulness, credibility, public accountability, fairness, impartiality and objectivity" (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 378). The combination of both fields, which forms the field of "comics journalism," raises the argument that this field is subjective because the hand-drawn images are "interpreted through the artists" (Kunert-Graf 3). Moreover, "texts [testimonies] combine firsthand accounts of conflict from the perspectives of interviewees. The cartoonists ... are not themselves direct witnesses to most of the

events depicted" (Kunert-Graf 3). Even if the testimony/text is recognized "as an authentic citation from an authentic source," but "the combined perception of images and words might call this [authenticity] into question" (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 378).

Drawings are subjective by their nature because "images, in general, are always artefacts of an artist, a designer, a photographer or a journalist and, therefore, subject to interpretations" (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 384). The subjectivity becomes apparent in comics journalism in the graphic style used in drawing comics through the visual means of expression, such as the hand-written lettering, the size and shape of the panels, the colour design, the page layout (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 384). Other subjective elements can be evident in the verbal narrative style, e.g., first-person storytelling, which is a characteristic of reportage (384). Comics journalists, as mentioned earlier, are similar to print, radio, and TV journalists. Therefore, their work bears "silent subjective traits" as they can show only "one segment of the reality." Indeed, "they have to select from different sources, different locations, different interview partners..." (383).

Comics journalists acknowledge the subjectivity of the genre. They insist, however, on "honesty" as a foundation of comics journalism. Sacco states in his book *Journalism* (2012) that "cartooning is an inherently subjective medium" (*Journalism* XII). "Drawings are interpretative even when they are slavish renditions of photographs...There is nothing literal about a drawing" (XI). However, he reinforces "the journalist's standard obligations – to report accurately, to get quotes right, and to check claims" (XII). In an interview with Henry Jenkins (2007), Sacco explains these subjectivity/honesty aspects<sup>15</sup>:

The fact is that no one can tell an entire story; everyone concentrates on what they want to, details are cropped out of photographs; stories go through an editing process. Every portrayal is to some extent a filter, and on that level, something that someone might find problematic. **I'm not making things up even though there is an**

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<sup>15</sup> For the full interview, please consult: [http://henryjenkins.org/2007/03/an\\_interview\\_with\\_comics\\_journ\\_2.html](http://henryjenkins.org/2007/03/an_interview_with_comics_journ_2.html).

**interpretive element to my work** (Sacco “An Interview with Comics Journalist Joe Sacco by Henry Jenkins”; emphasis added).

Honesty means that readers are conscious that hand-drawn comics are an interpretation of real events that happened in the past, but these drawings are not fictional or made-up (Weber and Rall “Authenticity” 384). In another interview with Grand Valley State University (2011), Sacco further explains objectivity/honesty in comics journalism. He confirms that honesty is to report what is happening in the field, even if this goes against the reporter’s ideologies and notions as a western journalist:

Readers are seeing things through your eyes. It [comics journalism] is not an objective form of journalism. Objectivity is different from honesty... **What I mean by honesty is if you see things that do not square with your notions of what things are supposed to be, you should report it. I feel I am an honest reporter in that way** (Sacco “Interview with Joe Sacco: Graphic Journalism and Palestine”; emphasis added).<sup>16</sup>

## **2. Authentication Strategies in Comics Journalism: *Footnotes in Gaza* as a Case Study**

Considering the subjectivity of the genre, as we discussed earlier, comics journalists use specific authentication strategies in order to prove the honesty, authenticity, and transparency of the information provided. These strategies (both verbal and visual) have become the “features of comics journalism.” The following analysis of these features will be based on examples taken from *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009).

### **2.1. The Use of Testimonies (Eyewitnesses and Survivors)**

Sacco uses the narrative of comics (text and image) for narrating history, stories of persecution, and shared trauma (Kunert-Graf “Comics and Narratological Perspective”). He considers this narrative as a “*lieu de memoire traumatique*”<sup>17</sup> of the Palestinian people: a “site” for recognizing their collective suffering (Romero-Jódar 73).

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<sup>16</sup>For the full interview, please consult: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcdIqdcDbMQ>.

<sup>17</sup> A term coined by Pierre Nora (a French historian). For more information, please consult his article: “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire” (1989): <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2928520.pdf>.



The testimonies of witnesses/survivors of the two massacres of 1956 are presented either in speech balloons when the testimony is associated with the teller (figure 2.1) or in captions when the testimony is reported without the teller (figure 2.2). Although provided by individual people, the testimonies do not represent a single individual's experience but the collective suffering of a community, "a collective trauma" (Romero-Jódar 72). This is reflected through the dominance of the pronoun "**we**" compared to the pronouns "**I**" and "**they**" (as we can see in the following figures 2.1 and 2.2).



**Figure 2.1:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 23.

[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company. All Rights Reserved.]



**Figure 2.2:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 23.

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It is to be noted that the names of the eyewitnesses and survivors are authentic in most cases. When an eyewitness refuses that his/her name be indicated in the book, Sacco refers to him/her as "anonymous."

All testimonies are translated from Arabic into English by an interpreter/translator called “Abed” in the book. Sacco (the author), with the help of his interpreter, selects the most appropriate testimonies. This selection is not only informed by Sacco’s ideological perspective (i.e., what serves the purpose of the book or the line of the story), but also he tries to overcome the limited space that speech balloons/captions provide. For instance, he may opt to draw some elements instead of writing them. In this regard, Sacco (2007) confirms: "most of the editing occurs when I realize that I don't need to write out something because I can draw it instead" ("An Interview with Comics Journalist Joe Sacco by Henry Jenkins"). This leads us to another point: the testimonies' meaning is generated from both verbal quotes and visual representation. Therefore, this interplay between the verbal and the visual must be considered when translating any comic text. Indeed, comics are "often represented as a type of multimedia text" and addressed within a "**constrained translation' approach**" (Zanettin 20). Translation, in this approach, "is seen as constrained by visual limitations such as the space provided by balloons and captions and the interplay of visual and verbal text" (Zanettin 21).

## **2.2. The Interplay between the Individual and Collective Memory**

In memory studies, three types of memories are distinguished: **individual** memory, **supra-individual** memory (“collective,” “social,” and “communicative” in terms of being transferred from one generation to the other) as well as **cultural** memory (defined as being external to human beings' memory as recorded in different types of media like texts, archives...) (Lukas 109). The testimonies provided by eyewitnesses and survivors in *Footnotes in Gaza* are based on both individual and supra-individual memories. However, I will refer to the supra-individual memory as “collective memory” because it is shared among all witnesses, and passed on from one generation to another.

Sacco actualized both memories verbally and visually through what Andres Romero-Jódar (2017) called a "re-enactment technique of traumatic event" (79) which means to present the traumatic events

as if they were happening simultaneously in the past and in the present time. In the example on page 265 (figure 2. 3), we can see three witnesses; Mohammed Youssef Shaker Moussa, Anonymous Four, and Saleh Mehi Eldin Al-Argan, who went through the same traumatic event of the massacre of Rafah on November 12, 1956.

The three witnesses, in figure 2.3, are re-enacting or taking the same position they took that day (their hands over their heads). Sacco drew the witnesses in separate panels to emphasize “the individuality of each testimony” (Romero-Jódar 79), which means that these testimonies were provided to Sacco individually and separately. However, the similarity between these individual testimonies (memories) shows that they are an integral part of a collective/shared memory. To depict this idea, Sacco drew in the background “myriads” of people in the same position as a representation of the collective/shared memory of the suffering of the Palestinian people (Romero-Jódar 80).

Verbally, the speech balloons, although presented in separate panels to represent the individual memory, can be read as a single voice to represent the shared/collective memory (Romero-Jódar 80): "We sat like this. All the people on the ground. Yes, very crowded very crowded. Very pressured, very crowded. Like this...We were sitting with each other like water-melons" (Sacco *Footnotes in Gaza* 265).



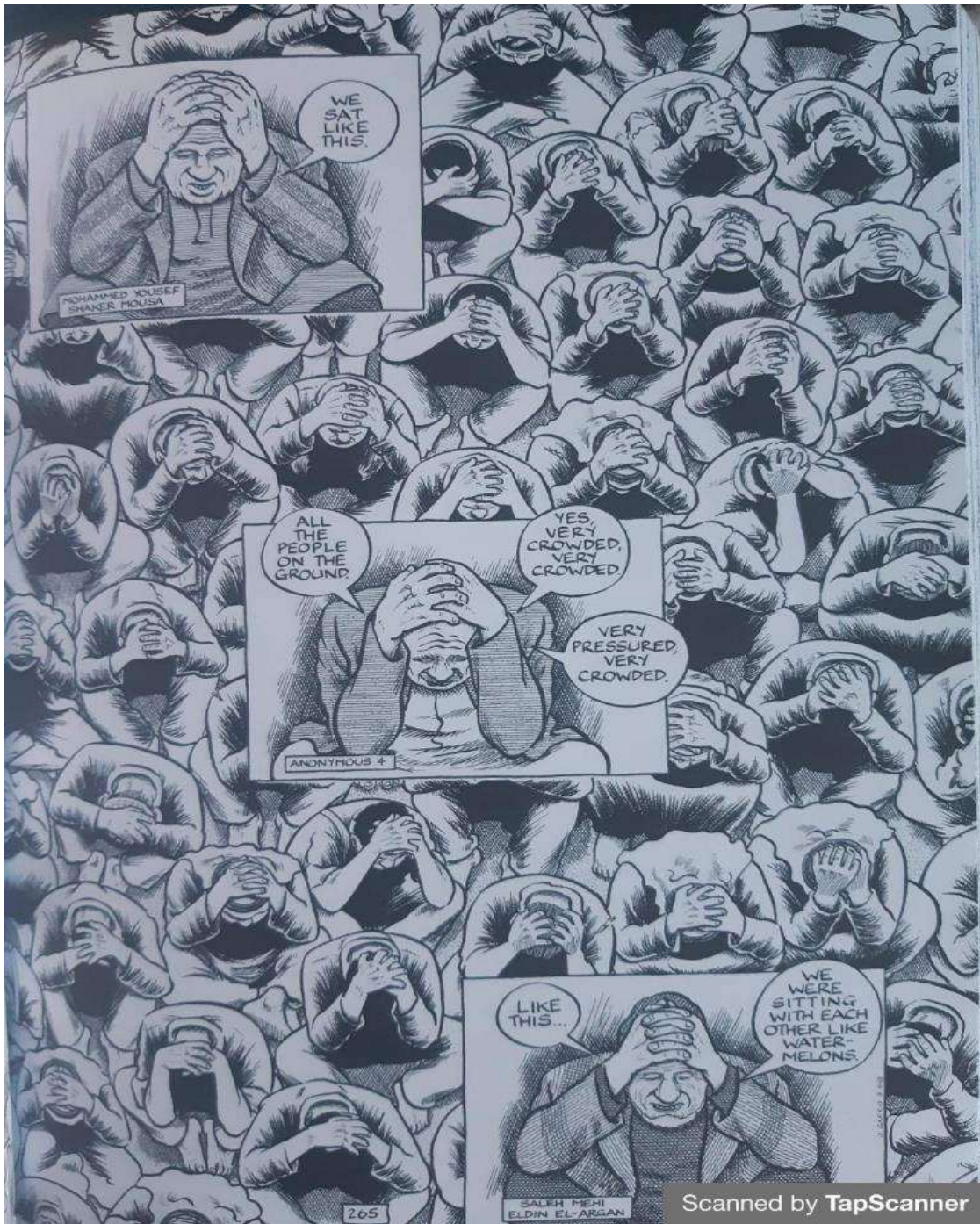


Figure 2.3:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 265.

[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company. All Rights Reserved.]

### 2.3. The Interplay between the Past and the Present

*Footnotes in Gaza* presents different modes of telling history (Owen 203). According to Hillary Chute (2011), comics possess "the ability to use the space of the page to interlace or overlay different temporalities, to place pressure on linearity and conventional notions of sequence, causality, and progression" (Chute 112). We notice, throughout the book, that Sacco adopts neither a purely "progressive" view of history (linear and irreversible) as this view will relegate the past events into "footnotes," nor a "cyclical" view of history that most of his interviewees adopt seeing the Palestinian history as a repetitive "series of inevitable defeats" (Owen 204).<sup>18</sup>

Sacco adopts a non-linear hybrid mode, juxtaposing conflicting ways of telling history (Owen 204), such as the juxtaposition of past and present events. For instance, on pages 27 -29, Sacco drew two open panels of refugee camps at two different times, the first in the mid-1950s (page 27) and the second in the early 2000s (pages 28-29). Sacco drew these pictures based on the testimonies of elderly Palestinian refugees. The narration shows a comparison between the two pictures of the refugee camps. The first picture (figure 2. 4) shows regular blocks of identical single-story brick houses built in the mid-fifties (the previous pages in the book indicate that these houses replaced the clay houses, which in their turn replaced the tents provided by the UNRWA and Quaker, which in their turn replaced the shelters of branches and blankets constructed by refugees in 1948) (Owen 207-208). The second picture (figure 2.5) shows three-or four-story buildings with unfinished top floors built in the early 2000s (208).

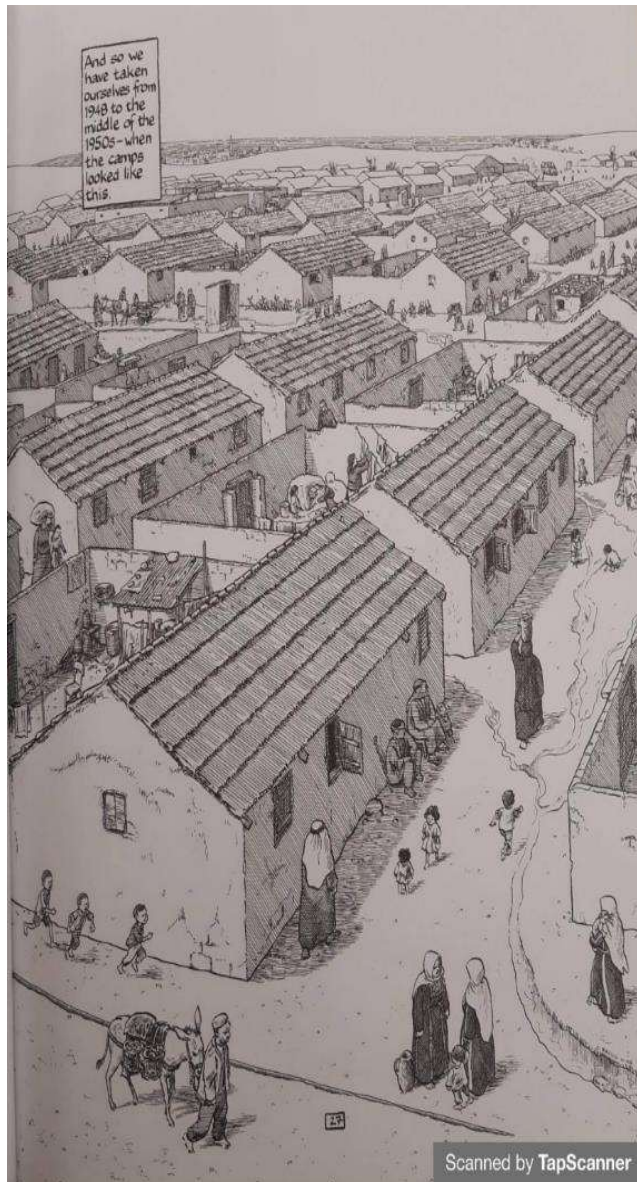
These borderless panels are called "the bleeds" in the language of comics. They are defined by Scott McCloud (1994) as panels that "run off the edge of the page" (103). These panels represent a timeless space. According to McCloud (1994), "time is no longer contained by the familiar lines of the closed panel,

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<sup>18</sup> For more information about cyclical and linear (progressive) view of history, please consult: "Philosophy of history" in *New World Encyclopedia*, at: [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Philosophy\\_of\\_history#Cyclical\\_and\\_linear\\_history](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Philosophy_of_history#Cyclical_and_linear_history)



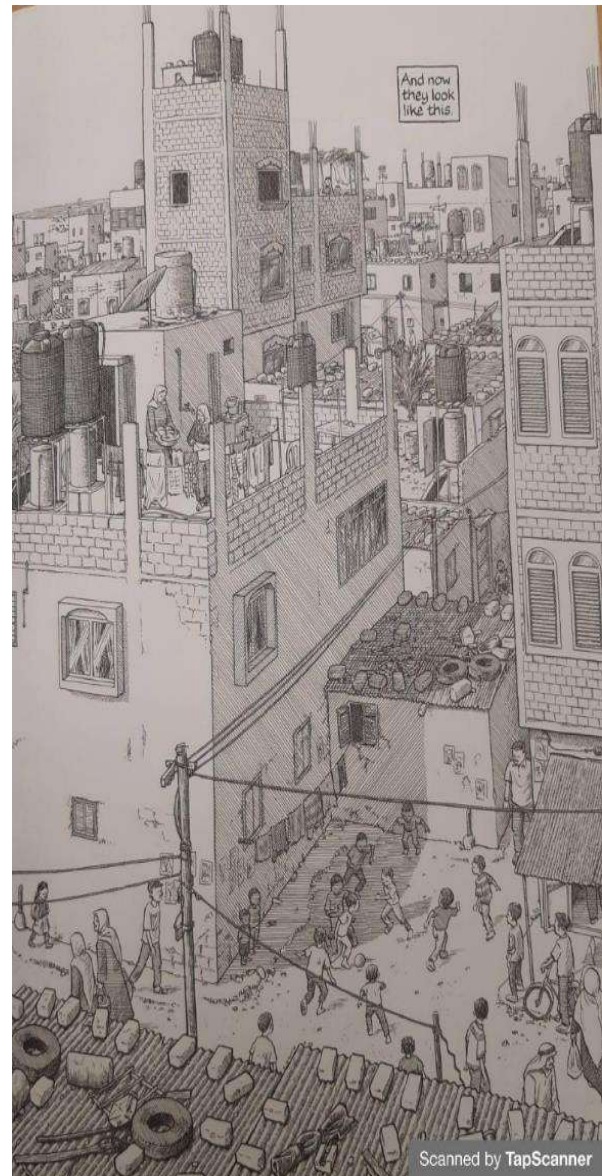
but instead hemorrhages and escapes into timeless space" (103). Harriet Earle (2013) thinks that "bleeds are, by their nature, dramatic and often violent" (Earle "Comics and Page Bleeds"). These definitions reflect exactly the refugees' situation, which is still ongoing (timeless) and tragic.



**Figure 2.4:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 27.

[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company. All Rights Reserved.]



**Figure 2.5:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 29.

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## 2.4. The Realistic Style:

Although using comics as a medium, Sacco does not adopt a "cartoony style" but a realistic one. This realism is considered an authentication strategy. According to Elizabeth El-Rifaie (2012), "in the case of a visual medium such as comics, the authenticity of a work is also judged on the basis of the degree to which the drawings resemble the actual, real-life people they are supposed to represent" (El-Rifaie "Visual Authentication Strategies"). Comics journalists opt for "a visual aesthetic that differentiates their work from fictional comics" (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 387). They combine "the drawing style of cartooning with sometimes highly detailed and realistic illustrations..." (387). The cartooning techniques "such as motion lines, symbols, sound words or scream bubbles, are rare" (387).

In *Footnotes in Gaza*, all the protagonists (eyewitnesses, the interpreter, and all those involved in the story) appear as black-and-white real hand-drawn characters and look like the people they are supposed to represent (figure 6). The scenes and the towns drawn in the book are also realistic pictures. Sacco explains his realistic style in the interview carried out by Henry Jenkins in 2007:

I conduct lots of rigorous, sit-down interviews, one after the other [...] I also *take photographs* whenever I can. I'm currently doing a book about the Gaza Strip for which, after interviewing someone, *I'd take his or her photograph*. If someone refused to have a picture taken, then I'd try to ***quickly draw an image*** of the person in the margin of my notebook [...]. I have to ask a lot of ***visual questions about what a street or a camp looked like*** [...]. I also need to do extra *research* sometimes. For example, the work I'm doing right now is set in Gaza in 1956. I've made trips to *United Nations archives* to gather photographic evidence of Gaza city at that time. When I was interviewing people about what happened, I spent a significant amount of time *talking about the visual details*. I had people taking me around and showing me old houses, some of which had been built over, but still gave me a sense of how things looked [...] (Sacco "An Interview with Comics Journalist Joe Sacco by Henry Jenkins"; emphasis added).

Throughout *Footnotes in Gaza*, we can notice how Sacco drew "detailed portrayals of emotion-laden faces" (Romero-Jódar 90). For instance, on pages 22 – 23, the witnesses providing testimonies are individualized and separated from the background by drawing "a close-up on their faces and setting them

in a frame" (Romero-Jódar 90). This way, the author of *Footnotes in Gaza* makes the reader face and meet the witnesses, while the visual narrative provides at the same time a "re-enactment of the memories that the witness is recalling" (90-91). This strategy gives more credibility to the testimonies and authenticates the author's journalistic work, as we can notice in figure 2.6:



Figure 2.6:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 23.

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## 2.5. The Documentary Evidence

Comics journalism is considered to be documentary-type journalism. Comics journalists use documentary evidence as an authentication strategy for the work. This can be carried out by "adding fact boxes with statistical data, diagrams, maps, information graphics, or interviews with scientists or experts such as historians about the drawn topic" (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 389). In *Footnotes in Gaza*, Sacco uses many documentary pieces of evidence: First, he includes maps of the Gaza Strip accompanied with



historical information and statistical data. For example, on page 18, he provides a highly detailed map of the Gaza Strip, with a caption containing information about the length and width of the Strip, population density, and numbers of Jewish settlers in the Strip<sup>19</sup> (Sacco *Footnotes in Gaza* 18). On page 19 (figure 2.7), he provides another detailed diagram with information captions about the placement of settlements and checkpoints in the Gaza Strip (19).

Second, in Appendix I (p. 390-404), the author presents all the documents and sources, dated November 1956, that he used in the book, and which he found throughout his research in the UNO archives and the Israeli archives. On pages 390-340, we find

transcripts of letters exchanged among high officials concerning the incidents (such as Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army R.F Bayard, and Colonel Leary; acting chief of UNTSO, on Nov.13, 1956). We also find transcripts of a top-secret communiqué by the IDF, a 5-pages IDF report, articles from the *Times* and *Kol Ha'am* newspapers... On pages 401-403, we find an interview with an Israeli official Mordechai Bar-On. In Appendices II and III (p. 404-413), we find transcripts of interviews with high Israeli officials concerning the demolition of homes in Rafah in 2003, such as Major Sharon Feingold, Captain Jacob Dallal, IDF spokespersons, and others. In Appendix V (p. 415), Sacco provides Palestinian figures of the houses

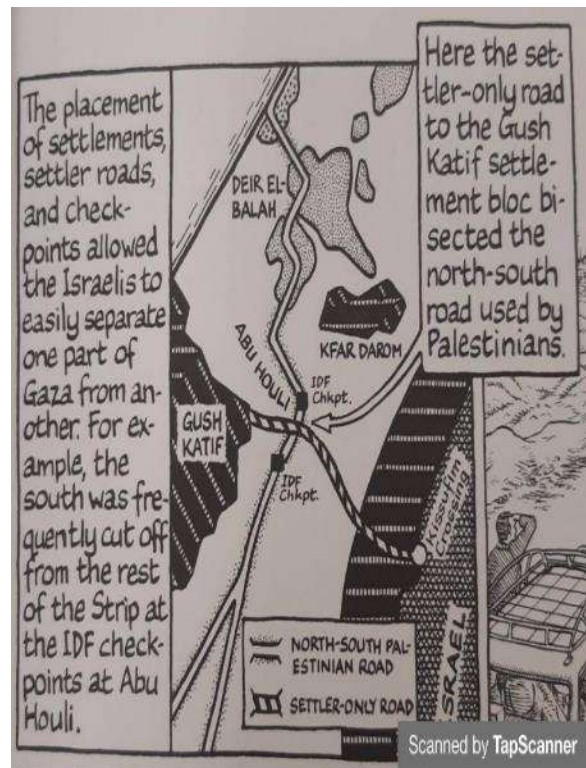


Figure 2.7:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p.19.

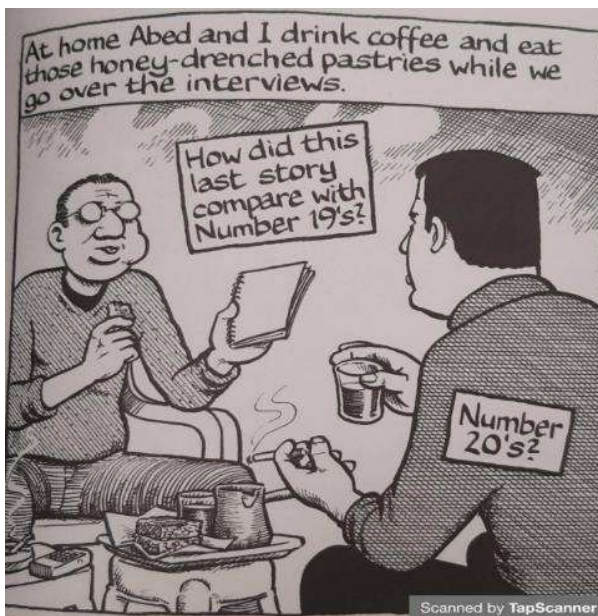
[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company. All Rights Reserved.]

<sup>19</sup> In 2005, Israel dismantled the settlements and withdrew from the Gaza Strip.

demolished in 2003, based on the UNRWA and the Ministry of Housing. On page 416, Sacco provides a complete bibliography.

## 2.6. The Presence of the Author:

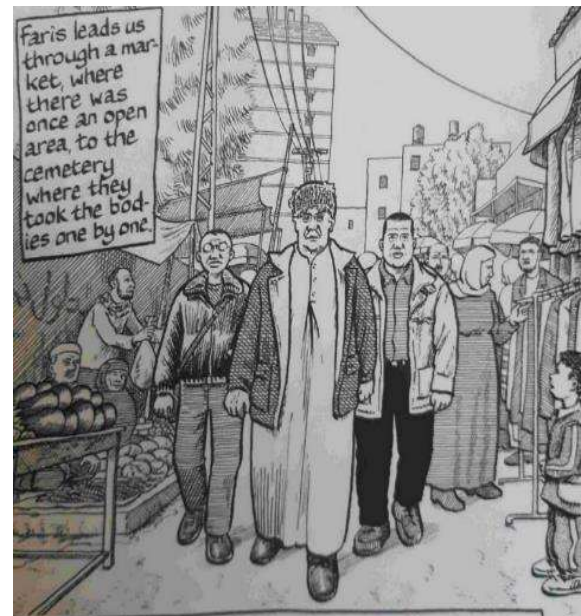
One of the most crucial authentication strategies and features of comics journalism is the author's presence in the text. In *Footnotes in Gaza*, Joe Sacco is present throughout the book as a character in the story (a narrator or a talking head) both verbally and visually. Verbally, Sacco uses captions to either narrate events from the subjective first-person point of view ("I") or first-person plural point of view ('we, us'), or from a discreet point of view using a more objective third-person narrative mode (**he/ she**) (Weber and Rall "Authenticity" 385). As we can see in the following figures 2.8 and 2.9:



**Figure 2.8:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 203.

[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company. All Rights Reserved.]



**Figure 2.9:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 101.

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Visually, Sacco depicts himself, in the book's panels, in a "**cartoony style**" (figures 2.8 and 2.9). He appears in the book either as a journalist (interviewing people and holding a camera, a pen, and a notebook) or as a character (engaged in discussion with his interpreter or his surrounding people). The cartoon-Sacco is the only character drawn with ironic traits, as opposed to the remaining highly-realistic-drawn characters. The self-caricature shows a weedy, small character with exaggerated facial traits and thick glasses (Maher 233). The reason behind such a caricatural depiction is to present himself as "a cultural outsider trying to make sense of complicated conflicts" (Maher 233). Therefore, he is trying to distance himself, as an honest reporter, from what he is reporting. Indeed, the thick glasses that cover his eyes represent "a purity of gaze" or "a blindness of an outsider" (Maher 233). In an interview with Rachel Cooke for *The Guardian* newspaper (2009), Sacco explains this self-depiction as a way to leave the space for others' stories and to hide his emotional responses:<sup>20</sup>

I'm a nondescript figure; on some level, I'm a cipher. The thing is: I don't want to emote too much when I draw myself. The stories are about other people, not me. I'd rather emphasise their feelings. If I do show mine – let's say I'm shaking [with fear] more than the people I'm with – it's only ever to throw their situation into starker relief (Sacco "Eyeless in Gaza").

### **3. Translation and Interpretation in Comics Journalism**

Journalists, reporters, and correspondents usually work in multilingual environments to cover real-events news, dealing extensively with problems of cultural and linguistic differences (Maher 222). The role of translation (and translators), consisting of solving these problems and maintaining communication between journalists and native people, usually goes unnoticed (Maher 222). Comics journalism, being a subfield of journalism, is also based on translation and interpretation, mainly in field research, which consists of "eyewitness input, research, and careful fact-checking" (Maher 225). However, translators are

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<sup>20</sup> For the full interview, please consult: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2009/nov/22/joe-sacco-interview-rachel-cooke>.

not glossed over in comics journalism; because of the very different nature in which the reportage of comics journalists is presented. The reportage in comics journalism allows the “time” and “space” for comics journalists to shed light on aspects that traditional journalists tend to ignore, such as the work of translators (Maher 225). In other words, unlike regular reporters in daily newspapers, for instance, comics journalists are “under less time pressure during research and writing,” and their reports “have a longer life than regular journalism” as they appear in bound collections (Maher 225). Therefore, translators- interpreters appear, both verbally and visually, in the panels. However, we should note that their presence is not **only** an acknowledgment of the tremendous work that translators carry out - usually behind the scenes -but also an authentication strategy confirming that all testimonies were translated by a third party.

A project in comics journalism is realized in two stages: **a)** during the field research and **b)** while writing the speech balloons and drawing the pictures. In the first stage, comics journalists hire a “fixer,” who is usually a local interpreter, a translator, and a guide at the same time. Indeed, the skills required for such local mediators are not only interpretation/translation skills but also journalistic and networking skills such as “to find interviewees, organize transport, make bookings, check facts and much more” (Maher 224).

The book *Footnotes in Gaza*, according to Joe Sacco, took almost seven years to be achieved. “Two and a half to three months of field research ... and then the writing took some months, and the drawing took some years” (Sacco “Joe Sacco: Drawing Out the Truth”)<sup>21</sup>. During the first stage, i.e., the field research, Sacco hired a Palestinian young man called “Abed” as an interpreter and a guide. They ended up being friends. Sacco explains Abed's role in an interview with Gary Groth (2011):

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<sup>21</sup> For the full interview, please consult: <https://bookpage.com/interviews/8539-joe-sacco-history#.X97Dt9hKjIU>.

He wasn't a fixer in the true sense of the word. I would say he acted as my fixer, and he might have helped journalists before, but that wasn't his thing.... He worked at a Palestinian NGO [Non-Governmental Organization]. .... He was a young guy — he lives in Ramallah now — he's a Palestinian-American: very smart. He hand-held me, took me to Gaza. I had been to Gaza before, **but he actually showed me some people and said: "I think this guy might be able to help you."**... We just basically lived together, ate together, worked together. It would have been impossible without him (Sacco "Joe Sacco on Footnotes in Gaza: Interview by Gary Groth"; emphasis added).

### 3.1. A Multitude of Narrative Voices in *Footnotes in Gaza*: A Polyphonic Text

"Abed" is present throughout the book, verbally and visually. His voice, together with the voice of the narrator and the witnesses/survivors, makes the text "polyphonic." But before tracing the voice of the interpreter, which is the main point of this section. I would like, first, to discuss the concept of polyphony, the levels (layers), and the categories of the voices in *Footnotes in Gaza*.

Polyphony is a term coined by Bakhtin in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984). It is borrowed from music and means the existence of "multiple voices" in the text (Robinson "In Theory Bakhtin"). Bakhtin thinks that Dostoevsky's work contains "many different voices, unmerged into a single perspective, and not subordinated to the voice of the author. Each of these voices has its own perspective, its own validity, and its own narrative weight within the novel" (Robinson "In Theory Bakhtin"). And it is the **dialogue** among these characters' voices or the dialogic relationship among them that "formed the fundamental content of 'polyphony'" (Zhongwen 780). This dialogue can be either a 'large-scale dialogue' or 'micro-type dialogue' as put forward by Bakhtin (780). The large-scale dialogue "touches upon the structure of the characters' relationship; that is 'counterpoint'" (780). The micro-type dialogue takes the form of "inner monologue" or "antiphonal dialogue," which is "a dialogue amidst dialogues" (781). Both monologues and large-scale dialogues are common among the voices in *Footnotes in Gaza*.

These narrative voices have different **levels** (layers) and belong to different **categories**. According to Gérard Genette (1980), there are three levels of narrative voices: the extradiegetic, the intradiegetic,

and the metadiegetic. The extradiegetic level is carried out at the first level of narration (Genette *Narrative Discourse* 288), i.e., the external level of narration. An extradiegetic narrator “narrates a story from outside the fictional universe of a particular text” (Bozyk “Narrative levels”). We can take the example of Homer in the *Iliad*. The events (story) told inside the first level of narration are called intradiegetic or diegetic (Genette *Narrative Discourse* 288). An intradiegetic narrator “exists within the story world of a particular text and transmits a story that is framed by the extradiegetic narrative level” (Bozyk “Narrative levels”). We can consider Scheherazade in the *Arabian Nights* as an example of an intradiegetic narrator. The events (story) narrated at the second-degree level (the intradiegetic level) are called metadiegetic (Genette *Narrative Discourse* 288). A metadiegetic narrator “exists within a story world depicted by one of the characters of the primary narrative and who shares, with his or her fellow character(s), a narrative of his or her own” (Bozyk “Narrative levels”). We can consider Aladdin, Ali Baba, and Sindbad the Sailor – who are characters in the *Arabian Nights* – as metadiegetic narrators. They narrate their own stories within the narration of Scheherazade, who is framed, in her turn, by the main narrator of *Arabian Nights*.<sup>22</sup>

The narrating levels can be seen as a story within a story within a story. They resemble the Russian “Matryoshka dolls,” which are decreasing-size dolls placed inside each other. The transition between levels is called “Metalepsis,” which is defined as “the act that consists precisely of introducing into one situation, by means of a discourse, the knowledge of another situation” (Genette *Narrative Discourse* 234).

We can consider the narration in *Footnotes in Gaza* (carried out by Joe Sacco) as extradiegetic, the testimonies are intradiegetic, and the events narrated within the testimonies are metadiegetic. The narrator in *Footnotes in Gaza* transitions, very often, in the same panel, from the extradiegetic, where he

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<sup>22</sup> For more information on extradiegetic and intradiegetic narrative levels, please consult: <http://narrativetheoryandtheearlynovel.weebly.com/extradiegetic-narrative.html#:~:text=An%20extradiegetic%20narrator%20is%20one,then%2C%20is%20the%20extradiegetic%20narratee.>

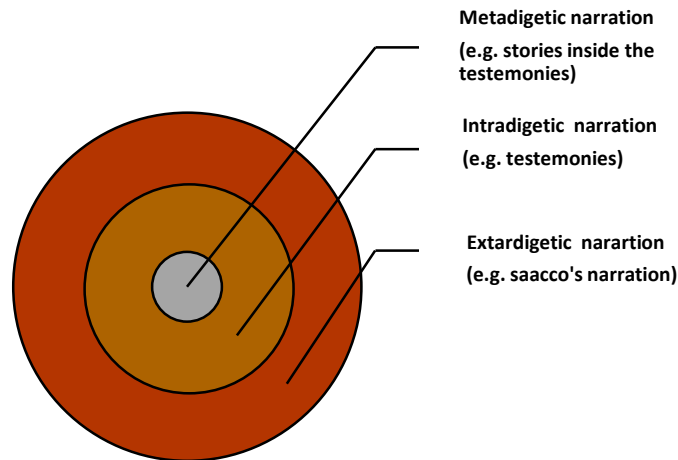


is an external narrator, into the intradiegetic, where he becomes an interviewer (a character in the book).

In very rare cases, he steps from the intradiegetic into the metadiegetic, such as on page 13, where Sacco jumps into the conversation of a survivor and takes part in it (Sacco 13):

- **Sacco's external narration:** Then again, sometimes my presence elicits discomfort, suspicion, perhaps tinged with humiliation... who am I, after all, snooping around taking photos, wanting names?
- **Survivor:** somebody from the Jews will get your book and read my name and my address ...and they will come here in the night **and** -
- **Sacco: - and demolish your house?**
- **Sacco:** If they demolish your house, I say, I will buy you a new one.

The following diagram illustrates the levels of narration in a text:



**Figure 2.10:**  
Representation of Narration Levels in *Footnotes in Gaza*

The narrative voice is classified, according to Genette (1980), into three categories: heterodiegetic, homodiegetic, and auto-diegetic voices. These categories are dependant on the narrator's presence in the text: explicit or implicit (Genette *Narrative Discourse* 244). Heterodiegetic is when "the narrator is absent from the story he tells (example: Homer in the *Iliad*...)", homodiegetic is when "the narrator is present as a character in the story he tells (example: Gil Blas ...)", and auto-diegetic is when "the narrator is the hero

of his narrative.” The auto-diegetic voice is “the strong degree of homodiegetic” (Genette *Narrative Discourse* 244-245).

Throughout *Footnotes in Gaza*, the narrator transitions from one voice category into the other. He uses an objective heterodiegetic voice when he narrates historical events based on real facts and statistics, such as when describing the situation of the Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip: “of the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who fled the fighting or were expelled by Israeli forces, 200,000 ended up in Gaza, tripling its population” (Sacco *Footnotes in Gaza* 18), and when he is a narrator-witness watching a demonstration: “the activists keep trying to impose their peaceful demonstration on the situation” (192). The narrator, then, switches to the homodiegetic voice when he intervenes or comments on the story of a character or when he gives an opinion, for example: “I tell him that, despite the difficulties, he must feel lucky to have a job in Israel” (35). This voice is recognized mainly by the subjective pronouns (the first-person pronouns) “I” or “we.” The narrator converts to the auto-diegetic voice on very rare occasions because he is not, in any case, a hero in the stories narrated in *Footnotes in Gaza*. We can hear this auto-diegetic voice when the narrator tells his constant struggle with sleep in the highly-congested refugee camp in Rafah: “If I fall back asleep, it won’t be for long because the day starts early in Rafah” (156). This voice is recognized by the subjective pronouns “I”. The witnesses and survivors always have an auto-diegetic voice, as they are the heroes of their own stories and not just taking part in it: “I wasn’t hit myself. I saw many people beaten with sticks” (210).

### **3.2. The Interpreter’s Voice in *Footnotes in Gaza*: Abed as a Case Study**

The interpreter’s voice is dominant in the book. This is because all the conversations are conveyed to the author through interpretation. Abed’s voice is located at the intradiegetic level (second-degree narration). Not only because every translation/interpretation is a re-narration of the original narrative, but also



because Abed's interference in the text always comes after Sacco's narration. Genette (1980) explains this difference between the narrative levels, saying: "any events a narrative recounts [re-narrates] is at a diegetic level immediately higher than the level at which the narrating act producing this narrative is placed" (*Narrative Discourse* 228). Abed's voice switches from one narrating category to the other (heterodiegetic, homodiegetic, and auto-diegetic) depending on the degree of his involvement in the story (from the least engaged voice to the most engaged one).

Indeed, we can hear the voice of Abed as an interpreter throughout the panels. For example, in one scene on page 41 (Figure 2.11), we can see Sacco visiting a *Fedayee* (national fighter) in his house to interview him about the War of 1956, during a day of Ramadhan which is the holy month of fasting in the Islamic faith (Britannica). However, the *Fedayee* does not want to engage in any serious conversation until his *Fast* is done (after the sunset). Abed is interpreting for them. This mediating role is depicted very clearly in the panel. We see Abed visually in the panel and verbally through the use of the phrase "**he is asking us to...**" (Sacco 41), which reflects clearly that the discourse is interpreted.

- Abed: **He is asking us** to return in the evening, after the Fast.
- Sacco: So, he can smoke?
- Abed: So, he can smoke.

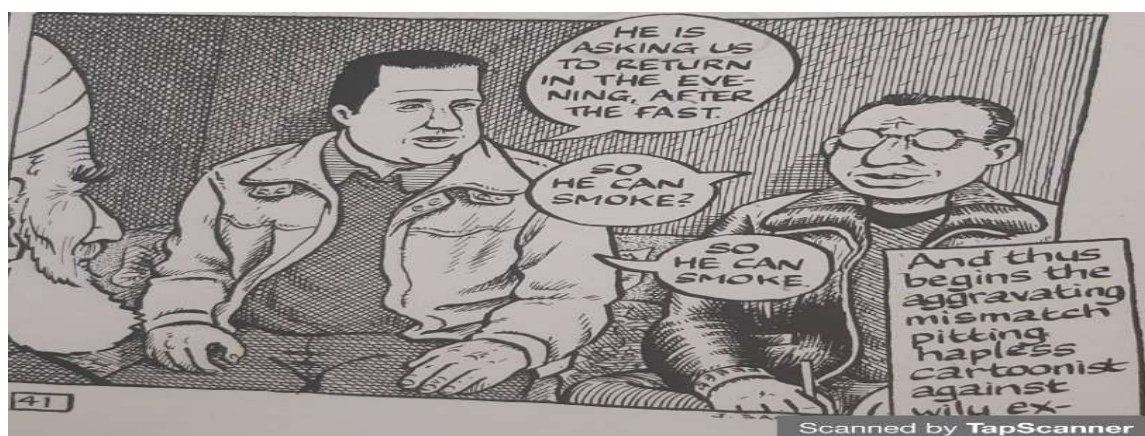


Figure 2.11:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 41.

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Abed, in this example, has a **heterodiegetic** narrative voice. He is present as a character in the story but does not take part in it. He is just interpreting/re-narrating what others say. This “neutral” voice will be soon silenced by an “engaged” homodiegetic voice when Abed interferes in the story by taking up the interviewer's role. For instance, on page 45 (figure 2.12), we can hear and see both Abed and Sacco interviewing the same *Fedayee* concerning one of the military actions he was involved in (Sacco 45):

- Narrator Sacco: I am hungry for details.
- **Abed: so, this operation, it was obviously without orders?**
- Fedayee: Yes, they were my own orders.
- Sacco: did you go with other people?
- Fedayee: Two were with me.

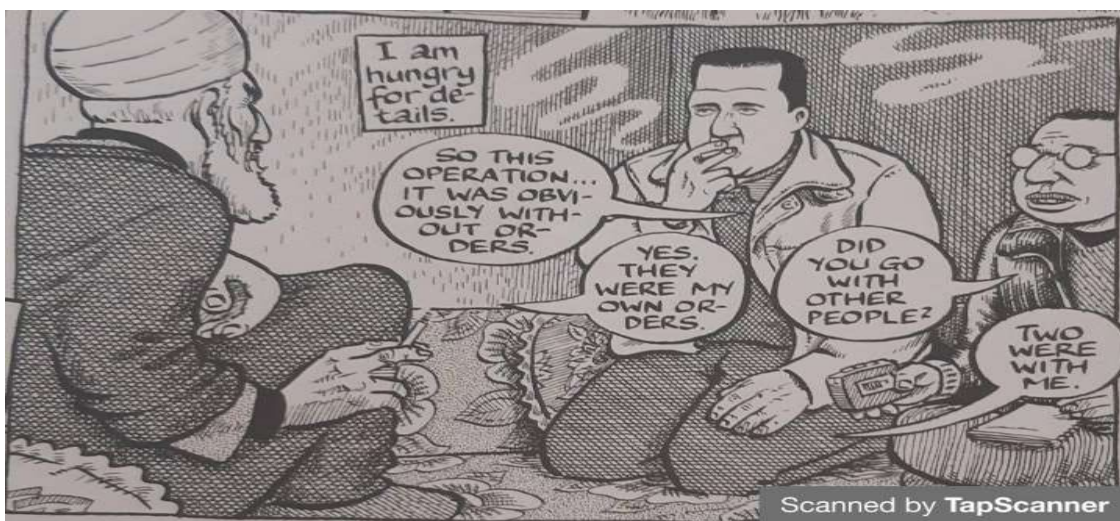


Figure 2.12:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 45.

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On page 242, we hear again the “engaged” homodiegetic voice of Abed, but this time he is the main interviewer (figure 2.13). Abed interviews an elderly survivor (Salah Mehi Eldin El-Argan) of the massacre of Rafah, that took place on 12 Nov. 1956 in a public school. The survivor narrates how hundreds of men were all

gathered in the school and how they were hit by Israeli soldiers. Abed is trying to help the elderly survivor to recover memory and to narrate his story in an organized way (Sacco 242):

- **Abed: we're walking with you, Okay?**
- **Abed: Abdullah is in front of you.**
- **Abed: Abdullah was hit and you kept going?**
- Survivor: I kept going.
- Survivor: I entered the school.
- Survivor: I left Abdullah at the gate bleeding.



Figure 2.13:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 242.

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The “engaged” homodiegetic voice of Abed becomes louder as an editor and filter. Sacco confirms in many interviews that Abed is more than just an interpreter/translator. In an interview with Gary Groth (2011), he says: “Abed was getting very interested in the project — a smart guy himself, he really kept his ears open. He became a **little filter**. He was listening” (Sacco “Joe Sacco on Footnotes in Gaza: Interview by Gary Groth”). In another interview with Roger Sabin (2009), at London’s ICA, Sacco confirms<sup>23</sup>:

What is good was that my guide and friend Abed, he really got into this story too. He started evaluating people’s stories. And being a Palestinian himself, he would say, ‘You know, I don’t really believe this guy’s story, I think he’s exaggerating.’ He was one of those ... filters... My

<sup>23</sup> For the full interview, please consult: <http://www.eyemagazine.com/blog/post/notes-on-saccos-footnotes-in-gaza> .

feeling was, if he said, 'I don't believe that guy's story,' as far as I was concerned, that was a veto. So, we would discuss this stuff a lot (Sacco "Notes on Sacco's *Footnotes in Gaza*").

Sacco explains, in detail, the filtering-editing process that Abed and himself carried out every day after conducting interviews. He dedicates a whole page (p. 203) and many other panels in the book to show us how both of them are involved in the process. On page 203 (figure 2.14), in the first two panels, we hear Abed giving his opinion and acting as a filter about a story narrated by one of the survivors of the massacre of Nov. 12, 1956 (Sacco 203):

- Sacco: Speaking of the number 20 - and by the way, I've numbered all the interviewees because I can hardly keep any one's name straight – **what did you think of his story?**
- Abed: about his friends being killed?
- Abed: **I think he is exaggerating.**
- Sacco narrator: Abed is getting as sucked into this as I am.

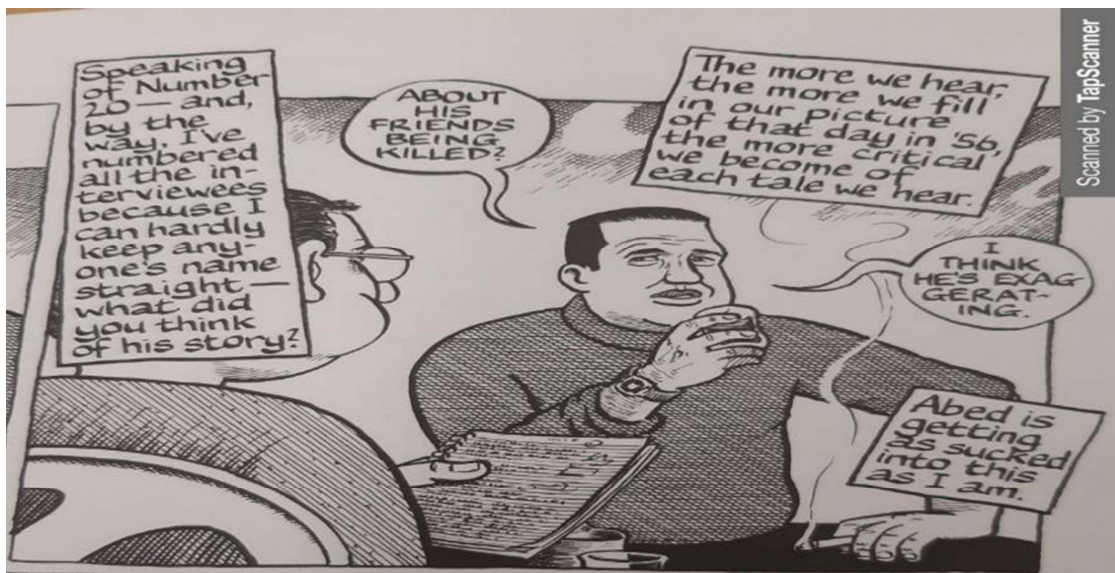


Figure 2.14:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 203.

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In many other panels in *Footnotes in Gaza*, Sacco confirms the importance of Abed's role as a filter/editor. On page 276, he confirms that "Abed's doubt is as good as a Veto." On page 277, he says:



“who decides what is credible and what is not? We [Abed and Sacco] decide, we edit, we determine”. On page 278, after listening to the testimony of a witness, Sacco states: “Abed and I have to take responsibility for believing or rejecting a witness.”

Abed also participates in guiding and planning the day’s movements. We hear his homodiegetic voice, on page 19 (figure 2.15), while organizing with Sacco an interview with a witness from their “command post”; which is Abed’s house in Khan Younes. The use of the pronoun “we” in the narration of Sacco and “us” in Abed’s direct speech, proves that the role of Abed is more than just an interpreter (Sacco 19):

- Sacco narrator: And **our** command post is Abed’s home in the center of the town.
- Sacco narrator: Here, **we** plan the day’s movement.
- Abed: **the guy will meet us after the prayers.**
- Sacco: **sounds good.**
- Sacco narrator: And here **we** eat and sleep.



Figure 2.15:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 19.

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We hear Abed's "engaged" homodiegetic voice, once again, when he acts as a cultural mediator intervening in the situation by giving his opinion. On page 284, Sacco interviews some people whose homes have been recently demolished. He wants to help those unfortunate people and asks Abed if this is a good idea (Sacco 284):

- **Sacco narrator:** I feel terrible for these people who have lost two homes between them. I want to do something, but I don't want to overstep the bounds of Arab propriety.
- **Sacco:** Shall I give them some money, or is it a bad idea?
- **Abed:** **It's a bad idea.**

Another "engaged" homodiegetic voice of cultural mediation can be heard when Abed intervenes in the conversation to explain a cultural word to Sacco. On page 317 (figure 2.16), the survivor Mohi Eldin Ibrahim Lafi describes, in his testimony, that the good thing about the massacre that occurred in the public school in Rafah is that soldiers did not attack women, who came to look for their men after being gathered in the school and killed. Women are usually referred to as "honor" [*Al-Sharaf*] (الشرف), or (العرض) [*Al-Ard*] in the Palestinian society, in particular, and the Arab culture, in general, as they represent the "honor" of their men and families (Sacco 317):

- Mohi Eldin Ibrahim Lafi: The good thing is that they **didn't attack our honor**.
- Sacco: **Our what?**
- Abed: **He means the women.**
- Mohi Eldin Ibrahim Lafi: Death and money are nothing.
- Mohi Eldin Ibrahim Lafi: The important thing is our honor.

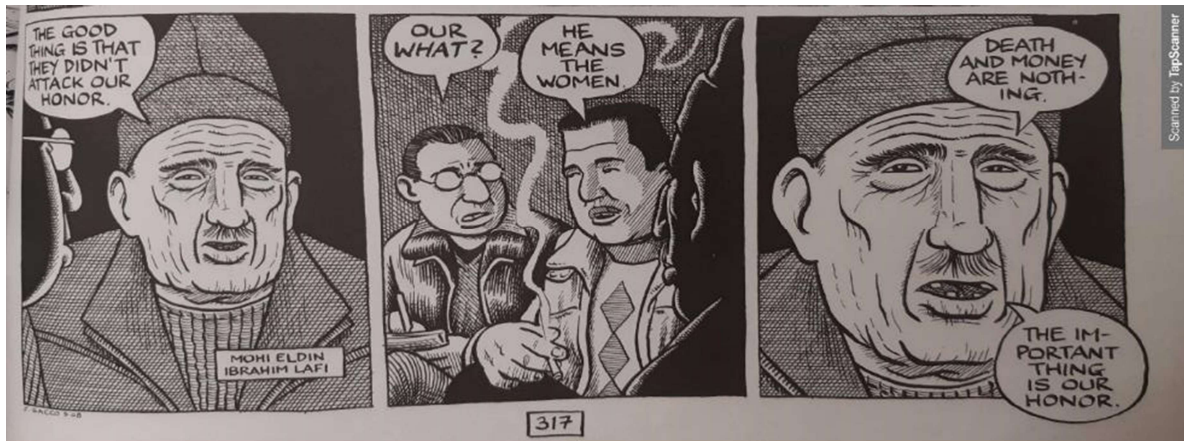


Figure 2.16:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 317.

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We also hear the “extremely engaged” auto-diegetic narrative voice of Abed when he expresses his nationalism as a Palestinian who shares the same stories, collective memory, and identity of the witnesses and survivors. Indeed, Abed does not always “simply parrot or ventriloquize but is actually a part of the collective narrative into which each interviewee’s individual narrative fits” (Maher 227). On page 133, figure 2.17, we can hear and see Abed talking about the military operation against the Israeli Abu Houali checkpoint in Gaza, which resulted in the death of three Palestinians, and a few Israeli soldiers were diagnosed with shock (Sacco 133):

- **Sacco narrator:** As we finally reach the checkpoint, we look around for signs for yesterday suicide attack.
- **Abed:** Many men have been ‘**martyred**’ attacking these two ‘**fucking towers.**’
- **Sacco narrator:** We are told this the tower the three men targeted.
- **Sacco narrator:** Save for few scraps from the blown-up car, little remains to tell the tale.
- **Sacco narrator:** The Israeli position is unscathed.

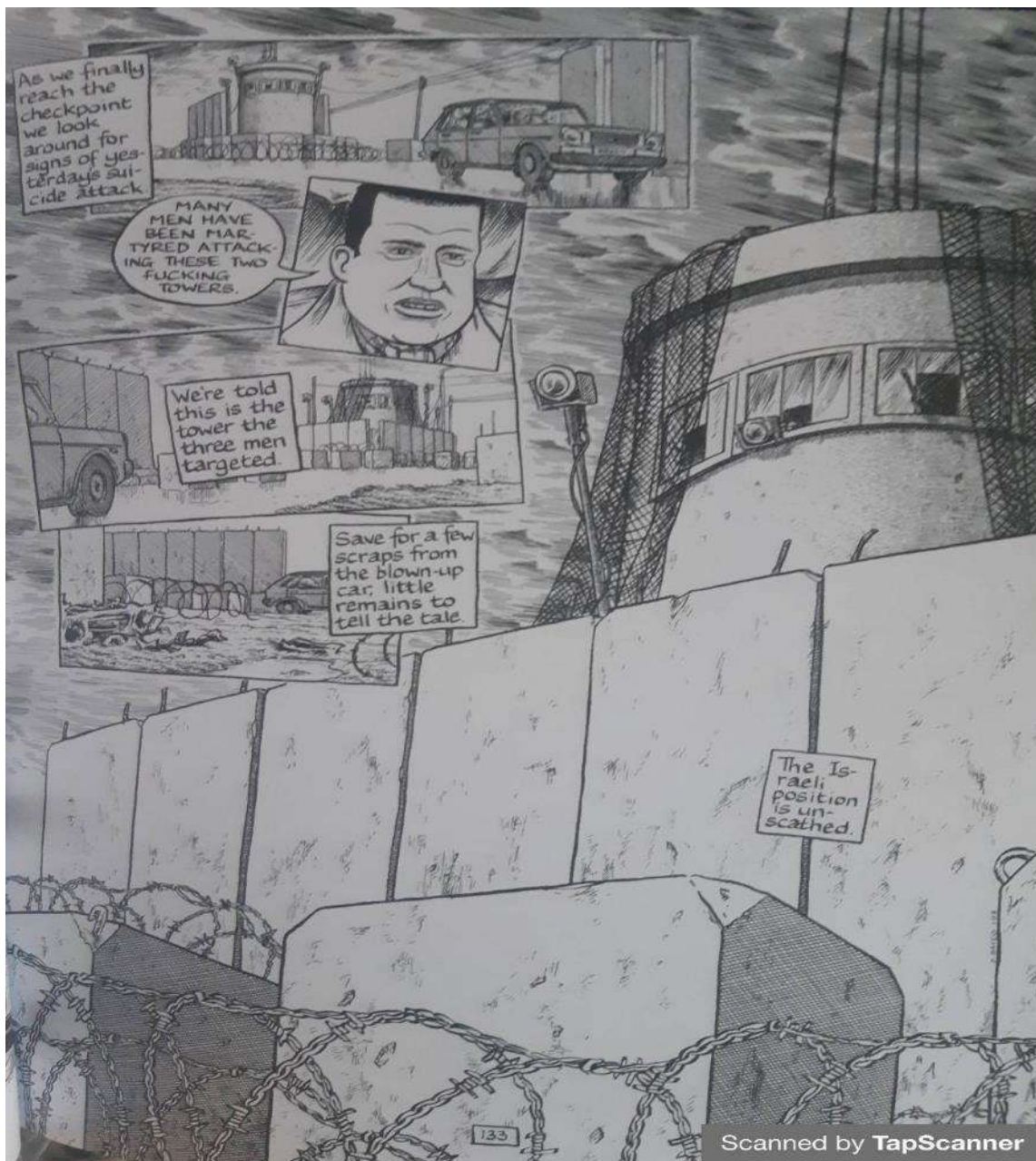


Figure 2.17:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 133.

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As we can see in figure 2.17, the sadness depicted on Abed's face shows the traumatic impact that such an operation left on him as a Palestinian. Although there is no use of the pronoun "I," the strong involvement of Abed in the story is clear through his choice of the words "**martyred**" instead of "**killed**" (which is used by Sacco throughout the book) and the slang "**fucking towers**." This choice reflects very well his position as a nationalist, activist Palestinian, and as a protagonist narrating the suffering of his own people.

The "engaged" auto-diegetic narrative voice is also evident when Abed narrates his own future plans (p. 17), or when he gives his opinion concerning the War in Iraq (p. 370), or his disagreement with international donors (p. 43). On page 17 (figure 2.18), for instance, he discusses with Sacco his plans to finish his studies abroad:

- **Sacco:** can you imagine a different life for yourself or are you so used to this that it's impossible?
- **Abed:** For me I can.
- **Abed:** I want to spend another year in Gaza, and then I need to leave, maybe for three or four years...
- **Abed:** Not just to finish my studies, but to see something else of the world, to get different perspectives.



Figure 2.18:

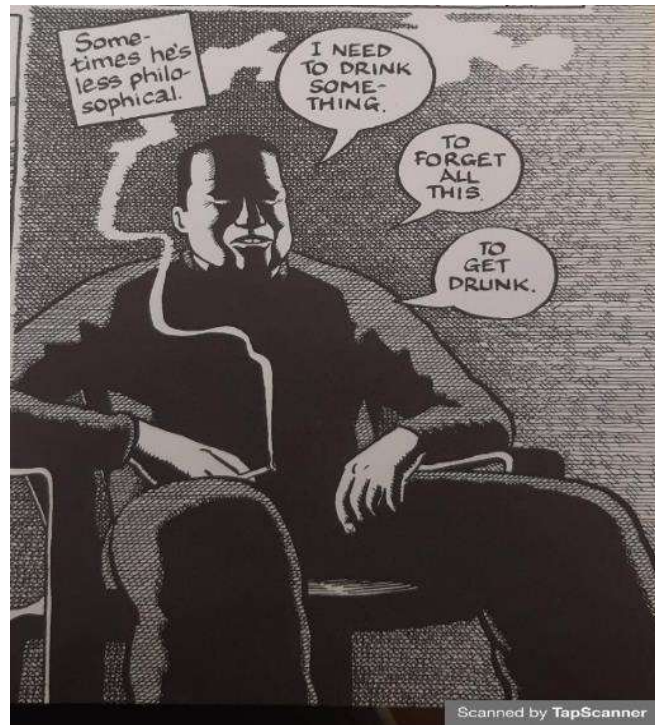
Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 17.

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We also hear his auto-diegetic voice when he performs a direct interior **monologue**. On the same page 17 (figure 2.19), Sacco depicts Abed sitting in a chair, alone, in the dark, in a very bad mood:

- **Sacco narrator:** Sometimes he's less philosophical.
- **Abed:** I need to drink something.
- **Abed:** to forget all this.
- **Abed:** to get drunk.

The use of a black panel represents a state of “mental collapse” or a state of “traumatic shock” (Romero-Jódar 88). This example represents individual suffering, which is a part of collective suffering, resulting from the awful reality Abed – and his people - are living under occupation.



**Figure 2.19:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 17.

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### 3.3. Interpreters in War Zones

We should also note that local interpreters and fixers in war zones, like Abed, play an essential role – usually unacknowledged - in narrating the conflict and even shaping the journalists’ understanding of the war/conflict (Baker “Interpreters” 215). They act as ‘proxy journalists’<sup>24</sup> “**selecting** and **deselecting** interviewees and venues, and in some cases carrying out the interviews themselves” (218).

<sup>24</sup> The term “proxy journalist” was used by Jerry Palmer (2007) in his article “Interpreters and Translators on the Front Line: Interpreting and Translation for western Media”.

This selection/deselection of information is carried out by fixers or local interpreters in war zones for many reasons: the first one is related to security reasons. According to Palmer (2007), fixers lead a “security assessment” as they are “better able than a westerner to assess whether going to a particular place in order to get material is likely to be possible, or excessively dangerous” (Palmer 19). The second reason is that fixers and local interpreters have the local knowledge, linguistic skills, and a wide network of contacts that make them better than a westerner to select the exact individual for an interview (Palmer 19). The third reason is ideological. Indeed, local fixers or interpreters are “firmly embedded in the conflict and feature as protagonists in their own right in the unfolding narrative of the war” (Baker “Interpreters” 216). They inevitably intend to “reproduce and strengthen particular narrative takes on the conflict” (Baker “Interpreters” 216). Indeed, fixers might “bring their own agendas,” which to some extent “determines what a journalist sees” (Palmer 22). Usually, fixers and local interpreters in war zones attempt to position themselves with one of the sides of the conflict: with the “us” side or the “them” side.” They try to serve one of the conflicting narratives through the depiction of “the other” as radically opposite to themselves and their values: “we value life and freedom; *they* are out to kill and enslave us” (Baker “Interpreters” 198; emphasis in original). In conflict zones, neutrality is “close to impossible” (Palmer 22). And if for any reason local translators chose to be “neutral,” they will be drawn into an area of “conflicting loyalties”: where they will be regarded as traitors by their communities - accusing them of being collaborators with the enemy - and untrustworthy by the other side – accusing them of being security risks. This situation leaves them bare of any protection (Baker “Interpreters” 204-205). A good example would be the interpreters who were working during the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This point will be explained, in detail, in the following chapter when we study translators in the in-between space.

Abed obviously positions himself on the Palestinian side (the “us” side). Sacco makes Abed’s political position clear throughout the text as a Palestinian activist, nationalist, and promoter of his people’s cause. The author dedicates a whole section to him from pages 13 to 17. Sacco states in one of the panels on page 14 of *Footnotes in Gaza* Sacco:

- He is well known on the streets of his hometown, Khan Younis.
- He is educated, his family clan is respected.
- **He is a patriot.**
- He got a bullet in his leg while stoning an Israeli soldier when he was 13 or 14 years old.
- That was during the first Intifada back in the late 1980s.

Abed’s “nationalism” and “activism” can be evident through his “moderately engaged” to “extremely engaged voice” that we studied earlier. We can hear his “moderately engaged” voice when he provides an explanation, or when he participates in an interview or when he explains a cultural reference. We can also hear his “extremely engaged voice” when he selects and deselects places and people for interviews, when he filters information and when he gives his opinion concerning the tragic Palestinian situation. This demonstrates his involvement in the narration of his people’s story. Sacco acknowledges in all his interviews on *Footnote in Gaza* the tremendous job done by Abed and his involvement in the project; “he [Abed] lived and breathed the project too” (Sacco “Joe Sacco on Footnotes in Gaza: Interview by Gary Groth”). “This book to a large part is also his [Abed’s]” (Sacco “Footnotes in Gaza: Interview with Matt Weiland”).

On page 14, we can see Abed’s nationalist position when he expresses firmly his disagreement with Oslo Accords - peace agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (Britannica) - and with the Palestinian officials who signed them. We also hear Abed’s nationalist voice on page 34, when he refuses to get a job in an American-government-aid agency. Indeed, Abed accepted to get a dramatic pay cut in his salary when the NGO he works for stopped accepting aid from western donors (Sacco 34):

- Abed: We believe that there is a hidden agenda behind every western donor- especially American donors.
- Abed: Their idea is to make us focus on how to democratize ourselves and to forget that we are still slaves.

We see Abed as a promoter of the Palestinian cause in all the scenes that depict the present-day Gaza. Looking at the present-day scenes depicted in the book, we have the impression that Abed wanted to make Sacco witness the every-day suffering of his people under occupation and not only to focus on the past 1956 massacres. Ultimately, he wanted the world to see -through Sacco's eyes - the ongoing situation of the conflict. Indeed, we see him and Sacco in very dangerous situations, such as on page 182, where both of them are witnessing a bulldozer demolishing a house in Rafah. They appear, in the panel, dashing to hide into a group of dwellings (figure 2.20). On page 192, we see both of them trapped in the dwellings and witnessing from a distance: the AFV (Armored Fighting Vehicle) stitching holes in houses on their side, the bulldozer demolishing a home, the militants angling for a shot, the international activists demonstrating trying to stop the demolition, as well as children playing fearlessly (Sacco 192).



Figure 2.20:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 182.

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While those interpreters in war zones, like Abed, are participating in narrating history, we should not ignore the traumatic effects that such interpretations can have on these professionals. According to Mona Baker (2006), “the ontological narratives can be among the most demanding and challenging to translate, and particularly to interpret” (*Translation and Conflict* 32). Mainly in conflict zones where these narratives are very painful. Baker provides the example of interpreters at the Truth and Reconciliation Trials that took place after the fall of apartheid in South Africa (32). These interpreters were traumatized by the traumatic ontological narratives of victims and perpetrators: “.... the interpreters have, for instance, had the trauma of not just hearing or reading about the atrocities, but have had to speak in the first person as either a victim or the perpetrator” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 32).

These traumatic effects become more severe for interpreters who share the same traumatic memory, being a part of the society, such as in the case of Abed. Joe Sacco, in his book *Palestine* (2001), explains how hard these interpretation assignments were for his fixer:

How many soldiers? How did they beat you? Then what happened, He helped me wring it out of the people I interview... And he has heard every blow and humiliation twice. Once by the person telling me and again when it's come out of his mouth in translation (Sacco *Palestine* 219; emphasis in original).

### **3.4. The Author as a Translator in *Footnotes in Gaza***

As indicated earlier, the book *Footnotes in Gaza* was realized in two stages: **the first stage** is the field research which included the collection of testimonies and data, and **the second stage** is the actual writing of the text (word balloons and illustrations). Through the analysis of the voice of the interpreter “Abed” in the previous section, we can see that the field research is heavily based on the interpretation and translation of testimonies and data from Arabic into English. We can also see how the voice of the interpreter is imbedded in the narrative.

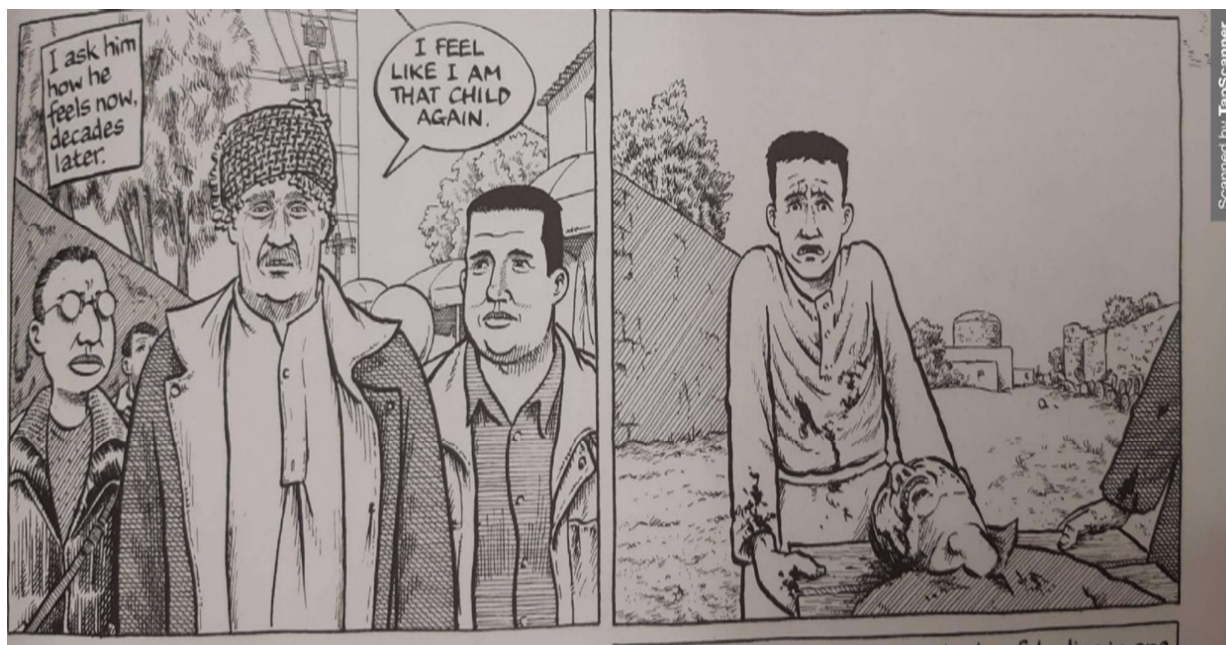
In this section, I would like to note that a further work of translation or re-translation must have been carried out by the author himself in the second stage of realizing *Footnotes in Gaza*, i.e., the word balloons and the visual representation (Maher 226). Indeed, the original conversation or script must have been “re-shaped” to fit into “the spatial and rhythmic constraints” of word balloons (Maher 226). We should not forget that the conversation presented in word balloons is not a pure **reported verbatim** (226). The comic journalist must have carried out a final selection as to which element will go into word balloons and which one will be drawn instead of written, and which one will be eliminated (226). Sacco, in his interview with Roger Sabin at London’s ICA in 2009, explains the selection process of historical narration

It [history] is completely about selection. I’m sure most historians can tell you that. They have to decide in the end what goes in and what gets left out. You realise you’re actually leaving stuff on the cutting room floor that’s history. And you just say, well, that’s just how it has to be (Sacco “Notes on Sacco’s *Footnotes in Gaza*” 2009).

The visual representation of the testimonies can also be considered as a type of “translation” from “**words**” into “**images**.” Indeed, Sacco translates most testimonies into images. As we saw earlier in the second section, this process is called the “re-enactment of memories” (Romero-Jódar 79). On page 101, for instance, Sacco talks to Faris Barbakh, one of the witnesses of the massacre of Khan Younes. Faris, who was 14 years old at the time (in 1956), was living near the Mamluk Castle where the massacre occurred. He saw the dead bodies when he was coincidentally passing by the Castle to fetch water despite the curfew, and helped older people to move and bury them. When Sacco asks Faris how he feels now, decades later, he responds: “I feel like I am that child again” (Sacco 101).

In the panel below (figure 2.21), Sacco translates the witnesses’ feelings and memory from words into an image: he depicts a traumatized and confused child carrying a dead body, facing the readers. This is a technique used by Sacco to involve readers as witnesses in the story.





**Figure 2.21:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 101.

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#### 4. Conclusion

Initially, my purpose from the above analysis (the rhetorical context, the authentication strategies, and the role of translation in comics journalism) was to see how the author Joe Sacco used comics journalism as a “site” to narrate the conflict through the voices of other people. And how he used the medium of comics, which is often associated with funny stories and children’s books, to narrate serious and true-life events. Indeed, comics in *Footnotes in Gaza* are used as a “platform” for the less heard to speak out their version of the facts (their narrative).

But then, I realized that the most important finding of this analysis is the role that local translators and interpreters play in the production of comics journalism books by “shaping” the narrative. For instance, Abed in *Footnotes in Gaza* attempted to bridge the gap between two opposed worlds: that of



the western journalist Joe Sacco and that of the local survivors and witnesses. Throughout his intervention in the process of writing the book (explaining, translating, filtering information, selecting and deselecting witnesses and venues...), Abed certainly served a national agenda: he wanted the world to hear the Palestinian version of the conflict's narrative. The question to be raised here is: Can Abed's intervention in realizing this text be considered a form of "mediation" between the conflicting narratives? In the following chapter, we will find out whether translators, through their re-narration of the conflict, can be "mediators" or not.

## Chapter Three: Translation as Mediation

In the previous chapter, that was dedicated to the analysis of *Footnotes in Gaza*, I traced the voice of Abed - the interpreter for Joe Sacco, who is also a Palestinian activist. Abed bridged the gap between two ideologically conflicting worlds, the world of Sacco, the American journalist who came to the Gaza Strip with his prejudices about the Palestinian society, and the world of Palestinian survivors and witnesses with their prejudices about the West.<sup>25</sup> Abed is a “**prototype**” of the concept of “mediator” that will be tested and developed throughout chapters three and four. The question is: can translators/interpreters dealing with conflictual and opposed narratives, like Abed, be considered “mediators”?

In the third and fourth chapters, I will attempt to answer this question by studying mediation in armed conflicts from a general perspective, and examining mediation in translation studies from two perspectives: the first one is translation as intercultural mediation, and the second one is mediation as a negotiation of the distance between narratives. Concerning the latter, I will examine three types of translators (activist translators, external translators, and the “in-between” translators). In the present chapter, I will study the “in-between” translators, those who belong to one side of the conflict but work with the other. I will draw here on the Arab-Druze translators in the Israeli army and the Iraqi interpreters working for the U.S. forces in Iraq. In the following chapter, I will discuss activists and external translators. Indeed, using a comparative analytical approach, I will trace the voices of the Palestinian and the French translators of *Footnotes in Gaza*.

### 1. Mediation in Armed Conflicts

Mediation is one of those terms that are used frequently but rarely defined (Baker “Ethics of Re-narration” 15). The term mediation is usually used in conflictual situations. It is defined by the Canadian Bar

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<sup>25</sup> Joe Sacco discusses the idea of prejudices in the interview “Graphic Journalism and Palestine” (2011) carried out by Grand Valley State University (GVSU): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcdlqdcDbMQ>.

Association as “the intervention into a dispute or negotiation by an acceptable, impartial and neutral third party who has no decision-making power, to assist disputing parties in voluntarily reaching their own mutually acceptable settlement of issues in dispute” (“Mediation” [Government of Canada]).

In armed conflicts, mediation is considered a peaceful method of conflict resolution contrary to military intervention (Żakowska 76). Oran Young (1967) defines mediation “as any action taken by an actor not directly involved in the conflict, aimed at reducing or removing one or more problems occurring between the negotiating parties, which in the end should lead to establishing conditions for ending the conflict” (34). Mediation thus enables “the parties to the conflict to start communicating” in order “to find a compromise solution” (Żakowska 76). The question that arises here is the following: When do the parties involved in an armed conflict decide to resort to mediation? The following motives are just a few among many.

First, when adversaries decide that mediation will serve their interests better than an unregulated, ongoing conflict and will prevent them from choosing between two evils: “escalation of the conflict” and “making concessions” (Żakowska 81). Second, when the chance for a military victory is low, and the related costs are high (82). Upon a deep analysis of the “costs and profits,” the parties decide to start mediation (82). Third, the “stalemate situation”: when the adversaries “are involved in a costly conflict without the possibility of emerging from it victorious” (82). Fourth, adversaries might use mediation as a “political strategy.” It prevents “the reduction of public opinion support for the military operations carried out,” and it can be used to enable “the actors to gain some time, which is necessary to regroup and strengthen their armed forces and to develop a new war strategy” (84). Fifth, mediation can be used by the conflicting parties as an “opportunity to gain international recognition”; as they “announce that they are ready to accept and respect the international regulations regarding peaceful conflict resolution and start cooperation to solve the conflict” (85). This cooperation may result in “the cessation or reduction of

various forms of pressure applied on the adversaries, such as sanctions aimed at forcing them to end the conflict,” which can “strengthen their position and chances on the battlefield” (85). Finally, mediation can be used by the conflicting parties as “a saving face strategy” (86). This strategy may be used in highly polarized conflicts by the adversaries – who are not really willing to solve the conflict – to place “the responsibility for organizing the mediation process on the mediator” ... so that when “the mediation fails, they can save face and blame the mediator” (86).

Therefore, the mediation in armed conflicts is ensured by “a third party - a mediator who is accepted by the adversaries as an **"impartial"** and a **"neutral"** subject” (Żakowska 77; emphasis added). What do we mean by mediator’s neutrality? Paweł Waszkiewicz (2014) explains that this “neutrality” is ensured by: first, the mediator’s lack of connection to the subject of the conflict, and his/her lack of any interests in ending the conflict (Żakowska 87). Second, the guarantee that the mediator’s beliefs and prejudices will not influence the perception of the conflict by the parties nor the proposed solutions (87). Third, the necessity for the mediator to be “impartial,” which means having no relationship with any of the sides of the conflict and “not representing the interests of any of them” (87).

In sum, the main goal of the mediator is to help each party in “the same conditions” (87) and treat them on “equal footing” in order to reach an acceptable solution. The mediator should therefore apply “the principle of equality” (“The Principles of Mediation”). Indeed, “Each party has an equal chance and an equal opportunity to participate not only in the process but also in the outcome” (Pollack “Equality and Mediation”). Kamilla Bargiel-Matuszewicz (2007) sums up the tasks of a mediator as follows (qtd. in Żakowska 91):

- organizing parties’ meetings;
- agreeing on the mediation procedure;
- helping the parties express emotions and expectations;
- helping in formulating proposals of solutions;
- not resolving the dispute;
- not giving an opinion (even on the parties’ request);

- not representing any of the parties;
- not being appointed as a witness in a given case.

However, mediators are not always “neutral.” They might have personal or public interests/motives that can shape the mediation process and, thus, determine its success or failure. Dan Smith (1997) confirms that biased mediators cannot “expect to help a process build towards peace if they come with their own agenda” (Dan Smith 208). It is undoubtedly their role to make proposals – if asked – to help the parties involved reaching peace, but if they “consistently put forward proposals that favor one conflict party against the other, there will soon be an end to the negotiations” (208). Indeed, “the even-handed propositions” help mediators to earn the trust of both sides (208). Therefore, neutrality and impartiality are the basis for any successful mediation.

Dan Smith (1997) also suggests that the most effective strategy for a “successful mediation” is the “**cautious cooperation**” approach, inspired from the *Prisoners Dilemma game*<sup>26</sup>. In game theory, The *Prisoners' dilemma game* presents a situation where “two parties [prisoners], separated and unable to communicate, must each choose between co-operating with the other or not” (“The Prisoner's Dilemma” [Investopedia]). To put it simply, let us assume that two bank robbers have been arrested and are being interrogated in separate rooms (ibid). For lack of evidence and witnesses, the authorities offer each of them two choices: either to cooperate with his/her accomplice (by remaining silent) or to betray/defect the other member (ibid). If they both cooperate, they will remain in prison for one year only. If they both betray each other, they will remain for two years. If one of them betrays/testifies, and the other remains silent, the one who testifies goes free, and the silent one goes to jail for three years (ibid). It is clear that “the highest reward for each party occurs when both parties choose to co-operate” (“The Prisoner's

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<sup>26</sup> **The prisoner's dilemma:** is “a paradox in decision analysis in which two individuals acting in their own self-interests do not produce the optimal outcome. The typical prisoner's dilemma is set up in such a way that both parties choose to protect themselves at the expense of the other participant. As a result, both participants find themselves in a worse state than if they had **cooperated** with each other in the decision-making process” (“The Prisoner's Dilemma” [Investopedia]).

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/prisoners-dilemma.asp>

Dilemma” [Investopedia]], i.e., when they chose to remain silent, as they will spend only one year in jail. But, since there is no communication between them, they both prefer to testify/betray because they will either be set free or spend two years in jail (ibid)<sup>27</sup>.

In order to incite the prisoners [players in the game] to cooperate, an approach called “cautious cooperation” or “Tit-for-Tat” was developed by Anatol Rapoport in 1980s. This approach involves: first, to oblige actors to cooperate in the first round; second, to punish those who refuse to cooperate; and finally, to “forget” and “forgive” those who opt again for cooperation (Dan Smith 209)<sup>28</sup>. This approach can be applied in the mediation process. As a first step, the mediator should incite the parties of the conflict to cooperate. They should understand that “they are in this together” (209). Indeed, in conflicts, “being right is not enough,” and holding into their positions that brought them into the conflict will simply mean that this conflict will continue (209). As a second step, the mediator should successfully “decode” the discourses of both sides, including their views concerning “the nature of the conflict, its origins and where justice lies” (209). To do so, he/she must know “how to listen and how to paraphrase” (209). The mediator must also have “some knowledge of the conflict issues, region and parties” (210) to detect all the meanings variations.

In the end, we can say that the role of mediators in armed conflicts is very risky. According to Grethe Nordhelle (2010), mediation is like “positional warfare” in which “both sides are on the frontline in their trenches,” and the mediator “must navigate as a messenger between the missiles fired from all sides trying to reach an agreement” (qtd. in Żakowska 76).

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<sup>27</sup> For more information, please see the video “The Prisoner's Dilemma”: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9Lo2fgxWHw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9Lo2fgxWHw).

<sup>28</sup>For more information, please see the video “The Iterated Prisoner's Dilemma and The Evolution of Cooperation”: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOvAbjfJ0x0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOvAbjfJ0x0).

## 2. Translation as Intercultural Mediation

Liddicoat (2016) thinks that translators can be seen as both linguistic and cultural mediators. In the first case, the linguistic mediator uses a “neutral” voice and can be seen as “simply the channel through which communication is established” (Liddicoat 347). In the second case, the cultural mediator “can be understood as someone who undertakes some form of action to enable communication to occur” (348). Mediation, in the second sense, is a “conscious, purposeful intervention into the act of communication” (348). And translators, here, are seen as inter-cultural communicators and mediators. The idea of a translator as a mediator between cultures started with the “cultural turn” in translation studies introduced by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (1990) in the introduction to the book *Translation, History, and Culture* (“Introduction: Proust’s Grandmother” 11). Liddicoat (2016) confirms that the works on “mediation” by scholars like Katan (2002, 2009, 2013) as well as Hatim and Mason (1997), among others, have further developed “the idea of [the] translator as [a] mediator from a focus purely on mediating language to mediating cultures” (Liddicoat 348).

Indeed, Katan (2013) considers translation as an act of inter-cultural communication and translators as inter-cultural communicators and mediators. He defines inter-cultural mediation as “a form of translatorial intervention which takes account of the impact of cultural distance when translating or interpreting” (“Intercultural Mediation” 84). Katan (2009) explains the translator’s mediation using the Iceberg Theory of Culture, “the triad of culture,” developed by E. T. Hall in 1976. This theory divides culture into three frames: the first one is “visible” and “univocal” (above the waterline); the second is “semi-visible;” and the third is entirely “invisible.” The second and the third frames are “equivocal” (under the waterline) (Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 78 -79). As we can see from figure 3.1 (Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 78), the last two frames are “progressively more hidden but also are closer to our unquestioned assumptions about the world and our own (cultural) identity” (78).

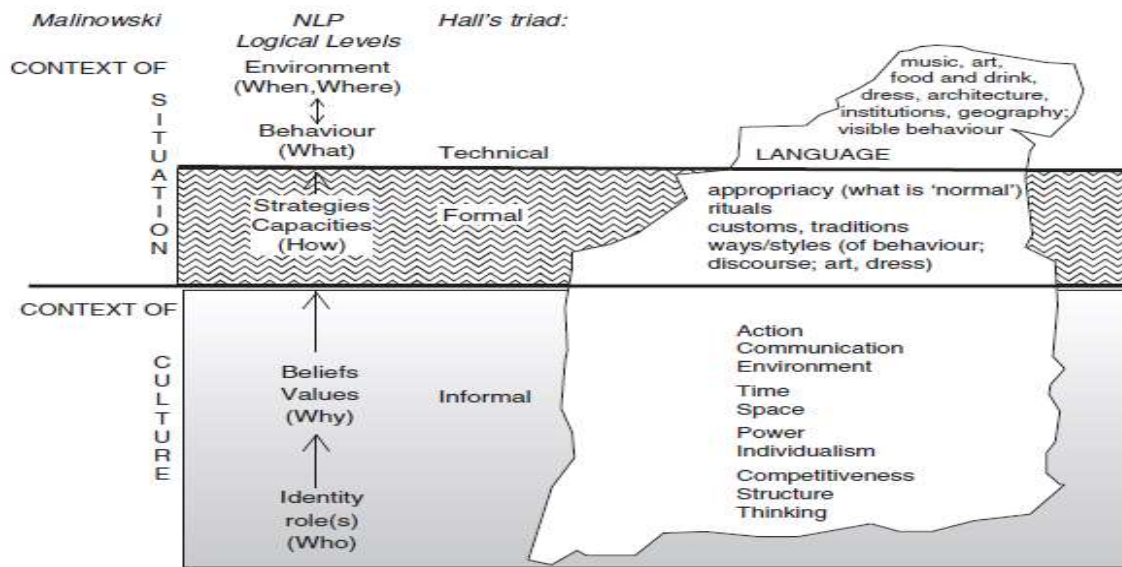


Figure 3. 1: "The Iceberg Representation of Culture"  
 Katan, David. "Translation as Intercultural Communication." *the Routledge Companion to Translation Studies*, edited by Jeremy Munday, Routledge, 2009, p. 78.

The degree of mediation, i.e. the intervention of the translator in the text (to interpret or manipulate rather than just carry out a purely linguistic transfer), varies according to the frame of culture in which the translation is taking place (Katan "Translation as Intercultural" 78). While the first frame is "self-evident" and therefore requires less mediation, the more hidden levels require more active intervention from translators ("Intercultural Mediation" 85). Katan (2009) confirms that "translation scholars tend to focus on the more hidden levels, while practitioners [professional translators] are more concerned with what is visible on the surface" ("Translation as Intercultural" 79).

The first cultural frame, called by Hall "the technical frame," is just at the tip of the iceberg. It coincides with the "humanist" and "universal" view of culture, referring to "what was civilized in a developed society (the education system, the arts, architecture)" ("Translation as Intercultural" 74). The text here has a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) referential function, and the hidden cultural values are universal (79). Indeed, the translator in this frame focuses on the text itself and transfers



concepts and terms with a “minimum loss” (79). So that “‘what you get in the source text is equivalent to ‘what you get’ in the target text” (79). According to Danica Seleskovitch, cited in Peter Newmark (1988), when two cultures “have reached a ‘comparable degree of development, there is no reason why meaning, reader response, and uptake should not be universal” (Newmark *A Textbook of Translation* 6). This was called by Newmark (1981) the cultural value of translation (Newmark *Approaches to Translation* 184-185). Among the issues that concern translators intervening at this level are: the translation of “culturemes” (culture-bound terms) and the translation of “allusions” (such as clichés and proverbs) (Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 79-80). Various procedures were proposed to translate these cultural elements. Piotr Kwieciński (2001), for instance, proposed in his book *Disturbing Strangeness* a few procedures such as: “exoticising procedures, rich explicatory procedures, recognized exoticisation and assimilative procedures” (qtd. in Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 80).

The second cultural frame is called the “formal level of culture” and reflects the anthropological definition of culture related to “what is normal or appropriate” in a society (Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 81). Vermeer (1986) defines culture in this regard as “everything one needs to know, master and feel, in order to assess where members of a society are behaving acceptably or deviantly in their various roles” (qtd. in Snell-Hornby 55). This level is less visible than the previous frame and requires a “mediating role” from the translator and not a “conduit translation” (Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 82). It focuses on “accounting for the difference in communication style (e.g., direct/indirect), politeness norms, register, and cultural practices” (Katan “Intercultural Mediation” 86). The translation norms here “govern all translation practice, from decisions regarding which texts are acceptable or accepted for translation, to the type of translation and assimilation/compensation strategies to employ, and to the criteria by which a translation is judged” (Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 83).

The third frame is called by Hall the “informal” or the “out of awareness” frame of culture. It is called “out of awareness” because it is not “accessible to the conscious brain for meta-cognitive

comment” (Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 83). Indeed, in this frame, “there are no formal guides to practice but instead unquestioned core values and beliefs, or stories about the self and the world” (ibid). These values are usually inculcated through the family, the school... and they form Bourdieu’s “Habitus,” which “guides and constrains an individual’s orientation in the real world” (ibid 84). In other terms, culture here is seen as “the form of things that people have in their mind” (Goodenough 36), and “which orients individual and community ways of perceiving and doing things” (Katan “Translation as Intercultural” 84). The translator, at this level, might “intervene on topic organization, and add, foreground or omit elements according to acceptability and understanding (Katan “Intercultural Mediation” 86).

### 2.1. The Location of the Mediator-Translator

Katan (2002) thinks that a mediator-translator should take a “third position” between the faithful translation (first position) and the free translation (second position) (“Mediating the Point of Refraction” 183). The mediator-translator is “neither bound to the text nor to the norms of the domestic culture” (183). He/she should achieve a balance between foreignization and domestication (therefore, between the three frames of culture). Katan (2002) summarizes the task of the translator-mediator as follows:

The task of the mediator will always be to empower the reader; enriching his or her cognitive environment, whether through accessing what is foreign or what is new. The key concept is access, and the question to be asked is “**what minimum changes are necessary to ensure the maximum level of uptake and cognitive effect?**” The type of effect desired will depend on what the translator wants or is required to produce. Manipulation will be necessary to push the text out of the source culture and refract it so that it can be accessed by the target culture reader. (Katan 187 “Mediating the Point of Refraction”; emphasis added):

Therefore, according to Katan, the translator-mediator should be “unbiased” (opting for neither domestication nor foreignization) and should incite both texts to cooperate.

With that being said, we should not be surprised when Katan (2009, 2013) locates “activism” and “advocacy” in translation as “outside the cultural iceberg” (“Translation as Intercultural” 87). He points out that activist translators are not “disassociated mediators” but “agents of social change”; as they

intervene “between competing (and unequal) power systems no longer to **facilitate** but to **take sides**” (ibid 88). Katan believes that “the mediator’s task is to **find a solution**, rather than to advocate a priori beliefs about which side (SC or TC) to take in the translatorial event” (“Intercultural Mediation” 88).

Therefore, according to Katan, intercultural mediation is a “neutral,” “unbiased” process that aims to build bridges among cultures. This idea [of neutrality] was heavily criticized by some scholars – such as Maria Tymoczko (2007) - who think that “neutrality is a myth” and “bridge-building metaphors are at best ‘naïve’” (“Intercultural Mediation” 87). Tymoczko (2007) states that cultural translation, in Katan’s work, is treated in “a relatively simplistic manner” as it remains “fixated on the lexical and linguistic aspects of cultural translation (Tymoczko 225). According to her, cultural translation has not been “sufficiently problematized” in terms of the “ethical and ideological implications of cultural translation” and the “relationship between the translation of culture and the translator’s agency” (Tymoczko 225). From his part, Katan rejects Tymoczko’s view as he believes that activism “differs radically from the intercultural, and legal sense of mediation, which is that of an ‘arbitrator’ or ‘adjudicator’” (“Intercultural Mediation” 87).

### **3. Mediation as a Negotiation of Distance**

Since mediation from a cultural perspective does not consider activist and engaged translators as mediators, I need to study mediation from another perspective because activism is one of the main pillars of my research. In this section, I will explain mediation in terms of the “**proximity**” and “**distance**” of translators and interpreters to one of the “sides” involved in an armed conflict. Indeed, because of the physical, cultural, linguistic, or ideological proximity of translators and interpreters to one side of the conflict, there is a strong tendency to position them “as loyal to one side and opposed to another” (Inghilleri and Harding “Translating” 165).

In this regard, there are three types of translators: **First**, “activist,” “engaged” translators who take the side to which they “ethnically” belong (such as Palestinian translators/interpreters who consider translation as an act of resistance). **Second**, translators who belong “ethnically” to one of the sides of the conflict but choose to work for the “other”; “the enemy” (such as the Druze translators in the Israeli army or the Iraqi translators who worked for the American forces in Iraq). These are usually located in the in-between space; that is between both sides of the conflict. This position of betweenness is marked by the tension and undecidability between the two allegiances. **Third**, translators who are “ideologically” and “ethnically” “distant” from both sides of the armed conflict. These “external” translators usually produce “neutral” and “unbiased” narratives, as they do not have to prove their loyalty, patriotism, or nationalism to any side. The following figure represents the three types of the positionality of translators involved in an armed conflict.

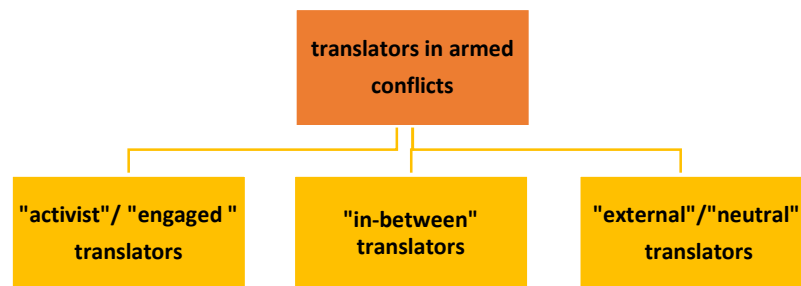


Figure 3. 2 Representation of the Positionality of Translators Involved in Armed Conflicts

These three types of translators will be discussed in two subsequent chapters. In this present chapter, we will study the “In-between” translators with particular attention to Druze translators in the Israeli Army. In the following chapter, we will discuss “Activist” vs. “External” Translators, which will consist of a comparative analysis of the Arabic and French translations of *Footnotes in Gaza*. However, since translators, who belong to one of the sides of the conflict, negotiate the distance between their own

narrative and the narrative of the other side, “the enemy,” I will first discuss the distance between “us” and “them.”

### 3.1. The Distance between “US” and “THEM”

The role of **all** translators involved in armed conflicts - whether involved directly like local interpreters or indirectly like translators dealing with written texts - is to “tune” or “adjust” the distance between the conflictual narratives. The question here is: how can local translators and interpreters, who belong “ethnically” to one side of the conflict, “tune” the distance between “us” and “them”? Between their own narrative and the narrative of the other, i.e., the “enemy”?

These translators and interpreters face hard ethical decisions emanating from the contradiction between their “selves,” i.e., their identity (including their beliefs, values, and ideologies) and the “other” the “enemy.” The turmoil that such interpreters/translators endure in war zones is due not only to the suffering that they have to experience every time they interpret or translate, as they witness the violence of war, but also to the “**chasm**” that “opens up between their own sense of identity, their own personal narrative, and the identity and narrative imposed on them by other parties...” (Baker “Interpreters” 204). In an attempt to bridge this “chasm” between “us” and “them,” these translators use the dichotomy of “**difference**” and “**homogeneity**” discussed by Baker (2009) in her article “Interpreters and Translators in the War Zone.”

Difference means that the “other” or the “enemy” should always be narrated as completely different than ourselves in order to justify the violence of the war and to legitimize our version of the narrative (Baker “Interpreters” 198). This narrative is usually sold to the public in war propaganda: the enemy is depicted as “evil, threatening, dangerously out of control and intransigent” .... “We are civilized, fair, level-headed, peace-loving, reasonable and open to compromise (198). As for **homogeneity**, it strengthens this difference and widens the distance between “us” and “them” (198). The enemy is

narrated as “a single, homogeneous group, as sheer evil” (198). All the members of the enemy camp represent an “undifferentiated menace” as put by Packer (2007) referring to the Iraqi employees, including interpreters and translators, and who used to work for Americans in the Green Zone which was the center for the coalition during the war in Iraq:

In October, 2004, two bombs killed four Americans and two Iraqis at a café in a shopping center inside the Green Zone, fuelling the suspicion that there were enemies within. The Iraqi employees **became perceived as part of an undifferentiated menace**. They also induced a deeper, more elusive form of paranoia (Packer “Betrayed”; emphasis added).

The members of the enemy camp are always seen “as sharing the same outlook, the same prejudices” (Baker “Interpreters” 199), and the same “propensity toward violent conflict” as Samuel Huntington (1996) described all Muslims in his book *The Clashes of Civilisations* (Huntington 258; Baker “Interpreters” 199). This view of the “homogenous” opposite camp may be used to justify any violent action such as the invasion of Iraq (in 2003) or the blockade on the Gaza Strip (since 2006).

In sum, local translators and interpreters in war zones, who belong to one side of the conflict, tend to re-narrate the “other” as different and homogenous, to resolve any contradiction between their personal narrative and the “enemy’s” narrative. Any deviation from this stance can draw them into a dangerous “**in-between**” space. For instance, the Iraqi translators who chose to work for the US forces, and the Druze translators who chose to work for the Israeli Army, are both located in this “in-between” space which will be discussed in detail in the following section.

## 3.2 Translators/Interpreters in the 'In-Between' Space

### 3.2.1 The Space of In-Betweenness in War: A Red Zone

As we saw in the inter-cultural mediation section, a successful mediator should be somewhere between the source text and the target text. In conflict zones, this “in-between space” is a “**red zone,**” and entering it can have life-threatening consequences. In war situations, the only rule that applies is “you are either with us or against us” (Baker “Interpreters” 201). There is no room to negotiate “a more tolerant, more accommodating relationship even with the odd member of the ‘enemy’ camp” (199). There is no room for ambiguity, ambivalence, or questioning the dominant national narrative.

Interpreters and translators in war zones, who attempt to position themselves in this “in-between” space between “us” and “them” - like interpreters in Iraq and Afghanistan who work for the American forces - are usually experiencing a “**Medusa-like status,**”<sup>29</sup> which means they are seen as both victims and villains (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 179). On the one side, they are victims of the foreign military or politicians “who exploit their skills but offer them no protection and treat them as second-class citizens” (Baker “Interpreters” 204). Indeed, they are adopted by the invading army as “fictive Kins” (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 179). They are not “legitimate members of the army” which means “they are not afforded the same institutional protections” (179). Therefore, they are “vulnerable to attack by insurgents, on the one hand, or suspected by the US military of working as double agents or spies, on the other” (180).

On the other side, these interpreters and translators are seen as villains, traitors, and collaborators by their communities “because of the assistance they offer to the invading forces or to foreigners...” (Baker “Interpreters” 204). Inghilleri states that such interpreters, by voluntarily providing

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<sup>29</sup> In the Greek mythology, Medusa was one of the three Gorgons. She was the only one born with a beautiful face. But once, the god of sea Poseidon impregnated Medusa in a temple of Athena, the latter transformed her to a monster (“Medusa: The Real Story”).

their services for the US military, “tacitly approve the decisions made by politicians and the military to declare war” (“You Don’t Make War” 177). They also “provided support for the putative justness of what many considered an unjust war” (176).

These interpreters and translators are also classified as either friends or enemies, trustworthy or untrustworthy. Palmer (2007) argues that all journalists who worked in Iraq and that he interviewed “trusted their fixers, and several made the point that they regularly trusted him/her with their lives” (Palmer 20). However, this is not the case for American military and politicians in Iraq and Afghanistan who see local interpreters as “evils.” Joshua Foust (2009) states in his article about interpreters in Afghanistan that “many [American] units consider [them] to be necessary evils, and even those who are Americans of Afghan descent are often scorned or mistreated for being too obviously ‘different’” (Foust “Maladies of Interpreters”).

We can conclude that no matter how loyal these Iraqi or Afghani interpreters may be to the foreign army, and even if they believe in its mission, they will **never** be classified [by the army] among the “**us**” group, but always among the “**other**,” the “enemy” group. The reason might be that such interpreters could be, intentionally or unintentionally, exposed to and influenced by the national narratives of the local community that the invading forces intend to undermine (Baker “Interpreters” 210). Baker explains this point as follows: “given their heritage, their roots in the ‘enemy’ community, they remain resistant to at least some aspects of the typical public narratives that define the war in the opposite camp” (ibid). María Gómez-Amich (2018) states in her article “The Heart of the Conflict,” according to the CALL (2004)<sup>30</sup>, that “the foreign army anticipates that loyalty of interpreters will primarily be with their own country” (qtd.

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<sup>30</sup> American Center for Army Lessons Learned (2004).



in Gómez-Amich 2). She adds that “in certain cases, these interpreters may even have hidden agendas resulting from their motivations, needs, ideology and patriotism” (Gómez-Amich 2).

Indeed, in wartime, the issues of trust/mistrust, loyalty/disloyalty are determined mainly by interpreters’ and translators’ language, origins, and “ethnicity” (Baker “Interpreters” 213). The paradox is that these are the same criteria for which they were hired in the first place: the linguistic skills and the knowledge of the local society. This point was explained by Footitt (2010) as follows: “it was almost as if the language abilities which had got them the jobs in the first place also gave them a **quasi-foreign identity** which the prevailing intelligence and service cultures could find occasionally unsettling” (281). María Gómez-Amich (2018) summarizes this idea by saying that:

This group of interpreters...are usually recruited because they speak the local languages/dialects (plus the troops’ language) and because of their cultural, historical, and political knowledge. However, it is precisely **this inside knowledge that accentuates** their ‘**otherness**’ in the eyes of the international troops. In other words, it highlights the fact that they **do not belong** in the military context, but rather come from the same country and the same community **as the enemy**; therefore, their in-group loyalties may be (considered) blurry. (Gómez-Amich 2; emphasis added)

### **3.2.2 Conflicting Identities of Translators in the “In-between” Zone: The Druze Translators in the Israeli Army as an Example**

As we saw earlier, the issue of trust is closely related to the idea of “otherness” or “foreignness” attributed to the interpreters and translators who decide to take the side of the “enemy” in conflict zones. In other words, trust is shaped by the two poles of the war, namely “us” and “them.” Even if translators and interpreters are ambivalent about their position, they will soon realize that “there is no place in war for fluid, shifting identities, for split or even strained loyalties, nor for negotiated narratives of any kind” (Baker “Interpreters” 200). The identity of those who experience the war is fully forged and constructed to “suit the exigencies of war” (Baker “Interpreters” 200). It becomes, therefore, “set in stone” with no room for deviation (ibid). Consequently, even if translators and interpreters explicitly express their loyalty

to the “other” (i.e., the enemy), they will always be treated with mistrust from both sides. The case of “Druze translators” in the Israeli army is a good example of translators in the “in-between” space.

### 3.2.2.1 A Brief Historical Glance

The Druze community is an “Arab” minority group in Israel<sup>31</sup>. It constitutes only 2% of the population, with no more than 122,400 people for a population of some seven million (Nisan 575). All of them are original residents of Palestine (Halabi 268). They are often seen “as a minority within a minority: a religious, ethnic minority within the Arab minority” within a Jewish majority (Halabi 268). The Druze chose, or were manipulated into choosing, another path, different from the one followed by “other” Arabs in Israel (268). They chose to distance themselves from the Palestinian nationalism and resistance and supported the Israeli side. Eduardo Aboultaif (2015) states that the Druze were obliged to follow “the policy of accommodation toward the Israeli state” after the 1948 defeat as being a minority that “has been defeated in war and persecuted for hundreds of years by the majority” (537). Their stance toward the conflict resulted in a complex, multifaceted, conflicting identity: Arab, Druze, and Israeli at the same time (Halabi 286).

Historically speaking, the Druze religion emanates from Islam, mainly from “the Ismailiyah movement<sup>32</sup> in Islam, in the 9th and 10th centuries AD, and from the Fatimid Caliphate founded by that movement” (Halabi 286).<sup>33</sup> This faith, however, was not welcomed by other sects of Islam (Sunni and Shiite Muslims) and “evoked a violent opposition” (268). During the Ottoman era, the Druze were perceived as “heretics” and “were not granted any sort of autonomy in Palestine or Syria” (Aboultaif 534).

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<sup>31</sup> The Druze are a part of a bigger community that “live mainly in the Middle East and are concentrated in four countries: Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Jordan” (Halabi 168).

<sup>32</sup> **Ismailism** is “sect of Shi’ah Islam that was most active as a religiopolitical movement in the 9th–13th century” (Britannica).

<sup>33</sup> **Fatimid Caliphate** is a “political and religious dynasty that dominated an empire in North Africa and subsequently in the Middle East from AD 909 to 1171 and tried unsuccessfully to oust the ‘Abbāsid caliphs as leaders of the Islāmic world. It took its name from Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Prophet Muḥammad, from whom the Fāṭimids claimed descent” (Britannica).

Before 1948, during mandatory Palestine, “the Palestinian Druze lived a relatively isolated existence and were by and large cut off from developments in Palestinian Nationalist politics” (Parsons 74). The reason was mainly “because most Palestinian Druze lived in small, rural communities and, thus, had little or no voice amongst the more politicized” (Parsons 74). This harassment and marginalization led their leadership to “adopt a position of neutrality toward the conflict around them” during the 1948 war (Halabi 269). Halabi states that - according to Parsons (1997) - “Some incidents, together with the growing power of the Jewish army, created an opening for agreements signed during that period between the Druze and the Jews” (269). This led to “a **transition** from Druze neutrality to a stance supporting the Jewish side, on the condition that the Druze villages would not be harmed” (269).

Nowadays, the Druze lay between the “Arab” and “Jewish” poles that define the whole Palestinian-Israeli conflict. They are classified as “**non-Arab Arabs**” by both Palestinians and Israelis (Hajjar 305). On the one hand, they are considered “Arabs” because they speak Arabic, and they belong to the Arab culture in terms of “customs, food, dress, literature, and music” (Halabi 277). On the other hand, they are seen as “non-Arabs” because of their conscription into the Israeli army since 1956. This military conscription represents “a significant turning point in shaping the identity of the Druze community in Israel” (Halabi 269). Indeed, on the Israeli side, the army service is regarded as a “prerequisite for true membership and acceptance in the Israeli polity” (Hajjar 304). However, on the Palestinian side, this conscription is considered as a “stab in the back of the Arab nation” (Halabi 269), which resulted in a negative attitude of Arabs toward the Druze, with some seeing them as traitors (277).

In a study entitled “Invention of a Nation: The Druze in Israel,” Rabah Halabi (2014) interviewed 50 Druze university students in Israel about their identity.<sup>34</sup> All of them defined their identity as ‘**Druze**’ by blood and religion, 48 out of 50 defined themselves as ‘**Arabs**’ by language and culture, and 46 out of 50

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<sup>34</sup> For the full study, please consult: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0021909613485700>.

described themselves as '**Israelis**' by citizenship (Halabi 267). Only three out of the fifty saw themselves as **Palestinians** (278). They are convinced that both "Palestinian" and "Israeli" identities are mutually exclusive and cannot be integrated, especially with the army service (278). Indeed, "it is impossible to feel a part of the Palestinian people... and at the same time go to war against it and oppress it" (278). However, for the great majority of the interviewees, the army service makes them feel more Israelis, as one of the interviewed students, "Ramzi," confirmed: "The army is your ticket [into the Israeli society] ... That is when you want to get something, and you want it very much, you have to kill the Arab inside of you...." (276). **However**, the Druze also feel "rejected by the Jewish majority, which does not accept them as Israelis on an equal basis" (278); as Majdi, an interviewee, said: "'I think everything has to be changed. First of all, the Jewish state thing should be done away with, since the state is Jewish and you're not Jewish, meaning that the state isn't yours..." (275).

### 3.2.2.2 The Druze Translators

The Druze translators in the Israeli military courts are young Druze soldiers who serve in the army. They are selected because of their "**non-Arab Arabness**" identity and based on their competency in Arabic and Hebrew (Hajjar 314). Actually, they are essential to the functioning of the court system as they constitute a bridge between many Palestinians from the territories who cannot speak Hebrew, and many Jewish Israelis who cannot speak Arabic (Hajjar 314). Therefore, these Druze translators are "called upon to navigate between the verbal-ideological worlds of Hebrew-speaking Jewish Israelis (military judges and prosecutors, and some defence lawyers) and Arabic-speaking Palestinians of the territories (defendants and defence lawyers)" (305). They perform a **mediating role** between two conflicting worlds: a world in which resistance against occupation is considered a "national duty," in which "there is no stigma attached to arrest, conviction, and imprisonment; on the contrary, people's statuses are often enhanced within their community as a result" (314), and another world, in which resistance movements are demonized and their activities are criminalized (315).

According to Lisa Hajjar (2000), these translators “speak the conflict.” They become the mouthpieces of both “the authority” and “the resistance” (315), the “victim” and the “victimizer”, the “occupied” and the “occupier” at the same time regardless of their identities and political positions.

### **3.2.2.3 The Voice of the Druze Translators: Neutral Translators vs. Biased Soldiers: a “Biased Neutrality”**

These soldiers-translators play “a legally neutral role” in the military court proceedings: they themselves have no voice, but they give voice to others in the courtroom (Hajjar 317). They follow exactly what Susan Berk-Seligson (1990) said in her book *The Bilingual Courtroom: Court Interpreters in the Judicial Process*:

They should not exist as a distinct verbal participant in [his]<sup>35</sup> own right during the course of a judicial proceeding. In effect, [he] is meant to speak solely in place of the other participants in the courtroom, those considered to legitimately hold the right to speak: the attorneys, witnesses, [prosecutors], and the judge (Berk-Seligson 54).

There is certainly a contradiction/conflict between their “neutrality” as courts translators who are supposed to maintain “justice” by equally giving the voice to both conflicting sides, and their “bias” as Israeli soldiers who embrace the army’s vision consisting in maintaining the authority of occupation. Many of the Druze translators, that Lisa Hajjar (2000) interviewed, said that “they see their *role* as neutral, but they don’t see *themselves* as neutral” (Hajjar 317; emphasis in original). The question here is how do they reconcile the contradictions between their neutrality and bias? Actually, these soldiers-translators are trained to follow the orders, to obey, “not to ponder, criticize or participate in policy-making that underlies the state’s exercise of authority” (Hajjar 318). Even if they adopt a critical position regarding the occupation, their Druze identity will refrain them. Indeed, they know that “they are more susceptible to suspicions of potential disloyalty than Jewish soldiers because they are still perceived as not completely “not Arab”— that is, the enemy” (319).

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<sup>35</sup> The use of masculine pronoun (he) is justified here because only male Druze are concerned with army service.

Therefore, in order to prove their loyalty to the Israeli side, the Druze soldiers-translators consider themselves not as translators but as “Israeli soldiers facing the enemy in the context to which they have been assigned – the military courts” (Hajjar 317). They consider translation as a military task, and neutrality serves their biased position (**biased neutrality**). One of the interviewed translators confirms the importance of “neutrality” or the “conscientiousness of the translator” but only in one direction: “if someone [a translator] makes a mistake of even one word, maybe the person [the Palestinian defendant] will be found not guilty” (Hajjar 317). When he was asked whether he thinks that a mistake would also make an innocent defendant guilty, the response was: “this does not matter because, in the end, all Palestinians are guilty of something” (317). Another translator confirms that translation is just a way to record this “guilt”:

The army arrests people because they are guilty. Everyone knows they are guilty. Even their lawyers know it. They have confessed. Therefore, translating is not so important. It is because their guilt has to be put down on the record. But it is there (Hajjar 318).

#### **3.2.2.4 Conflict of Identities: Arab/Druze vs. Israeli/Jewish**

Although these soldiers-translators declare their political position and their loyalty to the Israeli side, their experiences in the court system expose them to contradictions and ambiguities in their Arab, Druze, Israeli identity (Hajjar 320). The “Israelization” policy<sup>36</sup> of the Druze Identity is focused mainly on “distinguishing” them from Arabs and making them closer to Israelis (320-321). According to Lisa Hajjar (2000), within courtrooms, the distinction between the “us” and “them” sides “is reflected foremost in clothing” (321). “Us” is everyone in “uniform” (Israeli soldiers), and “them” is everyone else (Palestinian defendants, their civilian lawyers, and family members) (321). Being soldiers-translators in uniform, the Druze undoubtedly belong to the “us” [Israeli] side. The only difference between them and other Jewish soldiers in the

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<sup>36</sup> A policy followed by the Israeli state to distinguish between the Druze as a loyal community and other Arabs living in Israel.

courtrooms is the Arabic language, which makes them appear similar to the “enemy side” (Palestinians). In order to remove any ambiguity about which side they are on, some of them refuse to speak in Arabic outside the courtrooms, even with bilingual lawyers, for fear that this will make them appear “less Israeli” (Hajjar 321). Somehow, their role as translators in the Israeli courtrooms keeps reminding them of the similarities they share with the other side (Palestinians): the language and the culture, for which they were called upon in the first place (Hajjar 322). This situation may lead to confusion in their identity, as explained by one of the interviewed translators: “If I forgot I was an Arab before the army, now I know I am an Arab. I am an Arab Druze Israeli. It’s crazy” (322).

Another aspect of the conflict in their Arab-Druze-Israeli identity is due to their “personal identification” with the other: the “Palestinian side.” Some Druze translators expressed their **sympathy** with the “other” (the Palestinian defendants). For instance, one of the interviewed translators, who used to work in the military court in the Gaza Strip, said that he was deeply affected when he found out that two local Palestinian lawyers - that he personally knew - were charged with being members of an illegal organization (Hajjar 320). After listening to them talking about the situation in Gaza, he started reconsidering “the court system and the politics of the occupation” (320). He confirmed, “I can’t say that I wouldn’t do the same thing if I lived in Gaza” (320). Other Druze soldiers confirmed that the “army service made them return to their Arab identity and distanced them from being Israeli” (Halabi 276). Sameh, a soldier who was interviewed by Rabah Halabi (2014), said:

When I first joined the army, I felt like I **belonged**; in the first year, I felt more connected to the State of Israel, and I felt myself to be more Druze. But after I was demobilized, I looked back on that period, and it started to affect me in the opposite way, I **began to feel more Arab...** (Halabi 276)

In conclusion, these Druze soldiers-translators, just like the Druze community, live out “the contradictions of being ‘**non-Arab Arabs**’ in a Jewish state, engaged in an ongoing conflict with an Arab

enemy” (Hajjar 322). Indeed, they are not comfortable living with their Arab-Druze and Israeli identities, and, therefore, they do not perfectly fit in any side of the conflict. On the one hand, the historic decision that their leadership made to choose the Israeli side in the conflict led the Palestinians to “adopt a certain stance toward the Druze, with some seeing them as traitors” (Halabi 279). On the other hand, they are not allowed to fully integrate in the Israeli society because of their different religious and linguistic background. This situation puts them in a “**limbo**,” “neither here nor there” (Halabi 279). They are considered as “**outsiders**” for both sides of the conflict. The solution that the Druze soldiers-translators found to live with this contradiction in their identity is to adapt to each situation, as one translator said:

When I am in Tel Aviv, I am a Jew. When I am in Rame [a mixed town in northern Israel] I am an Arab. When I am in Julis [a Druze village] I am a Druze (Hajjar 322)

### **3.2.3 Ethics of Translation and Interpretation in War Zones: Should Druze and Iraqi Translators participate in war?**

Generally speaking, translators and interpreters in conflict zones face multiple ethical issues on both professional and human levels. We can consider the examples of Eric Saar in Guantanamo Bay and Kayla Williams in Iraq. These American soldiers-linguists faced an ethical struggle that led “to come to terms with their role in a specific interrogation during which they witnessed acts in direct violation of the Geneva Convention, resulting in tactics that were sometimes tantamount to torture” (Inghilleri “The Ethical Task” 216). This ethical struggle resulted from a “**moral dilemma**”: a clash, or a “discordance,” between their professional deontology as soldiers-linguists, and their moral principles as human beings. Indeed, both Eric Saar and Kayla Williams were loyal soldiers who believed in the U.S. mission in Iraq, but they disagreed with the way in which the interrogation was conducted. This is evident from Saar’s words in the excerpt below:

...But I hated myself when I walked out of that room, even **though I was pretty sure we were talking to a piece of shit in there**. I felt as if I had lost something.



We lost something. We lost the high road. **We cashed in our principles in the hope of obtaining a piece of information [ . . . ] There was no honor in what we had just done.** Our tactics were way out of bounds. We were grasping, and in doing so we had spit on Islam. What we did was the antithesis of what the United States is supposed to be about (qtd. in Inghilleri “The Ethical Task” 216; emphasis added).

Saar clearly believed that the prisoner was a criminal. Therefore, he did not question the purpose of the War on Terror, but he rejected the unethical conduct of the war, i.e., the tactics and strategies used during the interrogations. In sum, Saar raised concerns over “how to act at once professionally and ethically” in wartime (Inghilleri “The Ethical Task” 219).<sup>37</sup>

For the Druze translators and the Iraqi (or Arab) interpreters<sup>38</sup>, the ethical dilemma is different and much more complex. The ethical issues emanate from the fact that the Iraqi and Druze translators “ethnically” belong to one side of the conflict (the occupied side) but chose to work for the “other” side (the occupier). For these translators and interpreters, the ethical issues override the “discordance” between the professional deontology and the moral principles, as we saw in the previous examples of Saar and William. In fact, the Druze and Iraqi translators are placed in a situation of conflicting identities and loyalties (e.g., Arab-Druze vs. Jewish-Israeli / Iraqi vs. American). This raises questions not only about what is “permissible” to do during the war but also about whether it is “right” to participate in the war **at all** (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 184), in other words, whether it is “ethical” to work for the “enemy side” at all. However, before tackling these questions, I would like first to discuss the reasons that may lead these interpreters and translators to take the risk of working for the “other side” (the enemy).

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<sup>37</sup> For more information, please see Eric Saar’s talk “Inside the Wire: Life at Guantanamo” (2005) at: <https://www.c-span.org/video/?186618-1/inside-wire-life-guantanamo>.

<sup>38</sup> There were also interpreters from other Arab countries who used to work for the U.S. forces in Iraq.

### 3.2.3.1 Why Do Interpreters and Translators Serve in War?

According to Inghilleri (2010), the reasons<sup>39</sup> that lead interpreters and translators to serve in war “are similar to the reasons individuals give for enlisting in the military service: patriotism, pay, employment opportunities and a search for adventure” (“You Don’t Make War” 180). In light of that, there are at least four reasons justifying such a decision. The first one is “**patriotism.**” It is the reason for which activist translators and interpreters accept to translate or interpret - such as Abed (the interpreter of Joe Sacco) and Al-Bujairami (the translator of *Footnotes in Gaza* that will be discussed in the next section). These patriotic translators are similar to soldiers in the institutional military model who “serve in response to a call to duty and service to one’s country” (180). The second reason is related to “**economic benefits,**” which is why many Iraqi interpreters chose to work for the U.S. forces. These types of interpreters are similar to individuals in the occupational military model “who enlist primarily out of self-interest, in pursuit of monetary compensation, educational and employment benefits” (180). One of the Iraqi interpreters said: “...The Marines paid me \$150 a month, which was better than the \$2 I was making as a librarian...” (178). However, it is to be noted that many other Iraqi interpreters enlisted for political reasons to remove a “dictatorship” (178). In this regard, an Iraqi interpreter said: “In Iraq, we were waiting for Godot. So, the Americans were Godot” (177). As for the third reason, discussed by Inghilleri, it is called “**pragmatic professionalism,**” in which individuals “enlist both out of a sense of duty or obligation and for the potential economic benefits” (180). We find here the Druze soldiers-translators who “enlist out of a sense of duty or obligation and for the potential economic benefits they are likely to reap” (181). If the Druze refuse to serve in the army, they will face severe repercussions such as loss of benefits like housing loans, government subsidies, and tax breaks that veterans enjoy, loss of any opportunity to work in the

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<sup>39</sup> Inghilleri (2010) used the term “motivation”. I opted for the term “reason” because when the army service is mandatory, such as in the case of the Druze, the compensation cannot be considered as motivation.

government (Hajjar 308). For the Druze, it is a “give and take” relationship as explained by Areej, who was interviewed by Halabi (2014):

I live here, so I want my rights, and to obtain them, I must perform my obligations.  
**Give in order to get.** Not to defend the land, not to sacrifice everything I have for the state. (Halabi 274):

The fourth and final reason, discussed by Inghilleri (2010), is the “individual self-fulfillment,” which involves the “imagined adventure of war.” This remains an attractive reason for many soldiers and linguists serving in the war (“You Don’t Make War” 181).

### 3.2.3.2 Is Participation of the Druze and Iraqi Translators in The War Ethical or Unethical?

We have just discussed the different reasons that may lead translators and interpreters to participate in the war. But the question that arises is: do any personal, economic, or political reasons absolve the Druze or Iraqi translators from their moral responsibility towards their own people? After all, in wars, as Tim O’Brien (1990) confirmed: “you can’t fix your mistakes. Once people are dead, you can’t make them undead” (qtd. in Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 176).

Indeed, through their participation, the Iraqi interpreters-translators “tacitly approve the decisions made by politicians and the military to declare war” (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 176). They justify a war that many consider unjust. According to the Just War Theory, a war can be considered “just” only if it meets two criteria. The first criterion is *jus ad bellum* [the justice of war], dealing with “when it is just to go to war” (Walzer “on Just War Theory”)<sup>40</sup>. A “just” war is motivated either by the “self-defense” to resist an attack or by “defense of others” (ibid). The second criterion is *jus in bello* [the justice in war], dealing with “the justice of the conduct of war” (ibid). This means that non-combatant communities or the civilian population should not be subject to attack (ibid)<sup>41</sup>. According to Inghilleri (2010) the war in Iraq, from a just war perspective, is far from being just:

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<sup>40</sup> For the concept of “Just War”, please see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcBovmGZSPU>.

<sup>41</sup> For more information about the Just War, please consult: <https://iep.utm.edu/justwar/#H3>.

From a just war theoretical perspective, the invasion of Iraq was far from just: it violated Iraqi self-determination and international law; diplomatic means had not been exhausted with regard to the question of WMDs<sup>42</sup>; the war was unnecessary for the defence of US national security, and it caused injury and death to hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians. Related events in Guantánamo, Abu Ghraib, and the controversy surrounding the extraordinary rendition of prisoners also called into question the principle of *jus in bello* (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 181).

The Iraqi and Arab interpreters were intimately involved in this war. They were present during the raids launched against their own people and participated in “combat foot patrols, vehicle patrols, ambushes, bomb-clearing, and base security missions” (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 183). Through such practices, interpreters could see the fear in the eyes of people, but also the “hatred” as a result of their identification with the American combat units: for instance, Sammy, an Iraqi interpreter, said: “they hate us for what we are doing” (183).

Similarly, the Druze translators in Israeli military courts participate, according to Hajjar (2000) in “legitimiz[ing] the legal system” and therefore in “maintain[ing] the ‘legal face’ of the occupation” (314). The legitimacy of the military legal system is usually related to a larger debate of the legitimacy of the “occupation” itself (315). The controversy around the legitimacy of the legal system emanates from the fact that the judges and prosecutors in Israeli military courts “represent and speak for ‘the state’” (314). The contradiction is that these judges and prosecutors “are formally vested with the obligation to impartiality,” while the state is “positioned in a legally adversarial relation to defence lawyers, who represent and speak for the defendants” (314). Since the purpose of the legal system is to maintain the “national security” threatened by the acts of Palestinian resistance, “extreme measures to control and punish Palestinians are justified” (315). Translators who work in this environment give voice to these legal contestations, contradictions, and injustice. They also legitimize the legal system as they confirm the claim that military courts operate according to “the rule of law” (315). One aspect of the rule of law is “the right

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<sup>42</sup> Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

to defence counsel” (315). This right hinges on “effective communication” (315). And this communication is ensured by the Druze translators.

### **3.2.3.3 The Paradox of “Neutrality”**

The “neutrality” or “impartiality” of translators/interpreters – like the Iraqi and Druze translators - is an illusion. It is just a pretext used by many translators to justify their participation in the war. “Neutrality” ignores the complex nature of the translation/interpretation process. Indeed, “working in conflict situations requires interpreters and translators...to confront their personal, political and professional beliefs” (Inghilleri and Harding “Translating” 166). Sadi Othman, a Palestinian, Brazilian, and American interpreter who eventually became the Senior Special advisor to General David Petraeus in Iraq, can be a good example. Othman confirms his neutral status towards the war: “they know I don’t side with one over the other” (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 190). He is also a self-proclaimed pacifist: “I am here for peace, not war” (“Sadi Othman”). Othman might have demonstrated how an impartial interpreter and mediator “serves to achieve consensus through ‘mutually’ respectful exchanges of perspectives amongst parties in the conflict” (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 191). But what is missing, in this positive image, is the absence of any reference to the clash between his conflicting “Arab” and “American” identities, or between his pacifist visions and his direct involvement in the war, and **mainly** the clash between the ‘unequal’ roles of the occupier and the occupied. Indeed, “It is the occupier, not the occupied, who determines when and under what terms the occupation ends” (191). Obviously, his assumed “impartiality” does not “relieve him of the moral obligation to consider the consequences of his role...” (Inghilleri “You Don’t Make War” 192).

Along the same line of thought, Mona Baker, as we saw in the first chapter, rejects the idea of absolute neutrality as she thinks that “intervention is inherent in the act of translation and interpreting, as it is inherent in any act of reporting” (Baker “Ethics of Re-narration” 16). She calls for a more “engaged,

committed translation practice” (12-13). Mainly at this time of history when translators are mediating violent political conflicts, when they are being killed and arrested, and when some of them have witnessed torturing prisoners such as in Guantanamo and Abu Gharib (13).

Baker agrees with Maria Tymoczko (2007) and Julie Boéri (2008) that “political engagement” or “activism” in translation and interpretation is not only tied to textual intervention (Baker “Ethics of Re-narration” 13). This idea can be applied to local translators and interpreters whose political engagement is not usually tied to the text itself but to a wider process of selection and deselection. Indeed, although they are linguistically neutral and invisible, whether in the courtrooms or during the daily interpretations, local interpreters and translators intervene in other ways. Fixers - like Abed, for instance - select, deselect interviews and places, interfere in the interviews, explain, filter information to serve a national “resistance’ agenda. Druze translators/interpreters opt to interpret only the gist of the interlocutor’s speech, and often they do not interpret for the Palestinian defendants when the lawyers are talking in Hebrew, because they “tend to consider that the only people who need to understand what is going on in the courtroom are the judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers only” (Hajjar 316). Some Iraqi interpreters (fixers), who worked for the journalists interviewed by Palmer (2007), refused to go to Sunna areas for security reasons because they are Shiites. The truth is that “the willingness or otherwise of [these Iraqi] interpreters to cross sectarian boundaries will have either asserted or undermined the centrality of the sectarian divide as a major element in the Iraqi narrative...” (Baker “Interpreters” 216).

All these scenarios serve a specific political agenda and shape the conflict in a particular way. Indeed, through this process of selection/deselection, these translators and interpreters give more room to certain voices over others. This leads to a “homogenous” narrative of the war (Baker “Interpreters” 217). A narrative that looks at the war from one perspective, that of the translator/interpreter and the side he/she serves. Therefore, they **re-narrate** the conflict “according to what is deemed moral or ethical

from a particular narrative location” (Baker “Ethics of Re-narration” 14). Definitely, how a Druze translator re-narrates the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is different from how Abed (a Palestinian activist) re-narrates it.

In conclusion, Baker thinks that translators-mediators in conflict zones are not supposed to literally “speak on behalf of the utterer,” as suggested by Stecconi Ubaldo (2004) in his article “Interpretive semiotics and translation theory” (Baker “Ethics of Re-narration” 15). They must re-narrate the conflict: interpret, select, deselect, in a manner that “is sensitive to contextual factors, including our own sense of what is appropriate or inappropriate, and what is ethical or unethical” (15). On certain occasions, it is highly ethical not to speak on behalf of others at all, to avoid giving the narrative of the other legitimacy and currency (15). It is also ethical to distance ourselves from the narrative by using specific paratextual techniques such as interviews, footnotes, prefaces... (16). It is also ethical to intervene directly, using our linguistic skills, to undermine a narrative that we judge unethical (16). As Michael Cronin (2002) put it:

The role of interpreters throughout history has been crucially determined by the prevailing hierarchical constitution of power and the position of interpreters in it. In this respect, if you or your people are seriously disadvantaged by the hierarchy, the **most ethical position can be to be utterly “unfaithful” in interpreting in the name of another fidelity, a fidelity of resistance** (58-59; emphasis added).

#### 4. Conclusion

In sum, we can say that the story of the conflict has multiple re-narrators. In the previous section, I discussed how local translators and interpreters in the “in-between space” - like Druze and Iraqi interpreters - re-narrate the conflict’s story according to their positionality in it. Indeed, they are either enemies or friends, victims or villains, loyal or traitors (Baker “Interpreters” 218). In the following section, I will discuss how activist and external translators re-narrate the conflict.

## Chapter Four: “Activist” vs. “External” translators: An Analysis of the French and Arabic Translations of *Footnotes in Gaza*

### 1. The Location of the Translator’s Narrative Voice

In the previous chapter, I studied how translators who ethnically belong to one side of the conflict and work with the other, i.e., the enemy, such as the Druze translators or the Iraqi translators, had acted in the “in-between” space. I should, now, focus on two other types of translators: “activist” translators who “ethnically” belong to one side of the conflict and consider translation as a “site” for resistance, and translators who are “external” to the conflict; they belong to neither side. To illustrate these two types of translators, I will analyze both the Arabic and the French versions of *Footnotes in Gaza* translated respectively by the French translator Sidonie Van den Dries and the Palestinian activist translator Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami.

However, in order to understand the mediating role of each type of translators, I need, first, to trace and locate their voice, i.e., their discursive presence in the translated narratives. To do so, it is important to provide an overview of the different models that have been developed in this regard; such as those proposed by Schiavi (1996), Hermans (1996; 2014), O’Sullivan (2005), and Suchet (2013).

#### 1.1 Giuliana Schiavi (1996)

Giuliana Schiavi (1996) proposed a model to locate the translator’s voice based on Seymour Chatman’s (1978) and Wayne C. Booth’s (1961) narratological theories, as we can see in figure 3.3 below (Schiavi 14). This model “supports the idea of a separate discursive presence and shows the translator constantly coproducing the discourse as well as shadowing and counterfeiting the narrator’s words” (Bosseaux 19; cited in Qun-xing 180):



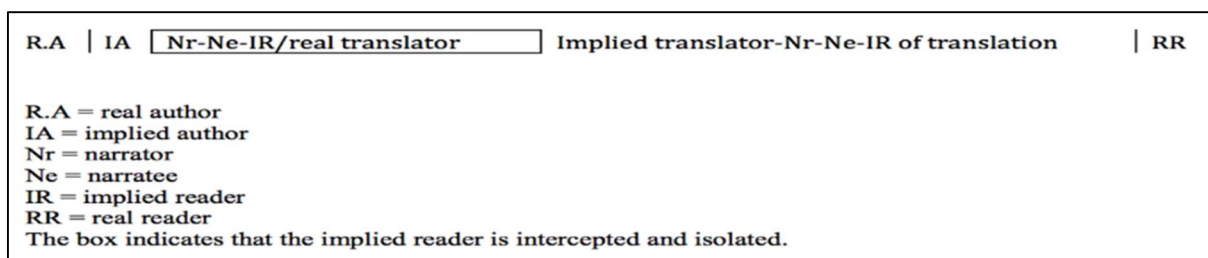


Figure 3. 3: Schiavi's model to locate the translator's voice

Schiavi, Giuliana. "There is always a teller in a tale." *Target-International Journal of Translation Studies*, vol. 8, 1996, p. 14, <https://benjamins.com/online/target/articles/target.8.1.02sch>.

According to Schiavi, the implied author "...instructs the reader on how to read the text and how to account for the selection and ordering of the textual component" (Schiavi 10). As for the "implied reader," it is "the counterpart of the implied author ... not the flesh-and-bones you or I . . . but the audience presupposed by the narrative itself" (10). The "narrator" is "the only subject, the only "voice" of narrative" (10).

As we can see, the translator in this model takes the role of the "implied reader." Therefore, on the one hand, the translator is "the receptor of the set of presuppositions assumed by the implied author and expressed through the 'voice' of the narrative discourse, i.e., the narrator" (15). On the other hand, the translator negotiates with the text to "build a set of translational presuppositions according to the book to be translated, and the audience envisaged" (15). What we obtain is "an **"implied translator"** sharing with the implied reader 'a set of presuppositions' regarding norms and standards in force in the target culture" (15). These presuppositions are expressed through the voice of **the "narrator of translation"**. In sum, the voice we hear in the translated text is a **"combination of two voices"**: the voice of the narrator of the source text and the voice of the narrator of the translation. As put by Schiavi (1996):

A reader of translation will receive a sort of split message coming from two different addressers, both original although in two different senses: one originating from the author which is elaborated and mediated by the translator, and one (the language of the translation itself) originating directly from the translator (14).

## **1.2 Theo Hermans (1996; 2014)**

Theo Hermans (1996), in his article “The Translator's Voice in Translated Narrative,” refers to the translator’s voice in the translated narratives as the “second voice” (27). A voice that is always present in translated narrative. However, it is “more or less overtly present” (27). This voice “may remain entirely hidden behind that of the narrator, rendering it impossible to detect in the translated text”, or “it is most directly and forcefully present when it breaks through the surface of the text speaking for itself, in its own name, for example in a paratextual translator's note employing an autoreferential first person identifying the speaking subject” (27).

In his article “Positioning Translators: Voices, Views and Values in Translation,” Hermans (2014) considers translation as a “reported discourse” or an “echoic speech.” The translator is a “rapporteur.” Indeed, the reader of a translation receives two simultaneous utterances: “one is the translator’s statement offering a translation. The other is the quoted discourse” (Hermans “Positioning Translators” 293). Since the latter (quoted discourse) is inserted in the former (reporting discourse), then the quoted discourse is affected by the frame surrounding it (293). Translation is, thus, a quoted discourse. But quotations are “not wholly mimetic representations” (293). Quotations are “selective in that they only rarely manage to reproduce fully such aspects as timbre, pitch, accent and rhythm of the quoted utterance, even verbatim written quotation contains a deictic element absent from the original” (293). Quotations are “simulated utterances” that are embedded in the reporting discourse. According to Sternberg (1982), this embedding “not only recontextualizes the quoted words but lets them appear under a certain light and thus puts them in a certain perspective” (qtd. in Hermans “Positioning Translators” 293).

Since translation as quoted discourse is not “wholly mimetic,” this means that there is a “margin” in which the translator’s agency can be articulated (Hermans “Positioning Translators” 294). This articulation renders the translated discourse “double-voiced and dialogical” (294).

### 1.3 Emer O’Sullivan (2005)

Emer O’Sullivan (2005), in her book *Comparative Children Literature*, amended the model presented by Schiavi (1996), who “situates the real translator within the framework of the narrative text itself” (O’Sullivan 107). O’Sullivan argues that the real translator is an external agency that is responsible for two tasks: reception and production (107). In the translated narrative, the communication between the real author of the ST and the real reader of the TT is ensured by the real translator who is located outside the text, and who transmits the ST via the internal agency of the implied translator (107); as we can see in figure 3.4 (O’Sullivan, 108). Unlike in Schiavi’s model, O’Sullivan thinks that the agency of the implied translator is not exclusively the agency of the real translator (107). The **implied translator** may also include the publishers, editors, program planners, and all those involved in the decisions implemented by the real translator (107).

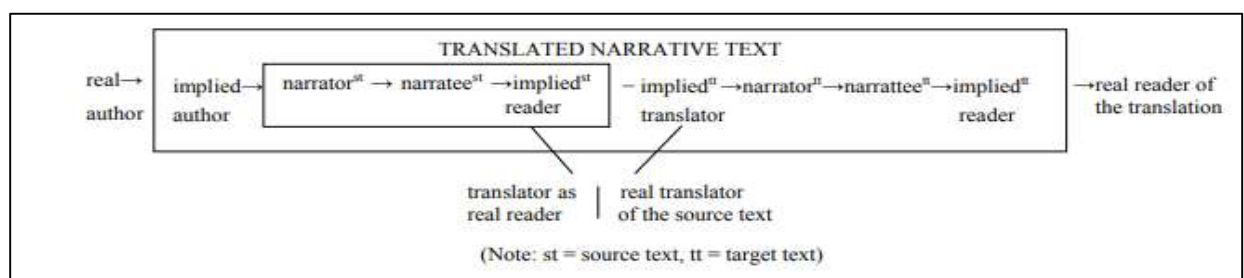


Figure 3. 4: O’Sullivan’s model to locate the translator’s voice  
O’Sullivan, Emer. *Comparative Children’s Literature*. Taylor and Francis, 2005, p.108.

O’Sullivan criticizes Hermans’ model because the voice of the translator is almost exclusively “metalinguistic” and “wholly assimilated to the narrator’s voice” (O’Sullivan 109). She suggests two levels to locate the voice: The first level – as identified by Hermans – is paratextual such as forewords,

afterwords, glossaries, and metalinguistic explanations like footnotes generated by the implied translator (109). The second level is textual – i.e., inside the translated narrative itself - and combines both the narrator of the ST and the narrator of the translation. In the second level, we have two cases, depending on the translation practices: first, the voice of the narrator of the translation “can slip in behind that of the narrator of the source text, that is to say, to mimic it entirely... or to sing in union with it” (109). We find this case in “neutral” translations. This type of translation is “dialogic” because we hear both the translator and the author (109). Second, the voice of the narrator of translation “can also dislocate from that of the narrator of the source text or sing in a different register” (109). In this type of translations, the implied translator “may try to control the source text with a voice which always remains dominant...” (109). This type of translations is usually “monologic” (109); as the translator’s voice is louder than the other voices such as in activist translations.

#### 1.4 Myriam Suchet (2013)

Unlike the previous models in which the voice of the translator will be added to the voice of the author, the model proposed by Myriam Suchet is **not** that of “*adding* a new speaker but of *substituting* one speaker to another” in the translation or interpretation process (Suchet 6; emphasis in original). Indeed, she thinks that the translator does not report a speech, but takes the place of the initial speaker and talks on his behalf (6). She illustrated the difference between “reporting/quoting” and “translating” in the following diagram that she borrowed from François Récanati (1979):

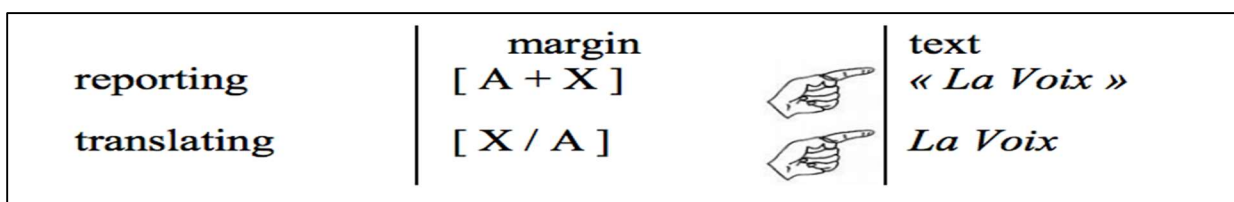


Figure 3. 5: The little Hand or Colophon

Suchet, Myriam. “Voice, Tone and Ethos: A Portrait of the Translator as a Spokesperson.” *La traduction des voix intra-textuelles/Intratextual Voices in Translation*, edited by Kristiina Taivalkoski-Shilov and Myriam Suchet. Montréal, Éditions québécoises de l’oeuvre, collection Vita Traductiva, 2013, <https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/handle/10315/20811>.

According to Suchet, the translator as “spokesperson” or as “substitute” is different from the translator as “rapporteur.” The “rapporteur,” although not the author of the quote, is the author of the reported speech. He can interfere in a way that may affect the meaning of the quote, as we saw earlier (see Hermans 1996). The spokesperson, however, uses his/her voice to speak others’ words, not his own words (7). Suchet highlights this difference, saying: “the author and rapporteur both remain themselves when they speak; whereas the translator, on the other hand, becomes as another” (7).

We should insist, however, on the fact that “speaking on behalf” or “substituting another” does not mean to repeat his words verbatim. Suchet thinks that the translator is similar to an actor who plays a role with “*Verfremdungseffekt*” (7) or “distancing effect.” He can never completely identify with the character (7). Similarly, there is always a “distance” between the translator and the author (the original enunciator). The “**negotiation of this distance**” explains the wide range of “translational possibilities” (7): starting from the most “neutral” translations to the most “engaged” ones.

The negotiation of the distance (i.e., the mediation) between the author and the translator results in the construction of a **discursive *Ethos***; a discursive image (Suchet 12). This image “characterizes an attitude of a spokesperson towards the speaker s/he is representing and the represented speech” (12). In general, the *Ethos* of the spokesperson is constructed through the negotiation of the distance between the sender and receiver (12). In this case, the *Ethos* is not only constructed through the relationship between the translator and author, but also through the relationship between the translator and the reader. The reader thus co-constructs the *Ethos* in translated narratives.

In the following section, we will see how both translators Mohammad Twafiq Al-Bujairami and Sedonie Van Den Dries negotiated the distance between themselves, the author of *Footnotes in Gaza*, and their respective readers, as well as what *Ethos* was constructed through this negotiation.

## **2. The voices of Mohammad Tawfiq Al-Bujairami and Sidonie Van den Dries**

The narrative voices of Mohammad Tawfiq Al-Bujairami and Sidonie Van den Dries will be analyzed on two levels. The first level is the macroanalysis which will be based on the background of the translators and the elements that shaped their translational choices. As for the second level, which is the microanalysis, it will be carried out on two sub-levels: the paratextual and the textual.

### **2.1 The Macroanalysis**

#### **2.1.1 Mohammad Tawfiq Al-Bujairami**

##### **2.1.1.1 A Refugee in Exile**

Al-Bujairami was a Palestinian translator, university professor, and TV presenter based in Damascus-Syria. He was born in 1938 in a small village called *Ijzim* that was located in southern Haifa in mandate Palestine, where he spent the first ten years of his life (Al-Bujairami “In Their Homes”). He fondly remembers his early years in the village (the school, the neighbours, the olive trees...) (Al-Bujairami “Marafi Al-Dhakira: An Interview”)<sup>43</sup>. The war of 1948 suddenly turned his life and the lives of all the inhabitants of the village upside-down. All of them, who were about 5000 people, were expelled to Jenin, a city in the northern West Bank (ibid). Being considered troublemakers, the inhabitants of this village were evacuated to Baghdad in Iraq (ibid).

In Iraq, Al-Bujairami studied English Literature at the University of Baghdad and graduated in 1960 (Romanoff “TV Star Shines in Syria”). He worked as an assistant teacher in the engineering college for one year. He then worked as a translator and news editor for Baghdad Television until 1964 (ibid). He was also the presenter of a 10-minute daily program entitled “Nafitha ala Al-Alem” “A Window to the World” (Al-Bujairami “In Their Homes”). In the same year, 1964, he was arrested in Baghdad-Iraq, for political

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<sup>43</sup> For the full interview, please consult: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqQYMCQOf2I>

reasons, under suspicion of being a Nasserist (supporting the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdul Nasser), and was expelled to Syria (ibid). He states: “All of a sudden I became a persona non-grata”<sup>44</sup> (Al-Bujairami “Marafi Al-Dhakira: An Interview”).

In Syria, the atmosphere was much more welcoming to Palestinian refugees (ibid). Al-Bujairami was considered a political refugee (ibid). He did not face a problem finding a job: he worked as an English teacher, then as a translator, news editor, TV presenter for the Syrian state-run television (ibid). In 1971, he got a scholarship and left for England to continue his Ph.D. in English literature. He returned in 1980 and worked as a professor in most Syrian universities until his retirement in 2000 (Romanoff “TV Star Shines in Syria”). He was also the presenter of a famous 20-minute weekly program entitled “Tarai’f Men Al-Alam” [Funny Stories from the World] on Syrian TV (Al-Bujairami “In Their Homes”). During the 1990s, he worked as a “translator in the UN Office in Geneva several weeks a year. He also served as interpreter for the late Syrian president Hafez Al-Assad” (Romanoff “TV Star Shines in Syria”). He was also the editor of the monthly English-speaking magazine “resistance.” In the years 1969, then 1995, 1996, and 1997, he played the roles of “Al- Jahith” and “Ibn Abd Rabbu Al-Andalusi”; who were very famous Arab writers (Al-Bujairami “In Their Homes”).

#### **2.1.1.2 Translation as a “Discursive Fight”**

Al-Bujairami translated more than 13 books, most of which are political books such as *Madam Secretary: A Memoir* by Madeleine Albright (2003), *My Life* by Bill Clinton (2004), *The Paradox of American Power* by Joseph Nye (2002), *The Shah's Last Ride: The Fate of An Ally* by William Shawcross (1988), *The 48 Laws of Powers* by Robert Greene (1998) and others.

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<sup>44</sup> A person who is unacceptable or unwelcome in a host country (Merriam-Webster).

In an interview with Al-Thawra newspaper (2012), Al-Bujairami announced that translation, in general, should not be “literal” unless the literal translation does not affect the meaning and the fluency of the Arabic language (“In Their Homes”). According to him, a good translation should sound as if it was directly written in the target language (ibid). Translators should be flexible with the source text: they can include interpretations provided that they do not affect the length of the source text (ibid).

He confirmed that translators should not be “neutral.” Indeed, their translations should be consistent with their political positions, identity, and culture (ibid). For instance, “Al-Bujairami would translate the phrase ‘the Golan Heights captured by Israel’ as ‘occupied by Israel’”; as a reflection of his positionality vis-à-vis the conflict (Dubbati and Abudayeh 150). Therefore, he insists on the role of Arab translators, in general, and Palestinian translators, in particular, as “activists” who must take part in “the discursive fight” which is “as important as a military one” (ibid). He also insists that “[the Palestinian] cause does not lack justice but good defenders,’ and he regards himself as one of its defenders” (ibid). He confirms that translators should be aware of “the need to address the imbalanced international media coverage,” which “outweighs the issue of faithful depiction of events” (ibid).

#### **2.1.1.3 The Translation of the “Self”: the “Self-reflexivity” of Al-Bujairami in *Footnotes in Gaza***

The identity of Al-Bujairami as a Palestinian refugee, who lived in forced exile, makes his identification with the source narrative [*Footnotes in Gaza*] “inevitable” (Dubbati and Abudayeh 150). Indeed, there is a striking similarity between his personal narrative as a survivor of the 1948 war and the narratives of the survivors of the 1948 and 1956 wars, collected by Sacco in *Footnotes in Gaza*. In an interview in 2011, Al-Bujairami describes in detail his painful experience as a child refugee who survived the war of 1948:

We remained, women and children, in the village, because men, who were able to fight, left the village earlier to Jenin. The Israeli soldiers put us, women and children, in buses and threw us in another village called *Al-Lajun* where all the wheat fields were completely burnt. They indicated with their hands that we should go from this direction. And they started shooting on us not to kill us but to terrorize us. I still hear the wheeze of bullets over my head [wiz -wiz-wiz]. This was in July 28, 1948. On foot, we reached another nearby village



called *Zalafeh*, then another village called *Romaneh*, then we reached *Jenin*. The Iraqi army, who was involved in the war, considered us as trouble-makers; because we said that they let us down as they were near the village and refused to rescue us because they didn't receive orders from their officers. We were then, by force, expelled to Baghdad-Iraq to get rid of us (Al-Bujairami "Beini w Beinek [Between us]: An Interview", My translation).<sup>45</sup>

We can see that Al-Bujairami is not only an "activist translator," but he is also a "witness" who is providing his "testimony" just like the other characters in *Footnotes in Gaza*. He, therefore, became one of the characters. Al-Bujairami "embedded himself in the translation in an act that Tymoczko (2007) calls "self-reflexivity" (Dubbaty and Abudayeh 163), carrying out all the changes that we will explore in the next section. I call the act of self-reflexivity a "translation of the self." We have the impression that Al-Bujairami was translating his "self"; his personal narrative, which is an integral part of the collective narrative of the survivors in the book.

The self-reflexivity becomes evident only when we "map out [his] interferences within textual and linguistic patterns and link them to Al-Bujairami's biography and statements" (Dubbaty and Abudayeh 163). Indeed, Al-Bujairami "visually and discursively pieces together parts of his own personal and ideological past and present" (163).

According to Baker (2006), the repositioning of the translator in the translated narrative "influences the interplay between ontological [personal] and public narratives" which results in a "different level of visibility of the personal in the context of shared, collective experience" (138). In other words, the changes that Al-Bujairami carried out whether in the para-text or in the text itself - such as adding a footnote rejecting the author's idea, or changing pronouns or activation/passivation...etc. - not only contribute to the "eras[ing] [of] the voice of the author/narrator" but also to the "reconfigur[ing] [of] the balance between personal and public narratives" (139). Indeed, Baker (2006) confirms that "ontological narratives... are dependent on and informed by the collective narratives in which they are situated" (29).

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<sup>45</sup> The interview was conducted originally in Arabic. For the full interview, please consult: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjGUB\\_DM8Vo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CjGUB_DM8Vo)

But, at the same time, it is the ontological narrative that helps in “the elaboration and maintenance of shared narratives” ... “because personal narratives can enhance or undermine the narratives that underpin the social order and hence interfere with the smooth functioning of society” (29). Al-Bujairami, therefore, through injecting his personal voice into the target narrative, helps in the elaboration and maintenance of a Palestinian collective narrative of resistance.

### 2.1.2 Sidonie Van den Dries

Sidonie Van den Dries is a French translator who was born in France in 1968 (“Sidonie Van Den Dries” [Babelio]). She holds a *BTS* (brevet de technicien supérieur) in “Visual Expression” from *l'École supérieure des arts appliqués Duperré Paris* (1985-1988) and a diploma from *Inalco: Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales* (1989-1992) (ibid). She was trained as a graphic designer because she wanted to work in illustration, but she became a proofreader and an editing assistant (ibid). Alain David, who worked at *Vertige Graphic*, offered her to carry out a translation, and she decided to make translation her career. She mainly works for children's or comic book publishers. She is also the author of *Quand Malo tombe à l'eau* (2016), et *Tom et la galette des rois* (2017) in the collection *Tu lis, je lis* (“Sidonie Van den Dries” [Bayard éditions]). Among her translations, in addition to *Gaza: en marge de l'histoire*, we can find: *La cabane magique* by Mary Pope Osborne, *Miss Peregrine et les enfants particuliers* by Tim Burton, *La bibliothèque des âmes* by Ransom Riggs, *Annie Sullivan & Helen Keller* by Joseph Lambert etc.<sup>46</sup>

Regardless of the little information that I could collect about Sidonie Van den Dries, it is clear that her decision to translate *Footnotes in Gaza* was not for ideological purposes, such as in the case of the Palestinian translator. Her educational and professional background justifies her “linguistic” and “ideological” neutrality in the translation.

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<sup>46</sup> All the information about Sidonie Van den Dries were provided in French.

## 2.2 The Microanalysis

### 2.2.1 Framing Through Paratextual Elements

Baker (2006) suggests that translators use “introduction, prefaces, footnotes, glossaries” and to a lesser extent “cover designs and blurbs” as sites that are available “to reposition themselves, their readers, and other participants in time and space” (*Translation and Conflict* 133). These sites, into which the voice of the translator is injected, are not only under the control of translators; other agents such as publishers, editors, experts, also exercise power over these sites through the practice of “patronage” (censorship) to enforce a prevailing ideology – the idea of “patronage” was discussed by Lefevere (1992) in his book *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, as we saw in the first chapter. However, the “patronage” is not always negative, in the meaning of repressive power. In some instances, as Foucault (1979) suggests, “patronage” may help in “produc[ing] reality; it [patronage] produces domains of objects and rituals of truth” (qtd. in Haj Omar 142). Indeed, in the case of the Arabic translation of *Footnotes in Gaza*, the prevailing ideology of “patrons” (the publisher) and the individual ideology of the translator met with each other to re-frame the Palestinian cause as a rightful cause and to resist against the occupation, starting from the selection of this book for translation to the changes carried out in the narrative itself.

According to Genette (1991), an element of para-text has a “positioning” in relationship to the narrative itself (“Introduction to the Paratext” 263). He classifies paratextual elements into two categories: first, “**peritext**,” which is situated around or inside the text such as titles, prefaces, footnotes, and titles of chapters (263), and, second, “**epitext**”; which is situated outside the book such as interviews, conversations, private communication (264). In this section, I will focus on tracing the voice of both Arabic and French translators in the peritext. The epitext, mainly interviews with the translators, was explored in the previous section (the macroanalysis).

The title,<sup>47</sup> according to Genette (1997), might have three functions, although not always fulfilled at the same time: a) to designate the text, b) to identify its subject matter, and c) to tempt the reader (*Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* 76). These functions make the title an attractive site for translators to reframe the whole narrative. Indeed, reframing the title is usually accompanied by changes in the narrative itself, in line with the narrative position announced in the new title (*Baker Translation and Conflict* 130).

The title *Footnotes in Gaza* was re-framed by the Palestinian translator, Al-Bujairami, into غزّة: تاريخ من النضال [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]. As we can see in figure 3.6 on the right, the Arabic title follows the format: title (in red) + subtitle (in black). Moreover, the Palestinian translator omits the word “footnotes,” which refers to the marginalization of the two massacres that occurred in 1956; as the American author compares them to a couple of footnotes at the bottom of the world history page. The translator also used overlexicalization by adding the words “the history of the national struggle,” which re-frames the whole Palestinian narrative as a “long heroic history of resistance” (Dubbati and Abudayeh 152).

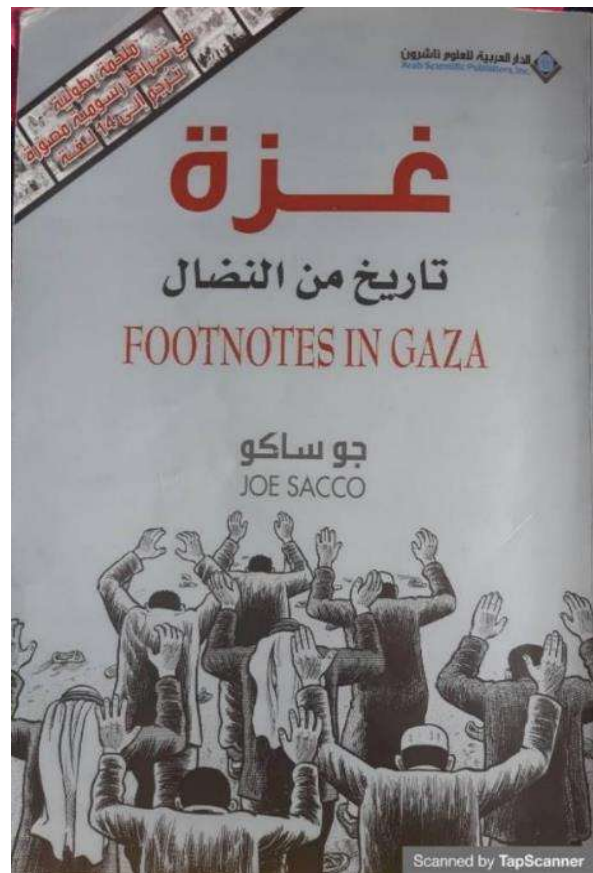
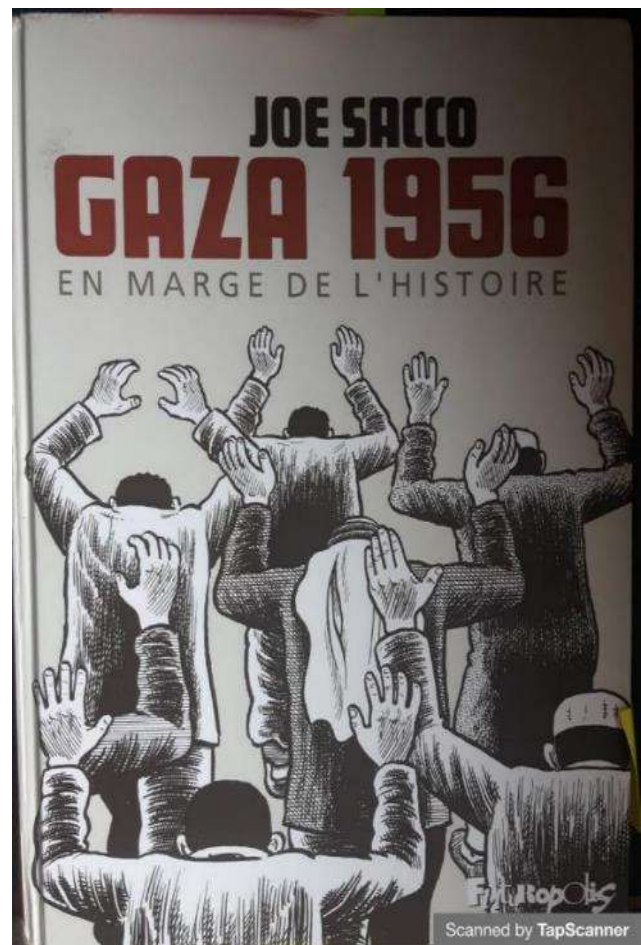


Figure 3. 6:  
Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal* [*Gaza: The History of The National Struggle*]. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al- Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011.  
[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Arab Scientific Publishers.]

<sup>47</sup> The title was explored by Baker (2006) under a separate section called “reframing through labelling”. Since the title gives a general idea about how the whole narrative will be reframed, I preferred to discuss it with the paratextual elements.

While the English title sheds light on the marginalization of the two massacres and the victimization of the Palestinian people (as we saw in the second chapter), the Arabic title removes the idea of victimization and marginalization, and creates “an aura of patriotism, heroism, [and resistance] that tempts Arab readers” (Dubbati and Abudayeh 152). The title also sets the stage for more interventions in the narrative itself. Interventions that reflect the political stance of the translator and positions him as a “political activist” not only in relation to this narrative but to the whole Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

As for the French translator, Sidonie van den Dries, she rendered the title *Footnotes in Gaza* as *Gaza 1956: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History*]. As we can see in figure 3.7 on the right, the French title also follows the structure: title (in red) + subtitle (in black). The French title provides a complement of information to the original one, and thus, creating a dialogue between them. We have the impression that the French title responds to the question: what does the author mean by “footnotes”? He means that the massacres that occurred, in Gaza, in 1956, are “*en marge de l'histoire*”. As we can see, the French title keeps the main idea of the original title, which is the marginalization of the war in Gaza. But, by adding the year 1956, the translator clearly identifies the war in question. And the word “footnotes” is substituted by “*en marge de l'histoire*.”

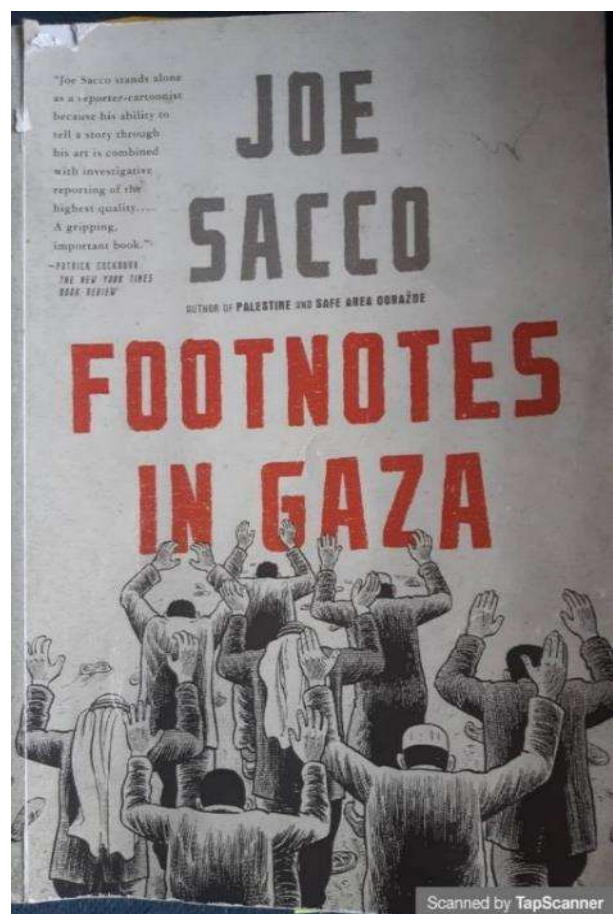


**Figure 3. 7:**  
Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1956: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010.  
[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Futuropolis.]

In sum, the French title is not a literal translation of the original title [for instance: *Petites histoires à Gaza*], but it is a “faithful” translation to the core idea that the author wants to convey and to the purpose of the book consisting in shedding light on two marginalized incidents. It also reflects the “neutral” stance of the translator. I believe that the French title is clearer than the English title as the reader knows what to expect. The title paves the way for a “neutral” translation, in which the translator’s interventions are simply linguistic and meant to ensure successful communication between the author and the reader, and not to fulfil any ideological purpose, or a national agenda, like the Arabic title does.

**The cover design**, as we can see in the three book-covers (figures 3.6, 3.7, 3.8), includes an illustration drawn by Sacco. The picture represents Palestinians raising their hands as a sign of surrender. While this representation fits with both the original title and the French one as they insist on the idea of marginalization and victimization, I think this representation does not fit with the Arabic title, which insists on the idea of resistance of a people who is under occupation but refuses to surrender: *Gaza: The History of The National Struggle*.

The French book cover includes information like the title, the author's name, and the publishing house. The Arabic book cover includes the same information in addition to the original English title and a statement that reads: “A heroic epic in graphic comic strips. It was translated into 14 languages” (my



**Figure 3. 8:**  
Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009.  
[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company. All Rights Reserved.]

translation). As for the English book cover, it includes additional information such as a review from the *New York Times* written by Patrick Oliver Cockburn<sup>48</sup>, and a statement, underneath the name of the author containing the titles of his two award-winning books.

The translators' names (both the French and Arab) do not appear on the front cover, with the authors' names, but on the title pages<sup>49</sup>. This idea was expressed by Hermans (1996) as a type of hierarchy or "erasure" of the translator ("The Translator's Voice" 26). First, the author's name is presented to us, on the cover, as being "the authoritative originary voice" (26). Then, the translator's name, which is written in smaller font size on the title page, is presented to us as a "secondary voice" that withdraws "wholly behind the narrating voice" (26).

**The translator's note** is also an interesting site for translators to position themselves vis-à-vis the narrative they are translating. It is defined by Genette (1997) as "a statement of variable length (one word is enough) connected to a more or less definite segment of text and either placed opposite or keyed to this segment" (*Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* 319). Pellat (2013) considers both "footnote" and "endnotes" as the most visible categories of paratext; they have a "connotative value" that contributes to the meaning (2-3). The French translator, Sidonie Van den Dries, did not use footnotes at all, although there are many cultural terms that could constitute a challenge to the francophone reader. In the case of the Palestinian translator, Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, he used a footnote only once, on page 21, not to explain but to reject a term used by the author (figure 3.9). Indeed, when the author was discussing the 1948 war between the Arabs and Israelis, he used the term "Arab armies," which was rendered literally in French as "*les armées arabes*." However, this term was considered incorrect by the Palestinian translator, who

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<sup>48</sup> Patrick Oliver Cockburn Patrick Oliver Cockburn (born 5 March 1950) "Patrick Cockburn is an award-winning Independent columnist who specialises in analysis of Iraq, Syria and wars in the Middle East. He has been with The Independent since 1990." ("Patrick Cockburn").

<sup>49</sup> The title page is "a page at the front of a book giving the complete title, the names of the author and publisher, and the place of publication" (The Free Dictionary).



included in the footnote numbers of Palestinian fighters and Israeli soldiers. The footnote states the following (page 21, my translation):

**There were no Arab armies.** That is a Zionist myth. There were only 33,000 Arab soldiers from Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, against more than 130,000 Zionist soldiers who were better trained and armed.

This procedure is called by Hermans (2014) “the discordant translation.” It means that “translators made their authors speak in a new language,” in a faithful way, but at the same time they ensured “that their [translators’] ideological, moral and other strictures about what the authors were saying were conveyed to the reader” through the footnote (Hermans “Positioning Translators” 292).



Figure 3. 9:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 21.

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Figure 3. 10:  
Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [Gaza 1956: *On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 29.  
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Figure 3. 11:  
Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal* [Gaza: *The History of The National Struggle*]. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 21.  
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**The preface**, according to Borges (1980), is like "a vestibule which offers to anyone and everyone the possibility either of entering or of turning back" (qtd. in Genette "Introduction to the Paratext" 261). Genette (1997) confirms that the purpose of a preface is "to get the book read and to get the book read properly" (*Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* 197). Pellat (2013) points out that "the functioning of a preface, if written by the translator, is often introductory in nature to introduce the characteristics of original work and its author" (107). But it can also be used for "justification and explanation" (3).

Both translators did not include a preface in their translations. The French translator, however, faithfully translated the preface written by the author. In the Arabic version of the book, the original preface is completely omitted. Whether the decision of omission was taken by the translator or the publisher, I think that this omission might be due either to the fact that Joe Sacco, in the preface, justifies why he chose this project and somehow announces that he is not taking side in the conflict: "my research did not take place in a vacuum. While I was investigating what had happened in 1956, Israeli attacks were killing Palestinians, suicide bombers were killing Israelis..." (Sacco *Footnotes in Gaza* x-xi), or to the fact that the preface included information (such as the data collection and authentication process) that are not of interest to the Palestinian reader who is familiar with his own history and does not need guidance to read the text. Indeed, this preface is intended for the anglophone reader.

### **2.2.2 Framing by Labelling: Rival System of Naming**

Baker (2006) means by labelling "any discursive process that involves using a term or a phrase to identify a person, place, group, event or any other key element in a narrative" (*Translation and Conflict* 122). This procedure includes the '**rival system of naming**' that is used in conflictual situations "where there are rival communities and traditions, so that to use a name is at once to make a claim about political and social legitimacy and to deny a rival claim" (124). This strategy is usually used by activist groups, for instance, the choice between West Bank/Judea and Samaria or between neighborhood and settlements, which

[illegible]

Al-Bujairami translated “Israel” as “occupied Palestine” or as “Palestine” in all the five maps in the book. These changes were mainly carried out in the maps in an attempt to re-identify or re-construct an **imagined nation** with clearly defined borders (as we can see in figures 3.12 and 3.13). However, he left the Hebrew names of the Israeli settlements in Gaza Strip such as “Gush Katif,” “Nezarim” and the names of the crossings such as: “Kissufim Crossing,” “Nahal Oz Crossing,” and “Karni Crossing.” Although these crossings have Arabic names, I think that the translator wanted to show, by using the Hebrew names, that these settlements and crossings were established by the Israelis and they did not

Figure 3. 12:  
Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 18.  
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[illegible]

# THE GAZA STRIP

**Area of Detail**

ISRAEL

WEST BANK

GAZA STRIP

GAZA CITY

BEIT LAHIYA

BEIT HANOUN

JABALIA

NEZARIAT

NUSEIRAT

BUREI

MACHATI

BE'ER EL-RAJAH

RAFAH PARLOI

GUSH KATIF

KHAN YOUNIS

RAFAH

Rafah Terminal

Kerem Shalom Crossing Station

Kfar Sina Crossing

Erez Crossing

Nahal Oz Crossing

Karni Crossing

Kissufim Crossing

South Crossing

Mediterranean Sea

ISRAEL

EGYPT

PALESTINIAN TOWNS/  
BUILD-UP AREAS

PALESTINIAN REFUGEE  
CAMPS/HOUSING

ISRAELI SETTLEMENT  
AREAS

ISRAELI-CONTROLLED  
MILITARY AND SECURITY ZONES

MAIN ROAD

This is the Gaza Strip, 40 km long by no more than 12 km wide, one of the most densely populated places on the planet. In 2002-3, when I visited, 1.3 million Palestinians lived on about 70 percent of the land. The rest was the domain of 7,500 Jewish settlers, who set up their enclaves after Israel seized Gaza in 1967, and the IDF soldiers who protected them.

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For more clarification, I summarize, in the following table, the names of the Israeli settlements and crossings and their Arabic and French translations as they appear on the maps included earlier:

English	Arabic	French
Israel	فلسطين / فلسطين المحتلة [Palestine/occupied Palestine]	Israël
Gush Katif	غوش قاطيف [Gush Katif]	Goush Katif
Nezarim	نتساريم [Nezarim]	Nezarim
Kissufim Crossing	معبر كيسوفيم [Kissufim Crossing]	Point de passage de Kissufim
Nahal Oz Crossing	معبر ناحال عوز [Nahal Oz Crossing]	Point de passage de Nahal Oz
Karni Crossing	معبر الكارني [Karni Crossing]	Point de passage de Karni
Kfar Darom	كفار داروم [Kfar Darom]	Point de passage de Kfar Darom

Al-Bujairami did not only change the name of “Israel” into “occupied Palestine” on the maps only; he also carried out this change on other occasions. For instance, on page 73 of the book, an old Palestinian militant describes, in his testimony, an attack that was launched by Palestinian fighters in April 1956 as a response to a previous Israeli attack on Gaza. The Palestinian translator changed the phrase “...entered Israel” into “...entered occupied Palestine” (73). This change aims not only to re-construct an imagined nation, as we saw in the previous example, but also to remind the reader that the Palestinian attack was not against civilians but against the occupation. It is a strategy to legitimize the Palestinian fight and re-frame it as an act of resistance against occupation. Another reason for this change - and which was proposed by Dubbati and Abudayeh (2018) - is “the visual awareness of the [Palestinian] translator” (155). Indeed, the author Joe Sacco depicts, in the second panel, two Israeli children who were killed in this attack (see figures 3.15, 3.16, and 3.17). AL-Bujairami tried, therefore, to soften the impact of the image

by confirming that these children were living in “occupied Palestine” and not in “Israel” (Dubbatl and Abudayeh 155). Therefore, the attack was against occupation and not children.

“...And everyone chose his target and entered Israel” (p. 73)	“...Chacun a choisi sa cible et on est entrés en Israël” (81)	“...واختار كل واحد منا هدفه ودخل فلسطين المحتلة (73)” [...And everyone chose his target and entered <b>occupied Palestine</b> ] (Back Translation)
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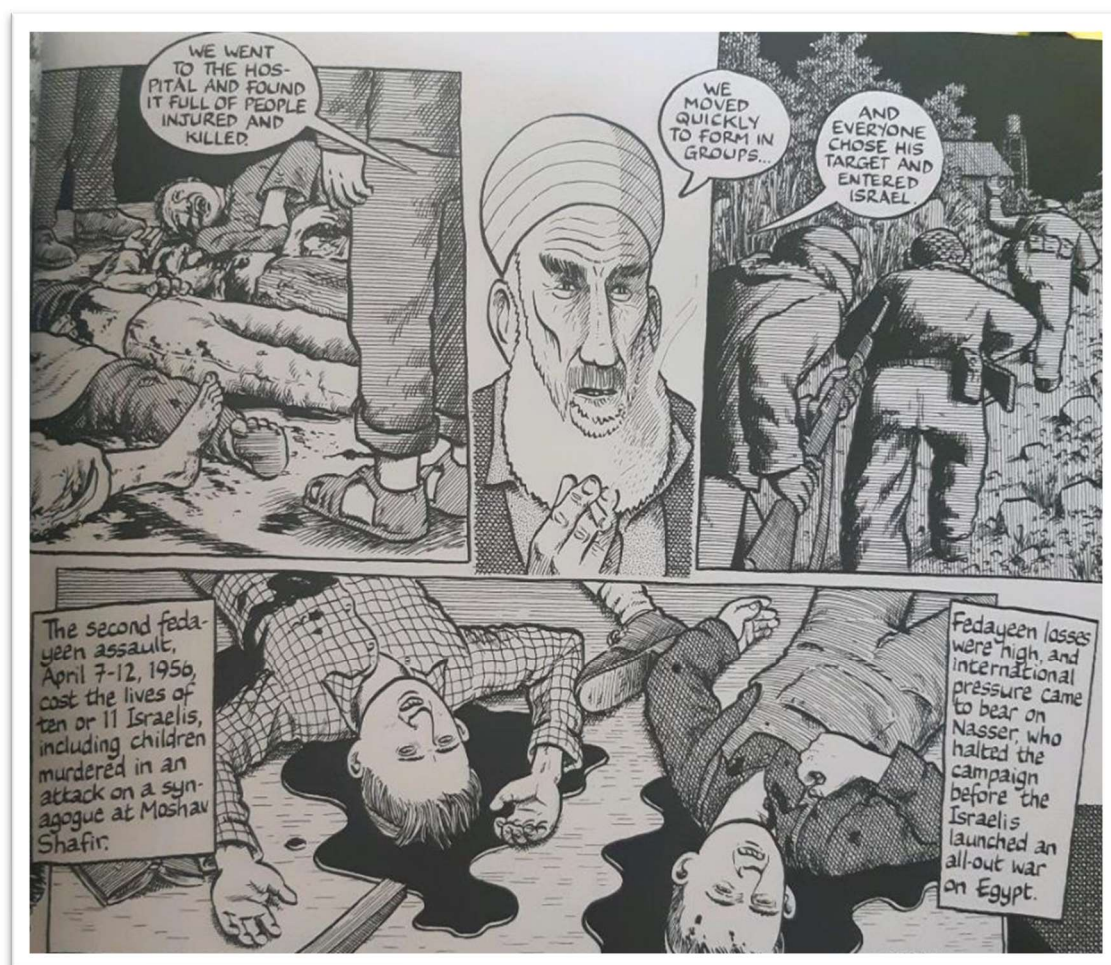
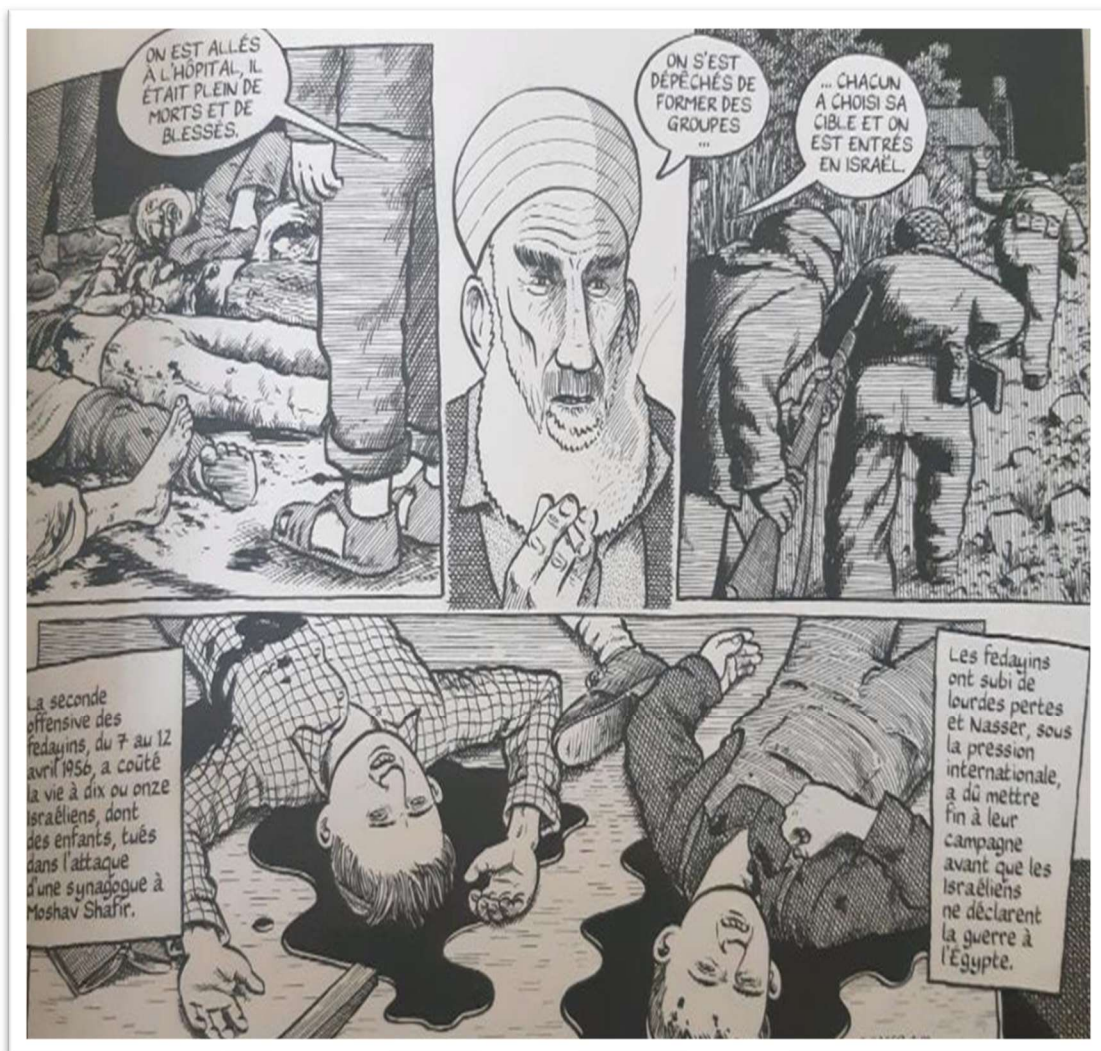


Figure 3. 15:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 73.

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**Figure 3. 16:**

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 81.

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**Figure 3. 17:**  
Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al- Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 73.  
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- **Guerilla vs. Fedayee**

The Palestinian translator changed the terms “guerillas” and “militants” used by the author to refer to Palestinians who are involved in the military activities respectively into “*Fedayee*” and “*Munadil/Nidal*.” The term “**Guerilla**” (حرب العصابات [Harb Issabat]) has a negative connotation as it means according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary: “a person who engages in irregular warfare especially as a member of an independent unit carrying out harassment and sabotage.” Guerillas are qualified as: “aggressive, radical, or unconventional” (Merriam-Webster). The use of this word in Arabic might affect the legitimacy of the Palestinian resistance. Therefore, the translator opted to change it with the term *Fedayee* which literally means: “one who sacrifices himself for the sake of his country” (Al-Maani), as we can see on page 53 of the book (figure 3.19).

As for the French translator, she translated the term “guerilla” as “*guérilla(s)*” or as “*de(s) insurgé(s)*” (p. 61), as we can see in figure (3.20), in an attempt to remain as close as possible to the ST.

<p>“-But Khaled knows I’m searching for <b>guerillas</b> from another time” ...</p> <p>“-Khaled’s uncle is a jocular who was a <b>guerilla</b> himself...” (p.53)</p>	<p>“Khaled sait que je m’intéresse aux <b>guérillas</b> d’un autre temps...”</p> <p>“L’oncle de Khaled est un homme enjoué. C’était un <b>insurgé</b> lui aussi...” (p.61)</p>	<p>“ولكن خالد يعرف أنني أبحث عن فدائيين من زمن آخر...”</p> <p>وكان عم خالد صاحب نكتة ومزاح، وكان فدائياً...” (ص.53)</p> <p>[But Khaled knows I’m searching for <b>Fedayees</b> from another time... ”</p> <p>...Khaled’s uncle was a jocular who was a <b>Fedayee</b> ...]</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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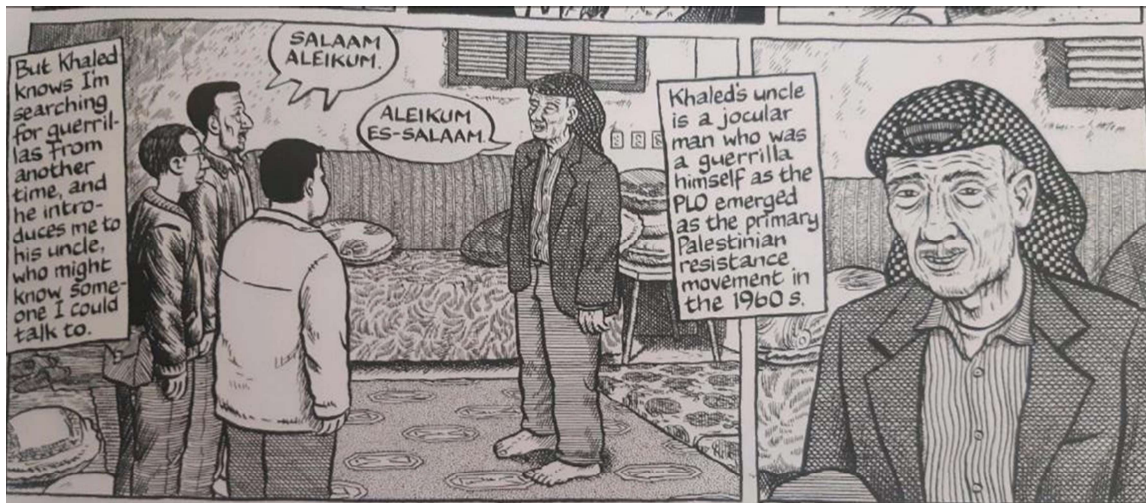


Figure 3. 18:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 53.

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Figure 3. 19:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 53.

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Figure 3. 20:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2011, p. 61.

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The term “militant” was rendered as “Munadil” (p. 60), which means in Arabic the defenders or fighters of the national cause. In French, the terms “militants” and “militancy” were rendered as “*militants*” (p. 67) and “*militantisme*” (p. 62); as we can see in the following example:

<p>"He couldn't" ...          "Those <b>militants</b> were my friends,          said Khaled" (60)</p>	<p>"Il n'a pas pu" ...          "Ces <b>militants</b> étaient "mes amis",          dit Khaled." (67)</p>	<p>"... فلم يستطع ذلك."          "فهو يقول: "إن هؤلاء المناضلين كانوا          أصدقائي" (60)          [Those <b>Munadileen</b> were my          friends, said Khaled]            (Back translation)</p>
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- **Dead vs. Martyr**

The Palestinian translator rendered the terms "died," "killed," or "death" as "martyred" or "martyrdom" throughout the text. In the Islamic tradition, the "martyr" is the one who sacrifices his life for the sake of his faith or his country. To die as a martyr in the Islamic faith "is one of the greatest honors. The rewards granted to the martyr are so sublime and are superior to the rewards for performing almost any other righteous act" (Al-Sibai). Therefore, the term "martyr" bears "an emotive value as martyrdom provokes sympathy and support for Palestinians and reframes their fight as religious and holy" (Dubbaty and Abudayeh 162). On her side, the French translator used the terms "*ont péri*" (p. 55), "*la mort*" (p. 166), "*a été tué*" (p. 257), to render the terms "died," "killed," or "death." The following example shows how the term "martyrdom" was translated into Arabic and French (figures 3.21, 3.22, and 3.23):

...a car with loudspeakers set on full distortion cruises by to announce <b>the death</b> of a boy 12 or 13 years old (158)	...une voiture équipée de haut-parleurs passe au ralenti pour annoncer la mort d'un garçon de 12 ou 13 ans (166)	... تأتي سيارة فيها مكبر صوت مفتوح على درجة عالية من التشويش لتعلن استشهاد ولد عمره اثنا عشر او ثلاثة عشر عاما (158)  "a car ...cruises by to announce the martyrdom of a boy ..." (Back translation)
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Figure 3. 21:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 158.

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**Figure 3. 22:**

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al- Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 158.

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**Figure 3. 23:**

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire [Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History]*. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 166.

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It is to be noted that the Palestinian translator reframed as “martyrs” only those who are killed by the Israeli army. The ones who died **naturally** were left with the original terms “died/death.” On page 378, for example, a woman mourns her son, who died from a heart attack: “I lost my eldest son.” This phrase was rendered literally. But when the same woman tried to console herself by comparing the natural death of her son to martyrs, “everyday many people are killed,” Al-Bujairami corrected her comparison by changing the words “are killed” into “are dying.” He wanted to “prevent the creation of equivalence between natural death and death by occupiers” (Dubbati and Abudayeh 162). For her part, the French translator followed the same pattern and corrected the comparison as well. She translated the term as “*beaucoup de gens meurent*” (p. 386) instead of “*beaucoup de gens ont été tués*”.

<p>“I lost my eldest son...A heart attack... Anyway, Thank God” ...  “Every day many people <b>are killed...</b>” (378).</p>	<p>“J’ai perdu l’aîné ...une crise cardiaque...quand même, Dieu Merci” ...  <b>“Beaucoup de gens meurent, tous les jours”</b> (386)</p>	<p>“وقد فقدت أكبرهم. أصيب بنوبة قلبية...والحمد لله على كل حال”  <b>“ففي كل يوم يموت الكثير من الناس”</b> (378)    [I <b>lost the eldest</b> ...A heart attack... Anyway, Thank God] ...  [every day, <b>people are dying</b>]    (Back translation)</p>
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### 2.2.3 Selective Appropriation Within the Text

Baker (2006) defines the strategy of selective appropriation within the text as “the patterns of omissions and additions designed to suppress, accentuate, or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative” (Baker *Translation and Conflict* 114). In this section, I will deal with strategies like under-lexicalization, over-lexicalization, and lexical variation.

#### 2.2.3.1 Under-lexicalization: Omission and Euphemism

The strategy of under-lexicalization is usually controlled by the exercise of censorship and self-censorship in translation. Usually, translators who translate for a conservative society “culturally appropriate the ST

to accommodate the socio-cultural expectations of TT readers” (Dubbati and Abudayeh 158). In the case of the Palestinian translator, he omitted the references to sex, drug, and alcohol **but only** for those whom he wanted to portray as heroes. However, these references were maintained in the French translation as the translator was addressing an audience that is ideologically and culturally distant from the Arab conservative culture. We can see in the example below, from page 17 of the book, how Al-Bujairami omitted the desire expressed by Abed - Sacco’s interpreter and a Palestinian activist - to drink alcohol to forget his miserable situation. This desire, however, was rendered faithfully in the French translation, as we can see in the following example and figures (3.24, 3.25, and 3.26).

“...I need to <b>drink something</b> ... To forget all this.... <b>To get drunk</b> ” (17)	“...J’ai besoin de <b>boire</b> ...Pour oublier tout ça.... <b>de me bourrer la gueule</b> ” (25)	“...وأحتاج إلى الهرب من الواقع.. لأنسى هذا كله.. <b>حقاً</b> ” (17).  “I need to <b>escape reality</b> ... to forget all this... <b>really</b> ” (Back translation)
--	---	--



Figure 3. 24:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. Henry Holt and Company, New York, 2009, p. 17.  
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Figure 3. 25:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 17.  
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Figure 3. 26:  
Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 25.  
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The Palestinian translator maintained these references (drugs, alcohol) for certain characters that he did not want to depict as heroes. On page 75, Abdel Hakim Amer - an Egyptian military officer and politician, who was the vice president of Egypt from 1958 to 1967, and who was blamed for the Arab defeat of 1967 - was described by one of the witnesses as “rotten” and his officers as “drunkards” and “drug users.” These terms were translated faithfully in Arabic as the Palestinian translator shared the same ideas with the witness, and he wanted to keep this negative image of the politician. The French translator also translated these references faithfully - not for any ideological reasons, like the Palestinian translator did, but to keep the regular pattern of neutrality that she followed throughout her translation:

"Abdel Hakim Amer was <b>carousing with women and drinking....</b> " (75)	"Abdel Hakim Amer passait son temps à <b>boire et à festoyer avec des femmes...</b> " (83)	"كان عبد الحكيم عامر <b>يعربرد مع النساء ويشرب الخمر....</b> " (75)
		[Abdel Hakim Amer was <b>carousing with women and drinking alcohol</b> ]
		(Back translation)



Moreover, the Palestinian translator used other examples of under-lexicalization to re-frame Palestinians as heroes. On page 43, for instance, an old *Fedayee* was describing to Sacco the actions that he and his friends were doing inside Israel as a part of the Egyptian-commanded Palestinian militia. Some of them used to enter the settlements and “steal cows and sheep” (43). Al-Bujairami completely omitted the reference to “stealing” to keep a positive image of the Palestinian resistance and fighters. The French translator, however, maintained the reference as it appears in the original:

<p>“In those days the settlements weren’t as protected like nowadays...”</p> <p><b>“Some of us used to enter settlements and steal cows and sheep” (43)</b></p>	<p>“Les colonies n’étaient pas protégées comme aujourd’hui”...</p> <p><b>“Certains y entraient pour voler des vaches, du bétail” (51)</b></p>	<p>“وفي تلك الأيام، لم تكن المستوطنات محمية بشدة كما هي اليوم” ...</p> <p><b>“وكان بعضنا يدخل المستوطنات” (43)</b></p> <p>[In those days, the settlements were not as heavily protected as these days...]  <b>[some of us used to enter settlements]</b></p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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### 2.2.3.2 Over-lexicalization: Additions

The Palestinian translator used over-lexicalization as a strategy to re-frame the Palestinian struggle as resistance through justifying or explaining the actions carried out by the Palestinian fighters. An interesting example can be found on page 51 of the book, where Sacco was discussing with Khaled - a Palestinian fighter - his role in killing the Palestinian collaborators with Israel. Throughout the text, Al-Bujairami omitted any reference to collaborators in order to frame Palestinians, in general, as fighters for the right cause. This was not possible on page 51 because there is a visual representation of a man killing a collaborator (see figures 3.27, 3.28, and 3.29). Al-Bujairami solved the problem by adding “collaborators **with the enemy**” to justify their assassination (figure 3.29). As for the French translator, she faithfully rendered the meaning (figure 3.28):

<p>"He proved his mettle in Israeli prisons and in unflinchingly rooting out Palestinian collaborators" (51)</p>	<p>"Il a prouvé son courage dans les prisons Israéliennes et en débusquant sans hésiter les collaborateurs palestiniens" (59)</p>	<p>"فقد أثبت قوة احتماله في السجون الاسرائيلية وفي اقتلاع المتعاونين الفلسطينيين مع العدو دون أن يتردد أو يهتز" (51)</p> <p>[He proved his resilience in Israeli prisons, and in uprooting Palestinian collaborators with the enemy, without hesitation or shaking]</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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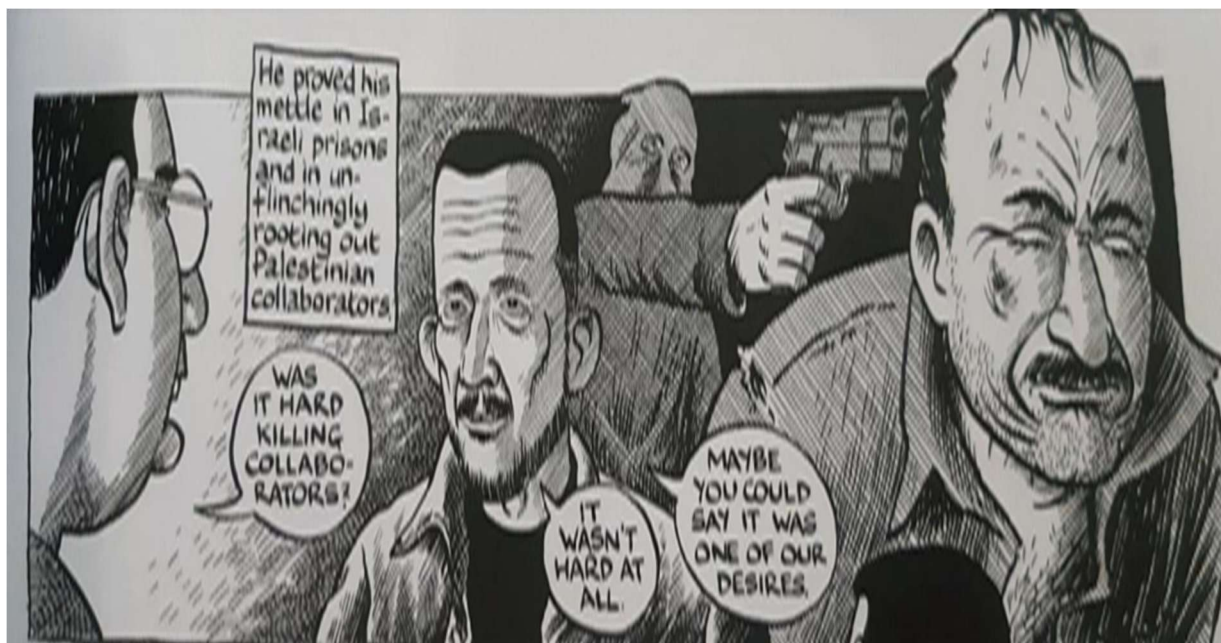


Figure 3. 27:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 51.

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Figure 3. 28:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1965: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 59.

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Figure 3. 29:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal* [*Gaza: The History of The National Struggle*]. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 51.

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Al-Bujairami, the Palestinian translator, used another example of over-lexicalization to re-frame Palestinians as victims. On page 37, Sacco was narrating how Palestinian refugees, who were expelled from their homes in 1948, were trying to go back. To Israel, these refugees who crossed back into its territory were considered “**infiltrators**” (37). To stop them, the Israeli army units patrolling the borders at that time were given “shoot-to-kill orders” (37). When Sacco stated that most of the Palestinian refugees who crossed into Israel were “**unarmed**” (37), Al-Bujairami intervened and translated as follows: “most of them were **unarmed women and children**” (37). As for the French translator, she rendered the words literally “... *dont la plupart n’étaient pas armés*” (45), as demonstrated in the following example:

“...by 1956 between 2700 to 5000 Palestinians who crossed into Israel - <b>most all of whom were unarmed</b> – had been killed in ambushes...” (37)	“...mais en 1956, entre 2700 et 5000 Palestiniens entrés clandestinement en Israël – <b>dont la plupart n’étaient pas armés</b> – ont péri dans des embuscades ...” (45)	“...بجول عام 1956، فإن ما بين 2700 و5000 فلسطيني ممن عبروا إلى إسرائيل ومعظمهم نساء وأطفال غير مسلحين قتلهم كائن ...” (37) “...most of them were <b>unarmed women and children.</b> ” (Back translation)
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On page 78, Sacco was interviewing Mordachai Bar-On, the right hand of Moshe Dayan. Bar-On realized from the speech given by Dayan following a Palestinian attack that “...the Palestinians have **good reason to do what they do**” (78). The Palestinian translator interfered in the text and added: “...**a good reason for the Palestinian resistance**” (78). The French translator used: “*les actes des Palestiniens étaient fondés*” (86). This was an opportunity for Al-Bujairami to re-frame the Palestinian actions as resistance within the Israeli narrative itself.

“You could see in Dayan a realization that the Palestinians <b>have a good reason to do what they do...</b> ” (78)	“Tout en réalisant que les <b>actes des Palestiniens étaient fondés...</b> ” (86)	“كان بوسعك أن ترى في دايدان سببا وجيها لمقاومة الفلسطينيين...” (78) [You could see in Dayan a good reason for <b>the Palestinian resistance</b> ] (Back translation)
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Another example of over-lexicalization can be found on page 21. Sacco was describing the situation of Palestinian refugees following the war of 1948. The Palestinian translator used over-lexicalization to render the phrase “the dispossessed came here with nothing” by replacing it with “the displaced who came here having nothing of their **stolen properties**.” The addition of the words “stolen properties” re-framed Palestinians as victims of aggression. The French translator rendered it literally as “*les dépossédés sont arrivés ici complètement démunis*,” as we can see in the following example and figures (3.30, 3.31 and 3.32):

<p>“Along the way, over the course of my visits to Gaza, Abed and I collect some stories about that time when <b>the dispossessed came here with nothing</b> and found – what?” (p.21)</p>	<p>“Au fil de mes visites à Gaza, Abed et moi recueillons quelques histoires sur cette époque où les <b>dépossédés sont arrivés ici complètement démunis</b> et ont trouvé – quoi? (29)</p>	<p>وعلى امتداد الطريق، على خط زيارتي لغزة، أقوم مع عبد بجمع قصص عن ذلك الزمن الذي جاء فيه النازحون إلى هنا وليس معهم شيء من ممتلكاتهم المنهوبة. (21)</p> <p>[...the displaced who came here <b>having nothing of their stolen properties</b>]</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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Figure 3. 30:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 21.

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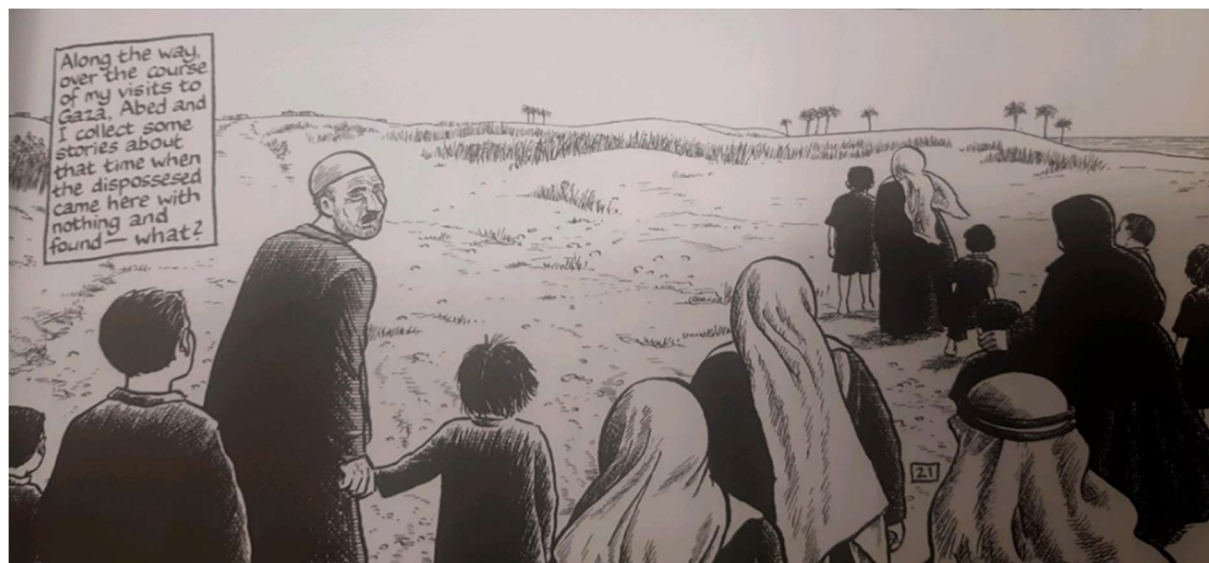


Figure 3. 31:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 21.

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Figure 3. 32:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 29.

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### 2.2.3.3 Lexical Variation

- **Defense Forces vs. Occupation Forces**

This strategy consists of substituting a term with another for ideological reasons. The Palestinian translator, for instance, has consistently replaced the term “IDF” (Israeli Defense Forces) with “the occupation army/forces” or simply with “the Israeli army/forces” in order to insist on the idea of **occupation** and to omit the idea of **self-defense** allocated to the army. In French, the IDF was translated literally as “*Les Forces de défense Israéliennes*,” as we can see in the following example:

<p>“...Israel Defense Forces (IDF) periodically destroy refugee homes here, claiming they are Palestinian ‘gun nests’” (16)</p>	<p>“...Les forces de défense Israéliennes (FDI) détruisent régulièrement les maisons de réfugiés au prétexte que ce sont des “planques d’armes” Palestiniennes”(24)</p>	<p>“...قوات الاحتلال الاسرائيلية تدمر بيوت اللاجئين على نحو منظم بين الحين والآخر زاعمة أنها “اعشاش بنادق فلسطينية” (16)</p> <p>[The Israeli occupation forces regularly, from time to time, destroy refugee homes...] (Back translation)</p>
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- **Actions vs. Violations**

On page 373, Sacco narrated how the UN-observers were prevented from moving around freely during the war of 1965 in the Gaza Strip. We can see how the Palestinian translator, Al-Bujairami, changed the term “**actions** against civilians” into “**violations** against civilians.” In French, the term “actions” was faithfully translated as: “*leurs **actions** à l’encontre de la population civile,*” as we can see in the following example:

“...Israelis do not wish to have United Nations observers reporting upon the <b>actions</b> they are taking against the civilian populace” (373)	“... les Israéliens ne souhaitent pas que des observateurs des Nations unies ... rapportent leurs <b>actions</b> à l’encontre de la population civile” (381)	<p>“...الاسرائيليين لا يرغبون بوجود مراقبين من الأمم المتحدة يبلغون عن انتهاكاتهم ضد السكان المدنيين” (373)</p> <p>[...the <b>violations</b> against the civilian populace]</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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- **Son vs. Child**

On page 91, we can find another example of lexical variation. Mesbah, one of the survivors of the Khan Yunis massacre in 1956, was telling Sacco how he and his brother fled the area of the massacre and hid in a hole in the ground. Being badly injured, Mesbah was unable to run and asked his brother to leave him. Indeed, Mesbah wanted his brother to survive and “take care of his **sons**” (91). The Palestinian translator changed the term “**sons**” into “**children**” in order to create an emotional reaction from the readers. Indeed, while the terms “son” (in English) or “*fils*” (in French) refer to “a male offspring; a boy or man in relation to his parents” without specifying the age (The Free Dictionary). The term “child” [طفل *tifl*] in Arabic refers to “a young human from birth to the age of majority” (Al-Maani). Therefore, the Palestinian translator wanted to insist on the young age of Misbah’s children - who could have been left without a father. As for the French translation, the term “sons” was rendered literally as “*fils*.” We can see how the term was rendered in the following example:



"I can't run. But <b>take care of my sons</b> " ... "there is no hope for me" (91)	"Je ne peux pas courir, <b>prends soin de mes fils</b> " ... "Je suis fichu" (99)	"أنا لا أستطيع الركض... ولكن اعتن بأطفالي ... ليس لي أمل" (91).  [I can't run ...But <b>take care of my children</b> ... "there is no hope for me]  (Back translation)
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- **Conquer vs. Invade**

The Palestinian translator wanted to reframe Palestinians as victims of occupation, but at the same time, as a people who are engaged in an ongoing resistance and not as a defeated people. On page 78, Bar-On talks about Moshe Dayan's - an Israeli military leader - plan to attack Gaza Strip. Al-Bujairami changed the phrase "to **conquer** the Gaza Strip" into "to **invade** the Gaza Strip." "To conquer" means "to overcome by force of arms or to vanquish" (Merriam-Webster). To invade is "to enter a country by force with large numbers of soldiers in order to take possession of it" but without victory being guaranteed (Cambridge Dictionary). In French, the term "conquer" was translated literally "*conquérir la Bande de Gaza*".

"He wanted to create a change in the basic situation – and <b>conquer the Gaza Strip</b> " (78)	"Il voulait modifier la situation de base – et <b>conquérir la Bande de Gaza</b> " (86)	"... فقد أراد أن يوجد تغييرا في الوضع الأساسي – بغزو قطاع غزة" (78)  [He wanted to create a change in the basic situation – by <b>invading the Gaza Strip</b> ] (78)  (Back translation)
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- **Remain vs. Remain Steadfast**

Joe Sacco, on page 285, expressed his wonder when he saw people still re-forming and re-constructing their houses - that had been demolished - to remain in them. The term "**remain**" was translated as "**remain steadfast**" by the Palestinian translator as an indication of the "resistance" of these people who do not want to leave their homes for a second time (as they did in the 1948 war). As for the French translator, she rendered the term "remain" literally using the verb "*rester*":

<p>"It's a wonder that people still patch up their places and <b>remain</b>" (285)</p>	<p>"Je m'étonne que les gens continuent à réparer leurs maisons, <b>qu'ils restent là</b>" (293)</p>	<p>"ومن العجيب أن الناس لا يزالون يرممون بيوتهم ويظلون فيها صامدين باستمرار" (285)</p> <p>"It is surprising that people are still repairing their homes, and <b>they remain steadfast in them.</b>"</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
--	--	---

- **New People vs. Other People**

On page 36, when Joe Sacco discussed the situation of Palestinian refugees after 1948, he refers to Israelis as **a new people** (meaning a new "nation" in English/ "*peuple*" or "*nation*" in French). The Palestinian translator changed the terms into "أناس آخريين" [**other people**] (meaning "individuals" in English/ "*des gens*" in French). He wanted to re-frame them as foreigners to the land and to legitimize the Palestinian version of the narrative as the real owner of the land of Palestine. On her side, the French translator rendered the term "people" literally; as we can see in the following example:

<p>"...all of It was now in the hands of <b>a new people...</b>" (36)</p>	<p>"...mais elles appartenait à un <b>nouveau peuple ...</b>" (44)</p>	<p>"... وكان هذا كله قد وقع في أيدي أناس آخريين..." (36)</p> <p>[...and all of It was in the hands of <b>other individuals/people...</b>]</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
---	--	---

- **Need vs. Want**

On page 259, the Palestinian translator used lexical variation once again. An old Palestinian woman was blaming the Israelis soldiers and Ariel Sharon – who was the Israeli prime minister at that time - for demolishing her house. In the original text, the woman says: "Sharon **needs** to demolish houses ... Sharon **needs** people to run from their homes" (Sacco 259). I believe that there is a type of "irony" here. This woman, who lost her home, would never consider the demolition of her house as out of "need" but out of a "desire" for aggression. Therefore, the Palestinian translator changed the verb "**need**" into "**want**" in

both phrases. The French translator also got this irony. She translated the first phrase as “*Sharon a besoin de démolir des maisons*” (expressing the need to) then “*ça l’arrange que les gens s’enfuient de chez eux*” (expressing the desire), as we can see in the following example:

“Sharon <b>needs</b> to demolish houses ... Sharon <b>needs</b> people to run from their homes” (259).	“Sharon <b>a besoin</b> de démolir des maisons... <b>ça l’arrange que</b> les gens s’enfuient de chez eux” (266)	<p>"إن شارون يريد هدم البيوت... إنه يريد جعل الناس يهربون من بيوتهم" (259)</p> <p>[Sharon <b>wants</b> to demolish homes... He <b>wants</b> to make people flee their homes]</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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## 2.2.4 Repositioning of Participants Within the Text

Baker (2006) thinks that “participants in the process of translation and interpretation can be repositioned in relation to each other and to the reader or hearer through the linguistic management of time, space, deixis, dialect, register, use of epithets, and various means of self- and other identification” (*Translation and Conflict* 132). In this section, I will analyze how both translators position themselves towards the source text and how they negotiate the distance between themselves, the text, and the reader. Linguistic strategies like activation/passivation, the use of vernacular, idioms, cultural terms, changing the pronouns, codeswitching.... will make their position clear in the translated narrative.

### 2.2.4.1 Activation vs. Passivation

Passivation, which means “converting a sentence structure from the active to the passive,” or activation, which means “reverting a passive sentence to its active structure,” can be used for ideological reasons such as to “emphasize or “de-emphasize” the doers of actions, usually violent actions (Dubbaty and Abudayeh 157). Indeed, Hatim and Mason (1997) confirm – based on Berk-Seligson (1990) - that “various forms of passive or impersonal constructions can be exploited for the purpose of avoiding explicit blame”

on the doer (Hatim and Mason 6). On the other hand, translators can use activation to attribute blame or responsibility to the doer.

The Palestinian translator reverts the sentence structure into an active voice whenever the attacks are carried out by the Israeli forces to emphasize that Palestinians are victims of aggression. On page 245, for instance, Joe Sacco used the passive voice to describe a heavy shooting that erupted at 5 a.m. and caused the death of 11 Palestinians. Al-Burjairami turned it into an active voice using the present continuous “are killing” with the pronoun “they” to insist on the doer instead of the victim. However, the French translator maintained the passive voice, as shown in the following example and figures (3.33, 3.34, and 3.35).

<p>"At 5 a.m., heavy shooting erupts... <b>eleven Palestinians are being killed</b>" (245)</p>	<p>"à 5 heures du matin, des cris retentissent ... <b>onze Palestiniens viennent d'être tués</b> (253)</p>	<p>وفي الساعة الخامسة صباحا ينفجر صوت الرصاص "... <b>انهم يقتلون أحد عشر فلسطينيا</b>" (245).</p> <p>[At 5 a.m., shooting erupts... <b>they are killing eleven Palestinians</b>]</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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Figure 3. 33:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 245.

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**Figure 3. 34:**

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 253.  
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**Figure 3. 35:**

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza. Tarikh Min Al-nidal* [*Gaza: The History of The National Struggle*]. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al- Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 245.  
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Al-Bujairami also turned the passive into active voice, on page 276, when Sacco was narrating the story of an eyewitness of the massacre of Rafah in 1956. This eyewitness, who was a young boy at the time, claimed to have watched his family members and neighbours when they “were lined up against a

wall and shot” (Sacco 276). Al-Bujairami not only turned the passive voice into an active voice, but also added the doers of the action, “the Israeli soldiers.” In the second speech box, Al-Bujairami maintained the passive voice because the doers are clear from the first utterance. On her side, the French translator used the pronoun “*on*” which is a neutral indefinite pronoun that can be used when the doers are not known: “*on les alignait contre un mur, avant de les exécuter*” (284). Like the Palestinian translator, she also maintained the passive voice in the second speech box, as we can see in the following example:

<p>“...and watched from a distance as <b>they were lined up</b> against a wall and shot”  “... All the men he mentions <b>were killed</b> that day” (276)</p>	<p>“...il aurait vu de loin <b>qu’on les alignait</b> contre un mur, avant de les exécuter”  “...tous les individus en question <b>ont été tués ce jour-là</b>” (284).</p>	<p>“... بينما قام (الجنود الإسرائيليون) بصفهم إلى الحائط وقتلهم...”  “...جميع الرجال الذين يذكروهم قد قتلوا في ذلك اليوم” (276)  [The Israeli soldiers lined them up against a wall and shot them]  [All the men he mentions <b>were killed that day</b>]  (Back translation)</p>
---	--	---

In contrast, Al-Bujairami maintained the passive voice to “de-emphasize” the doers of an action. For instance, on page 73 in *Footnotes in Gaza*, an old Palestinian fighter was describing, in his testimony, an attack that Palestinian fighters had launched in April 1956 as a response to a previous Israeli attack on Gaza. As a result of this attack, the *Fedayeen* losses were very high and about ten or 11 Israelis, including children, lost their lives (73). When discussing children's death, the Palestinian translator maintained the passive voice to re-frame the Palestinian attacks as resistance against occupation and not against civilians or children. As for the French translator, she also maintained the passive voice, not for ideological reasons, but to keep the regular pattern of neutrality that she followed throughout her translation. She also translated the verb “murdered” with a more neutral verb “*tués*” instead of “*assassinés*”; as indicated in the following example:

"... including children <b>murdered</b> in an attack on a synagogue ..." (73)	"... <b>dont des enfants tués</b> dans l'attaque d'une synagogue ..." (81)	"... بما فيهم أطفال قتلوا في هجوم على كنيس..." (73).  [...including children who <b>were killed</b> in an attack on a synagogue...]  (Back translation)]
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#### 2.2.4.2 Pronouns Shifts

On certain occasions, Al-Bujairami also changed the pronouns in his translation. This allows the reader to identify the position of the translator regarding the conflict and, thus, determines the distance between "us" and "them." A very interesting example can be found on page 54 in *Footnotes in Gaza*. Al-Bujairami changed the pronoun "**they**" to "**our** enemies." By using the pronoun "**our**," he identifies himself with the Palestinian reader. As for the French translator, she rendered "**they**" literally as "**ils**," as shown in the following example:

"... <b>they</b> have machines and American support" (54)	"... <b>ils</b> ont des mitraillettes et le soutien américain" (62)	"...وأعداؤنا لديهم آلات وعتاد ودعم أمريكي" (54). [... <b>our enemies</b> have machines and American support"]  (Back translation)
---	---	--

Another interesting example of changing pronouns in translation can be located on page 290. A taxi driver was furious because of the continuous home demolitions in Gaza. The author, Joe Sacco, tried to emphasize the distance between "**them**" and "**us**" in the driver's angry words by **underlining** the pronouns "**they**" and "**we**," as we can see in the example and figure (3.36).



<p>"They killed a pregnant woman yesterday. And they said <b>they</b> were sorry!"</p> <p>"Only <b>they</b> can say sorry?"</p> <p>"Let's do what <b>we</b> need to do and say sorry too!" (290)</p>	<p>"Hier, ils ont tué une femme enceinte, et ils ont dit qu'ils étaient <b>désolés</b> !"</p> <p>"Ce ne sont pas les seuls à pouvoir dire '<b>désolés</b>' !" .</p> <p>"On va faire notre devoir et dire '<b>désolés</b>' nous aussi !" (298)</p>	<p>"لقد قتلوا امرأة حاملا أمس وقالوا: "إننا أسفون"</p> <p>"فهل هم وحدهم القادرون على قول: "نأسف؟"</p> <p>"دعونا نعمل ما نحتاج إلى عمله ثم نقول: "إننا أسفون أيضا" (290)</p> <p>[They killed a pregnant woman yesterday and said: "<b>We are sorry</b>"</p> <p>Only they can say: "<b>We are sorry</b>"</p> <p>Let's do what we need to do and say: "<b>We are sorry too!</b>"</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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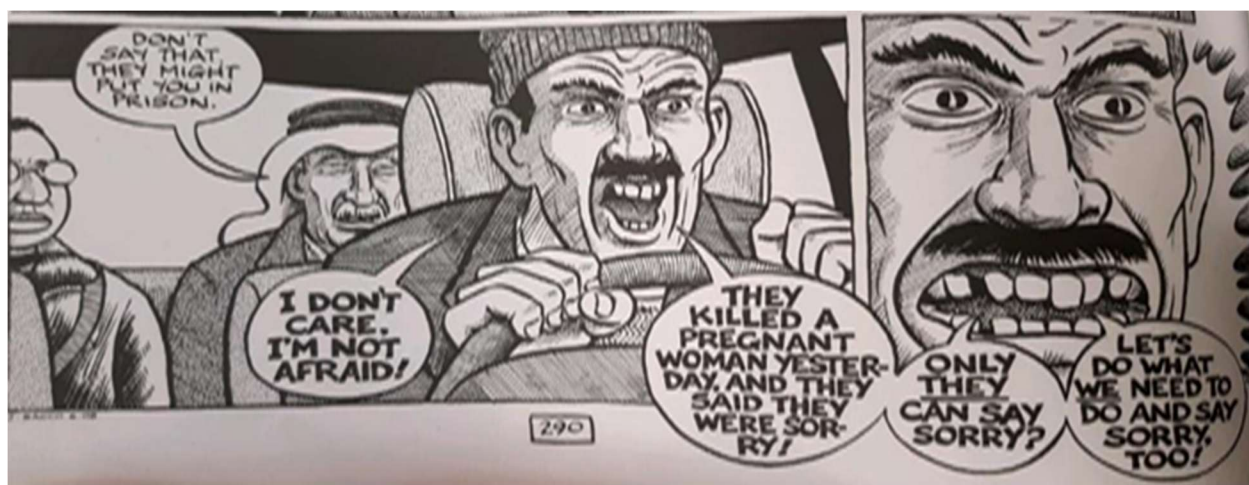


Figure 3. 36:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 290.

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The Palestinian translator, as we can see in figure (3.37), transformed the indirect speech in the three sentences into a direct speech, changing, therefore, the pronouns from "**they**" into "**we**." The use of direct speech reveals the angry tone and the mood of the character (P'Rayan "Importance of Using Direct Speech"). Indeed, direct speech is "more engaging than indirect speech" (Zwaan et al. "The Influence of Direct"), as it "causes the speaker's voice to be more activated in the reader's mind than the



use of indirect speech” (ibid). Indirect speech is a descriptive form of language, while direct speech is a depictive form (ibid). This can be compared to “looking at a Picasso painting itself, rather than reading a description of that painting” (ibid). In sum, the use of direct speech reduces the distance between the translator and the reader.



Figure 3. 37:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 290.

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As for the French translator, she maintained the indirect speech keeping the pronouns “on” and “ils.” The translator puts more emphasis on the idea of “apologizing” (“*désolés*”), as indicated in figure (3.38):



Figure 3. 38:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1965: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 298.

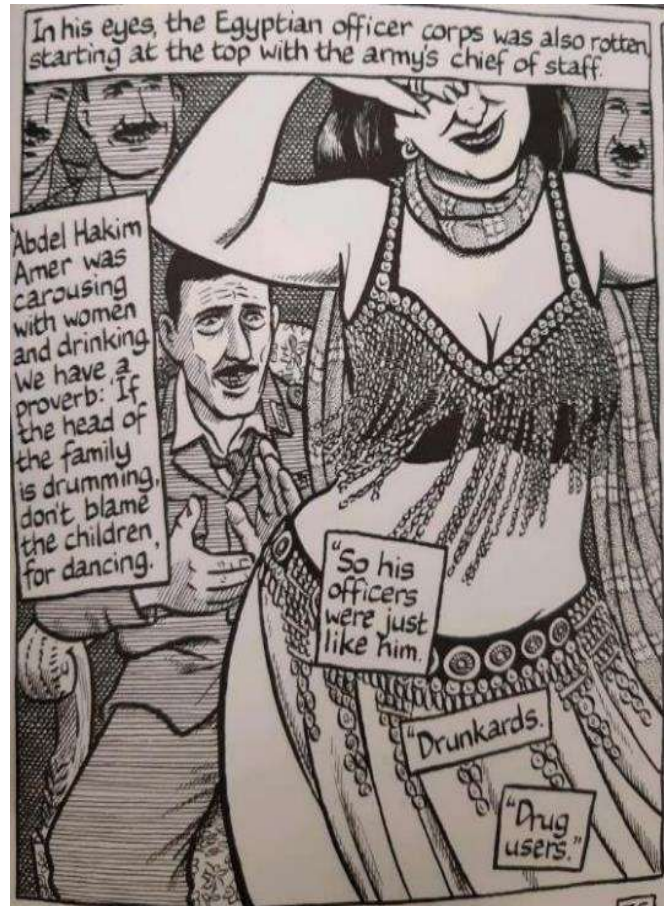
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#### 2.2.4.3 Idioms and Proverbs

Since this book is based on testimonies of local Palestinians, the author included some cultural elements related to the Palestinian and Arab society in general. Proverbs are one of these elements and were translated literally in the book. While the French translator rendered them literally, just like the author, the Palestinian translator rendered them into Arabic using the **original wording**, as we can see in the following example and figures (3.39, 3.40, and 3.41) where the witness was describing the “corruption” of Abdel Hakim Amer - an Egyptian military officer and politician - and his soldiers (Sacco 75):

“...If the head of the family is drumming, don't blame the children for dancing” (75)	“... quand le père joue du tambour, c'est normal que les enfants dansent” (83)	<p>“...إذا كان رب البيت بالدف ناقرا، فشيمة أهل البيت كلهم الرقص” (75)</p> <p>[... If the head of the family is playing the tambourine, then the other members of the family will be dancing].</p> <p>(Back translation)</p>
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This proverb is taken from a classical Arab poem by the poet Sibit Ibn Al-Ta'aouithi (1125-1187). It seems that Al-Ta'aouithi was living in an era where dancing was not regarded as an art but as an inappropriate act (Al-Jareeri). Actually, this view has not radically changed in the conservative Arab Society. Therefore, this proverb is usually used with a negative connotation, referring to the fact that if anyone in a high position (like the father of a family, or a director in a company, or a commander in an army) is corrupted, the affiliated people will most likely be corrupted as well.



**Figure 3. 39:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 75.

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A suggestion for a non-literal English translation would be “the apple does not fall far from the tree,” “like father, like son,” “a chip off the old block.” In French, we can say “*tel père, tel fils*,” “*les chiens ne font pas des chats*.”





Figure 3. 41:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al- Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 75. [Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Arab Scientific Publishers.]

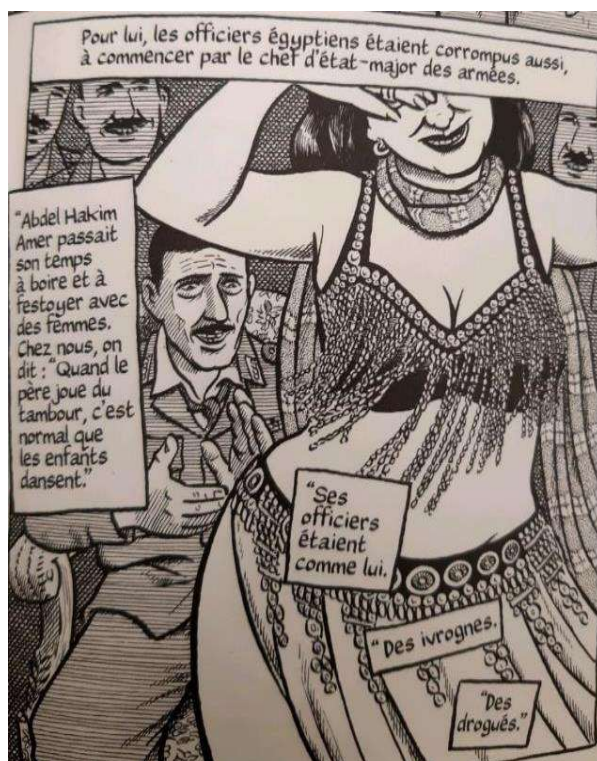


Figure 3. 40:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire [Gaza 1965: On the Fringes of History]*. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 83. [Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Futuropolis.]

The author indicated another proverb on page 60 while he was providing the testimony of Khaled - an Israeli target and an old *Fedayee*. Khaled flatly refused to participate in any of the operations launched by the *Sulta* (the Palestinian authority) in 1996 against militants of *Hamas* which is a “militant Palestinian nationalist and Islamist movement” (Britannica). Indeed, after Oslo agreements – which are “peace agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation” (Britannica) - the *Sulta* came down hard on these militants to prevent any operation against Israel (Sacco 59). Khaled even refused to participate in the anti-drug campaigns launched by the *Sulta*. He feared that any cooperation with the latter (the *Sulta*) would be the first step to draw him into more “objectionable” assignments.

Sacco and the French translator used a literal translation of the Arabic proverb (“the first step to dancing is moving”), while the Palestinian translator rendered it using **the original wording**, as we can see in the following example:

“...The first step to dancing is moving” (60)	“...Avant de danser, tu te lèves” (68)	أول الرقص حنجلة (60) [the first step to dancing is <i>Hanjala</i> *]
---	--	---

The “*Hanjala*” in Arabic is walking in a way that is close to dancing (Al-Maani). It also refers to the dancing way in which a bird called “Partridge” [*Hajal*] walks (Al-Rbihat). Since dancing in the conservative Arabic society is not well regarded (as we saw in the previous example), the idiom bears a negative connotation referring to a bad thing that will trigger many other bad things. In English, we say “the tip of the iceberg.” In French, we say “*la partie émergée de l’iceberg*.”

#### 2.2.4.4 The Use of Similes

The witnesses and survivors interviewed by Joe Sacco used similes in their testimonies, such as fish, watermelons, ants, etc., to describe the dramatic situation of Palestinians. These representations were maintained in both Arabic and French, as we can see in the following examples:

“They were dead like fish, like fish, on top of each other” (334)	“Ils étaient morts. Comme des poissons. Comme des poissons. Les uns sur les autres” (342)	وكانو ميتين، مثل السمك، مثل السمك، فوق بعضهم بعضا” (334) [they were dead, like fish, like fish, on top of each other]  (Back translation)
“We sat like this. Very pressured, very crowded... like water-melons” (265).”	“On étaient entassés comme des pastèques” (273)	“كنا جالسين..كلنا معا..مثل البطيخ” (265) [we were sitting... all together...like water-melons]  (Back translation)

"It was just like ants...people everywhere from the camp" (210)	"On aurait dit des fourmis, les gens, le camp tout entier" (218)	"وكنّا مثل النمل... الشعب... كل اهالي المخيم" (210) [they were like ants ...a nation...all the residents of the camp] (Back translation)
---	--	--

The use of similes affected the Arabic translation in some instances. For example, on page 210 (example above), the use of the term “**ants**” influenced the translation of the word “**people**.” In the Arab culture, we use the simile of “**ant-like**” to represent the idea of collectivity. In this case, it refers to the massive gathering and killing of the camp’s residents.

Therefore, Al-Bujairami rendered “People” as “nation” to represent the idea of collective, widespread killing of a whole nation (figure 3.43). I also believe that the use of this simile by the **witness**, at first hand, influenced how Sacco depicted the situation visually. We can see in figures 3.42, 3.43, and 3.44 “an aerial zoomed-out view of Palestinians running and stumbling under gunpoint which visualizes the eyewitness’ description of people as ants” (Dubbaty and Abudayeh 155).



Figure 3. 42:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 210.

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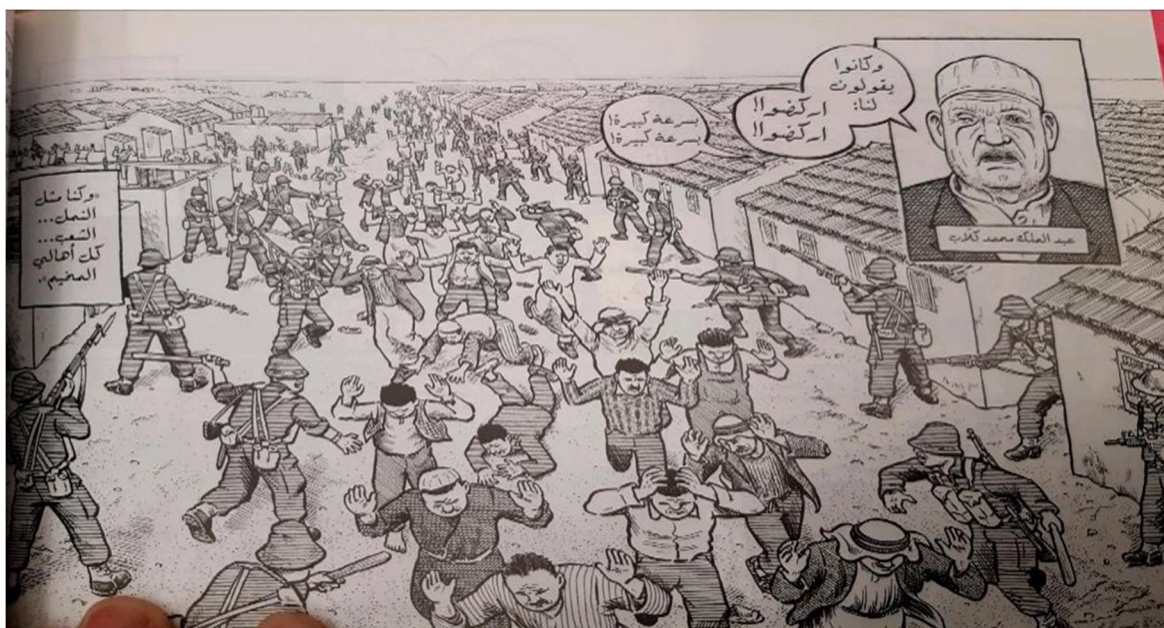


Figure 3. 43:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 210.

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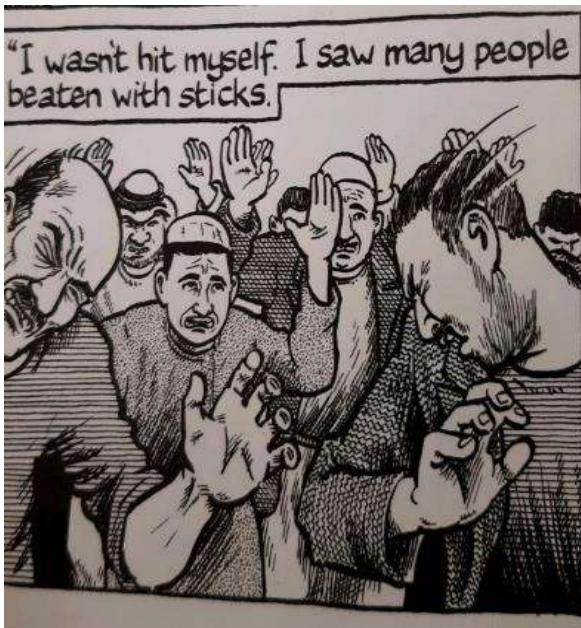
Figure 3. 44:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [*Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p.218.

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However, when another witness - on the same page 210 - described how people were beaten, but without using the simile of “**ant-like**” - that was used in the previous example to express collectivity - the word “**people**” was translated into Arabic as “**individuals**” (“*des gens*,” in French) and not as “**a nation.**” Sacco drew “a close-up pictorial representation of the men. We see their faces as they are beaten or expecting a beating, but we do not see them collectively as in the first panel” (Dubbati and Abudayeh 155), as demonstrated in the following figures 3.45, 3.46, and 3.47.





**Figure 3. 45:**

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 210.

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**Figure 3. 46:**

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire [Gaza 1956: On the Fringes of History]*. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, 218.

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**Figure 3. 47:**

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al- Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 210.

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#### 2.2.4.5 Codeswitching

Codeswitching is defined by Brown (2000) as “the act of inserting words, phrases or even longer stretches of one language into the other” (Felemban 46). Joe Sacco inserted many terms related to the Palestinian culture. They are either transliterated or translated literally in the book. These cultural terms in *Footnotes in Gaza* represent the “**traces**” of a previous text that existed before *Footnotes in Gaza*. This previous text consists of the oral testimonies provided by the witnesses in Arabic and interpreted, into English, by Abed - Sacco’s interpreter. Therefore, the oral testimonies are the original text, and *Footnotes in Gaza* is the translated one.

These “traces” (cultural terms) also indicate the discursive presence of Abed, the “interpreter,” in *Footnotes in Gaza*. They remained in the French translation as Sidonie Van den dries translated them literally. However, these traces were erased entirely in the Arabic Translation as Al-Bujairami rendered them using their **original wordings**. He even omitted the footnotes inserted by Joe Sacco to explain these elements to the Anglophone reader. For instance, the term “*Maltama*” was rendered in Arabic as it is “*Maltama*” or by its synonym “*Mandaba*” and the explanatory footnote was omitted, as shown in both figures 3.48 and 3.49. *Matama* (or *Mandaba*) is a form of grief expressed by screaming women who “let out their hair and fell on the ground throwing sand over their heads” (Sacco 359). As for the French translation, the term “*Maltama*” was transliterated, and the footnote was kept; as we can see in the figures 3.49, and 3.50:



Figure 3. 48:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza: Tarikh Min Al-nidal [Gaza: The History of The National Struggle]*. Translated by Mohammed Tawfiq Al- Bujairami, Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., 2011, p. 317.

[Copyright © 2009 by Joe Sacco. Reprinted by permission of Arab Scientific Publishers.]



Figure 3. 49:

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2009, p. 317.

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Figure 3. 50:

Sacco, Joe. *Gaza 1965: en marge de l'histoire* [Gaza 1956: *On the Fringes of History*]. Translated by Sidonie Van den Dries, Futuropolis, 2010, p. 325.

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In the following table, we find other examples of codeswitching that was transliterated/translated literally in English and rendered in their original wordings in Arabic:

English	French	Arabic	Definition
Maltamah (317)	Maltamah (325)	(317) ملطمة/مندبة [Maltama/Mandaba]]	a form of grief
Fusgyeh (353)	Fusgyei (361)	(353) فسقية [fusgiyeh]	a room underground used as a collective cemetery
Hatta (357)	Hatta (365)	(357) كوفية / حطة [Kufiyeh/Hatta]	"an Arab headdress consisting of a square of cloth folded to form a triangle and held on by a cord" (Merriam-Webster)
Hajja (258)	Hajja (266)	(258) الحاجة [Al-Hajja]	"a form of address for one who has made pilgrimage" (The Free dictionary) —often used as a form of respect to the elderly

Sulta (57)	La Sulta (67)	السلطة (57) [Al-Sulta]	“authority” referring to “the Palestinian Authority
Matiana (332)	Matianah (340)	مطينة (332) [Matianah]	an area full of clay
Halas (159)	Halas (167)	خلاص (159) [Khalas]	“done,” “finished”
Al-Salam Aleikum (57)	Al-Salam Aleikom (65)	السلام عليكم (57) [Al-Salam Aleikum]	“peace to you —used as a traditional greeting among Muslims” (Merriam-Webster)
There is no God but God (257)	Il n’y a de Dieu que Dieu (265)	لا إله إلا الله (257) [la Ilah Ila Allah]	the Shahādah, (“testimony”). “It is the Muslim profession of faith: [There is no god but God; Muhammad is the Prophet of God]. The shahādah is the first of the five Pillars of Islam.” (Britannica)

### 3. The Discursive *Ethos* Constructed in the French and English Translations: From the Full Identification with the ST to the Radical Detachment

In the previous section, I analyzed the translational strategies used by both the French and Palestinian translators of *Footnotes in Gaza*. In this section, I would like to discuss the discursive image (*Ethos*) that they constructed through their translations. This section is the outcome of the analysis I carried out above.

*Ethos* is a Greek term that means "custom" or "character" (Merriam-Webster). It also means “a man's character or personality” (ibid). Today, it is used to refer to “the practices or values that distinguish one person, organization, or society from others” (ibid). Suchet defines *Ethos* according to Aristotle’s Rhetoric:

*Ethos* designates the **image of oneself built by the orator in his speech** in order to exert an influence on his audience. This image is produced by a manner of speech rather than by its message: the orator does not claim his sincerity but speaks in such a way that his sincerity appears to the audience (Suchet 11; emphasis added)

Throughout the above analysis, both translators attempted to negotiate and “tune” the distance between themselves and the narrator of *Footnotes in Gaza*, i.e., between two enunciations. Each of them constructed a distinct discursive image (*Ethos*) according to what he/she wanted to convey to the reader:

### 3.1 The *Ethos* of the Arabic translator: The Radical Detachment of an Activist

The *Ethos* produced by Al-Bujairami is that of a defender of a “national narrative.” He aims to protest against the occupation and considers translation as a form of resistance. The translator completely disassociates himself from the discourse that the narrator is adopting in some instances. On one side, Al-Bujairami is very careful to **reduce** the distance between himself and the intended Palestinian reader, as they both belong to the same side of the conflict, which makes the reader a co-translator as well. On the other side, he **widens** the distance between himself and the narrator of *Footnotes in Gaza*; by establishing a clear **polarized relationship** in his translation between the “**us**” (the victim, the occupied) and the “**them**” (the occupier, the victimizer). Through the use of linguistic and paralinguistic elements, the translator constructs a **nation** called “Palestine” and revives a **nationalism** of a people who is living under occupation but keeps resisting. The identification of Al-Bujairami with the stories narrated by the witnesses, being a Palestinian refugee himself, explains and even justifies his interferences in the translation.

### 3.2 The *Ethos* of the French Translator: The Re-embodiment of an Avatar

The *Ethos* produced by the French translator is that of an “avatar.” Indeed, Sidonie Van den Dries **reincarnates** the voice of the narrator of *Footnotes in Gaza* to “report” the same stories narrated in the book. The distance between the translator, Sidonie Van den Dries, and the narrator of the source text is so minimal that we feel that the narrator is continuing his narration in another language - the French language this time. But at the same time, the distance between the translator and the francophone reader is so wide that we wonder how a francophone reader would understand certain unexplained cultural

elements. However, the position of the translator as being “external” to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and, thus, not affected by the traumatic experiences that the Palestinian translator had gone through (conflict, forced exile, and refugeeism) explains her ideological and linguistic “neutrality.” She is “unbiased,” taking neither side in the conflict.

In sum, the voice of Sidonie Van den Dries, in *Gaza 1956: en marge de l’histoire*, perfectly “mimics” the voice of the narrator of *Footnotes in Gaza*. She “sings in union” with the narrator. On the contrary, the voice of Mohammad Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, in *Gaza: The History of The National Struggle*, is “disassociated” from the voice of the narrator. They are both singing “in different vocal registers.”

#### **4. Conclusion:**

As we can see from the above analysis, translators and interpreters re-narrate the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in different ways, based on their position towards the conflict itself (activists, externals, or “in-between”). In fact, translators in conflict zones act as mediators who aim to “negotiate” and “adjust” the distance between the conflicting and competing narratives. These translators-mediators use multiple translation strategies that range from absolute neutrality (followed by Sidonie Van den Dries) to radical engagement (followed by Tawfiq Al-Bujairami). The question that arises here is: which type of translators can achieve a successful mediation between the conflicting narratives?

According to the legal and cultural definitions of mediation - discussed in the first two sections of this chapter - a successful mediator should be “neutral” and “external” to the conflict. At first thought, it seems that the French translator is the most successful mediator because she meets all the legal requirements for a mediator. Indeed, she is an “acceptable, impartial and neutral third party who has no decision-making power...” (“Mediation” [Government of Canada]). But then I thought that any neutral translation would “perpetuate” the imbalance of powers and voices between conflicting narratives and sides. The voice of the “stronger” side will always be louder than the “weaker” side in the text and in the

conflict. The basis of a successful mediation is “equality” between both sides. Both sides should have the right to freely express their voices. In the mediation process, “everyone has the chance to be heard, to voice their views, opinions, and objections and to help determine the best way to resolve the matter” (Pollack “Equality and Mediation”). Abed (through his selection of witnesses and places) and Al-Bujairami (through his linguistic and paralinguistic interferences) were trying to give voice to the Palestinian people and convey their version of the conflict’s narrative. Without hearing both narratives of the conflict, not only a successful mediation is impossible, but also the stronger side will always control the mediation process. Therefore, I believe that all translators involved in the conflict - whether directly (like local interpreters in war zones) or indirectly (like translators dealing with written texts) - carry out a mediating role. However, in my opinion, the most successful mediator-translators are “activist, engaged translators” who aim to “empower” the weaker side.



## Conclusions and Discussion of Findings

The main aim of this thesis was to see how translators with different backgrounds and different “narrative locations”<sup>50</sup> re-narrate the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Another issue to understand was how traumatic experiences such as conflict, refugeeism, forced exile, and loss of identity can form and inform the re-narration of the conflict. Moreover, how translators play a mediating role between the two competing and conflicting narratives. The “multidisciplinary approach” that I adopted throughout this research was an amalgam of many theories and studies such as the narrative theory by Mona Baker, cultural theories by Eva Hoffman and Edward Saïd, the re-writing theory by André Lefevere, and CDA by Van Dijk. This “multidisciplinary perspective” was actually inspired by the “activist turn” (Wolf 2012) in translation studies, which calls to stop looking at translation as a mere linguistic process that occurs in “isolation” of all the social, political, cultural, and ideological factors that surround the text especially in conflict situations.

The story (narrative) of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict, just like any other story, has had several narrators and re-narrators over the past seventy-three years. Translators and interpreters are among the re-narrators of this conflict. They re-narrate the story of the conflict into a new language according to their “location” in it. They are either totally “**external-narrators**,” belonging to neither side of the conflict (third-person narrators) such as Sidonie Van den Dries, the French translator of *Footnotes in Gaza*, or “**protagonist-narrators**” belonging to one side of the conflict (first-person narrators). These protagonist-translators, in their turn, are divided into two types: first, “**activist**” **translators** who belong “ethnically” to one side of the conflict and narrate their own story such as Abed (Joe Sacco’s interpreter) and Mohammad Tawfiq Al-Bujairami (the Palestinian translator of *Footnotes in Gaza*), and second, the “in-

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<sup>50</sup> “**Narrative location**”: a term used by Mona Baker to mean the translator’s position regarding the narrative he/she is translating. The narrative location of a translator restricts his/her “own vision in specific ways. It also provides a basis for elaborating an ethics of translation” (See Baker “Ethics of Re-narration” 11).

**between” translators** who “ethnically” belong to one side of the conflict but chose - or were forced into choosing - to work with the other side of the conflict such as the Druze translators in the Israeli army and Iraqi interpreters/translators working for the U.S. forces in Iraq. In sum, the translators re-narrate the conflict depending on their position in the conflict’s story (external or protagonists). Moreover, their re-narration ranges from absolute “neutrality” to radical “activism.”

### **1. Re-narration of the Conflict by Activist Translators: Defenders of a National Cause**

Activist translators and interpreters involved in the conflict, like Abed and Al-Bujairami, use translation as a “site for resistance”: a place where “activism” can be actualized. The actualization of activism or the “political engagement” differs in translation from interpretation, but the purpose is the same: to give voice to the less powerful. While Al-Bujairami focused on re-framing the narrative itself linguistically and para-linguistically, Abed, who interpreted the testimonies from Arabic into English, used a broad selective process that goes beyond his linguistic skills. For instance, He selected and deselected the witnesses, the survivors, and the places that he wanted Sacco to visit. More importantly, he filtered the information provided by the witnesses and helped Sacco in the editing process. He also got Sacco to see present-day events in the Gaza Strip and not only to focus on past events (wars of 1948 and 1956).

Abed re-narrated the conflict from an activist’s eye view. Being “firmly embedded in the conflict,” he inevitably intended to “reproduce and strengthen particular narrative takes on the conflict” (Baker “Interpreters” 216). He wanted to construct a positive, heroic image of his own people. But at the same time, he wanted the world to see - through Sacco’s eyes - the ongoing situation of the Palestinian people in Gaza and not only the past war of 1956.

Similarly, Mohammad Tawfiq Al-Bujairami, in his translation of *Footnotes in Gaza* into Arabic, re-narrated the conflict from an activist point of view. He re-framed the source text in translation as a narrative of a national struggle against the occupation. Although the general tone of the narrator in

*Footnotes in Gaza* is sympathetic to the Palestinian cause (as we saw in chapter two), Al-Bujairami interfered in the translation “to advocate for his people’s cause.” He “sanitiz[ed] the image of Palestinians,” depicting them as heroes, and “re-fram[ed] their armed struggle as a work of resistance” (Dubbati and Abudayeh 147).

The identity of Al-Bujairami as a Palestinian refugee who was expelled from his hometown and who has been denied a return, just like all Palestinian refugees in Diaspora, makes his identification with the survivors and witnesses inevitable. As an act of “self-reflexivity” (Tymoczko 2007), Al-Bujairami embedded himself in the translation as if he was re-narrating his own story. His translation “visually and discursively pieces together parts of his own personal and ideological past and present” (Dubbati and Abudayeh 163). He was a witness of the war of 1948 himself, and his interference in the text represents his testimony. As Dubbati and Abudayeh (2018) put it:

As someone who had lost his homeland and past, and was displaced repeatedly, Al-Bujairami becomes a character in the narrative like all the other Palestinian witnesses, and his interferences are his testimony (163).

Al-Bujairami used translation not only as a “site for resistance against the occupation” but also as a “site for resistance against forced exile.” Indeed, according to Edward Saïd (as we saw in chapter one), exiled intellectuals adopt national narratives and construct imagined nations in their writings to “fend off exile” and “fight against its ravages,” such as the feelings of homesickness and solitude (“Reflections on Exile” 182). Nationalism “is an assertion of belonging in and to a place, a people...” (182). In *Footnotes in Gaza*, Al-Bujairami re-constructed an imagined nation called “Palestine” with clearly defined borders in all the maps included in the book. He also revived a narrative of “nationalism” and restored a “national identity” lost in forced exile. This can be clear through the use of terms like resistance, Palestine, occupied Palestine, occupation, martyrs, martyrdom, *Fedayeen*, *Munadileen*, *Nidal*, *Kuffieh*, etc.

In conclusion, both Abed and Al-Bujairami re-narrated the conflict through an activist’s eye. They completely detached themselves from the narrative of the “other” side of the conflict and adopted a

“national narrative.” They both demonstrated how “traumatic experiences” such as conflict, refugeeism, forced exile, and loss of identity can form and inform the activist-translator’s re-narration.

## 2. Re-Narration of The Conflict by External Translators: “Neutral” Narratives

Being French and thus external to the conflict, Sidonie Van den Dries re-narrated the conflict in a very “neutral” way. She “re-embodied” the voice of the narrator of the source text and carried on the narration but in a new language. She is “unbiased” and thus does not give voice to any side of the conflict more than the other (unlike the activist translators). We have the impression that she maintains an equal distance between herself and both sides of the conflict. Indeed, her ideological, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic distance from both sides of the conflict justifies her neutrality. Moreover, according to her educational and professional background as a graphic designer and translator of comic books, I can assume that her interest in this book was not driven by any ideological reason. Indeed, Sidonie Van den Dries used translation as a linguistic and communicative act rather than an act of resistance.

## 3. Re-Narration of The Conflict by Translators in the In-Between Space: “Biased Neutral” Narratives

Translators who are in “the in-between” space are those who belong to one side of the conflict but work for the other, i.e., the side of the “enemy.” I called them the “in-between translators” because they can never gain the full “trust” of neither side of the conflict. They are classified as “traitors” by their communities and “untrustworthy” by the “other side.” We find, in this category, the Iraqi and Arab translators who worked for the American forces in Iraq and the Druze translators who worked in the Israeli military courts. These translators re-narrate the conflict through what I call a “**biased neutrality**,” which means that “the in-between” translators are linguistically “neutral,” but this “neutrality” serves the interests of the side they are working for. For example, the Iraqi and Arab translators and interpreters, by providing their interpretation services, legitimize the War in Iraq that many find “unjust.” Similarly, the

Druze translators, through carrying out interpretations in the Israeli military courts, participate in “legitimiz[ing] the legal system” and therefore in “maintain[ing] the ‘legal face’ of the occupation” (Hajjar 314).

#### 4. Translators as Mediators in Conflict Zones:

As I discussed in the conclusion for the fourth chapter (see p. 172), neutral translators cannot be considered successful mediators. Indeed, adopting a ‘neutral’ stance towards the conflict may play a tremendous role in “perpetuating the imbalances of powers” (Boyd 10): the occupier vs. the occupied. The voice of the “stronger” side will always be louder than the “weaker” side in the text and the whole conflict. Therefore, I believe that the basis of a successful mediation is to give a chance for both sides to freely and equally express their version of facts.

Consequently, I can say that the intervention in the translation may re-balance the powers of narratives. This could be applied to all oppressed groups. Indeed, women’s voice has become louder with the feminist translator Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood (1989), in her translation *Lettres from an Other*, where she excessively intervened in the translation, corrected it, and used every possible strategy to make women visible in the translated work (Von Flotow 78-79). Lotbinière-Harwood protested against a patriarchal hegemony; she tried to give voice to the less powerful to achieve gender “equality” between men and women. Along the same line of thought, can we imagine a translator of *Mein Kampf*, for instance, not intervening in the translation and not setting out his/her position concerning this text? (Baker “Ethics of Re-narration” 16).

It is true that a translator-mediator should act as a “peace-builder” or “bridge-builder” between the conflicting narratives, but for now, this is only an “**Idealistic Utopian idea**,” as stated by Martin Boyd (2012). We, as translators, need to be aware of the seriousness of our role in promoting, circulating, and emphasizing hegemonic narratives. At the same time, we need to be **aware** of the power we possess, as

translators, in resisting hegemony and building equality. This point was clearly explained by Mona Baker (2005) in her article “Narratives in and of Translation”:

Translators and translation scholars must resist the temptation to over-romanticize their role in society and must instead acknowledge the fact that they participate in very decisive ways in promoting and circulating narratives and discourses of various types. (4)

**5. The findings of this research can be summarised in the following points:**

- Every translator or interpreter re-narrates the conflict from his/her “narrative location,” whether he/she is an activist in the conflict, external to the conflict, or in the in-between space.
- Translators carry out a mediating role, while re-narrating the conflict, through their intervention in the source text.
- Mediation strategies in translation range from absolute neutrality (like the French translation) to radical activism (like the Arabic translation).
- A successful mediation is not a “neutral” mediation. “Neutrality” in conflict situations perpetuates the imbalance of powers.
- A successful mediation “empowers” the weaker side and “gives voice” to the less heard.
- Activist translation is the most “successful mediation” as it applies the principle of equality, giving the less powerful a chance to talk.
- Activism in translation is formed and informed by traumatic experiences: conflict, oppression, colonization, occupation, refugeeism, forced exile, loss of identity, etc.
- Activist translators resist the conflict and its consequences by adopting a national narrative, constructing an imagined nation, reviving a nationalism, and restoring a national identity.

The findings of this research are far from being comprehensive or conclusive. Indeed, further research is needed to determine the impact of the conflict on its victims (such as the loss of lives, homeland, refugeeism, forced exile, and loss of identity) and how this impact, in its turn, is reflected in the translation activity. As an initial result, I noticed that neither the external French translator nor the Druze translators have been affected by the traumatic experiences that Abed and Al-Bujairami have gone through, which explains their activism. Therefore, more studies on the relationship between traumatic

experiences in wars and translation would greatly help us understand why translators would resort to activism in conflicts.

In addition, further research is needed to examine the role of translators as mediators who can, through their mediation, perpetuate the imbalance of powers and legitimize wars that are “illegitimate” and “unjust”. Therefore, more studies on the “ethical responsibility” of translators and interpreters in conflict zones are required.

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