

REFRAMING PALESTINE: *MORNINGS IN JENIN* OR *DAVID'S SCAR*? A NARRATIVE ACCOUNT OF THE PERSIAN TRANSLATION OF SUSAN ABULHAWA'S *MORNINGS IN JENIN*

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Abstract

This article, with narrative theory mainly of Baker applied, explores how the translation of Susan Abulhawa's *Mornings in Jenin* in Persian reframes the Palestinian-Israeli conflict narrated by a Palestinian-American author. The hyphenated narrative position of the author provides her with more than the narratives of a monolithic 'self' and makes her challenge some of them. The language (English) she has chosen to narrate in also reveals the global audience her narrative is targeted at. However, the translator doesn't seem to associate her translation with such a narrative position of the author on the issue of self/other. The narrative aimed to be disseminated globally is funneled to be targeted at a domestic Persian audience, a process through which the translated text solidifies the wall between the 'self' (seeming to be the same 'self' of both the Middle East author and the translator) and the 'other' (the west).

Keywords: narrative theory, translation, reframing, Palestinian-Israeli conflict, Persian/English

1. INTRODUCTION

In ‘the climate of conflict’ we are now living in, which oozes from every channel we might choose to watch or every site we might click to read, translation seems to be a weapon unavoidable to use by all sides in what is called a *counter-attack* in their own narrative and an *attack* in their rival’s. What gives translation a position of such major significance is its power not only to represent what is happening but also to construct it in the form of a (re) narration in *another* language that finally contributes to changing the balance of the narratives contemplated by the people of that language as more valid (Baker 2014).

One of the most lasting of these conflicts is the one between Palestine and Israel which, in comparison with other conflicts of such type, has drawn a great deal of attention of Persian audiences. In so many parts of the world, subscribing to Palestinian narratives of this conflict simply means dissenting from dominant narratives of ‘war on terror’ that is properly called a metanarrative now. But among Iranian audiences, subscribing to Palestinian narratives has a dubious position: it could be unsubscribing from those globally-dominant indoctrinations while promoting the domestically-dominant narratives of the conflict serving (in)advertently a certain purpose. It is where resistance becomes dominance, and the translation otherwise aimed at resistance could be used as a tool of advocacy of another dominance politically practiced in Iran. As Baker argues (Baker 2006b), individuals of various backgrounds that share certain values endorse certain narratives and consequently legitimize a certain set of narratives in a society; but in the Iranian society, the individuals who support the Palestinian narratives of the conflict form inhomogeneous communities around the same narratives because of the use of such support in political terms. In such a complicated position this conflict has found among Persian audiences, I have undertaken a detailed textual analysis of one of the translations of Susan Abulhawa’s *Mornings in Jenin* into Persian (Abulhawa 2010). Choosing *this* novel, that is only one of many representations of the conflict from the Palestinian side in Persian, was motivated by the fact that it has tried, as claimed by most book reviews written on it, to be “deeply human against one of the twentieth century’s most intractable political conflicts” (Bloomsbury 2010), a “tale of ordinary lives letting events speak for themselves” (Guardian 2011), or “a tale of Palestinians rather than Muslim fighters” (Fars News 2015), and in being so, apparently different from its most ideologically-loaded counterparts dominating the literature on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. For this purpose, I have opted for the *second* translation of the novel by Fatemeh Hashemnezhad (Abulhawa and Hashemnezhad 2015), since it has received much more acclaim from the press and the audience than the first translation by Marzieh Khosravi (Abulhawa and Khosravi 2012). Though far less accurate than the first to the point that such a clear recurrent historical reference as Hashemite Dynasty has been translated as حشمتیه

[Heshmadiyah]¹, this translation has been republished five times up to the moment this article is being written, and the translator has been interviewed by some of the most known Persian news agencies such as the one mentioned above, i.e. Fars News Agency, recognized to be a semi-official news agency in Iran. The current study examines both the main text of *Mornings in Jenin* and its Persian translation, *Davis's Scar*, as narratives. It not only treats these as narratives, but also employs narrative theory as its method to explore and generate a narrative of its own. This approach seeks to see to what extent what the Persian text reads corresponds to what the English text does. It also aims at studying how the translation, at the divergence points, turns out to be circulating its own narrative of the events, a narrative that has been able to win the approval of both the public and the press in Iran.

2. DIFFERENT NARRATIVE POSITIONS OF THE AUTHOR AND THE TRANSLATOR

Though known rather as a Palestinian writer due to her individual political activities to support the Palestinian cause², which most of her fiction is propelled by, Susan Abulhawa's work can be situated within the larger body of diasporic literature, the literature produced by writers of hyphenated identities. It is undeniable that writing as a Palestinian-American author has let her into a space that other only-Palestinian writers confined within their borders might not have access to; a space located between the global and the local where new landscapes of identities are negotiated (Brah 1996). So there is an author narrating from such a position, along with English language as a medium chosen by her to disseminate her personal narrative through a medium that tells us about her target audience (certainly not those fellow Arabs of hers who read only Arabic). The combination of such a narrating position and such a medium seems to have motivated her into shunning a monolithic view toward the dichotomy of self/other that could have brought about her being rejected by the very 'other' that her narrative assumedly has been intended to be heard by.

The opening and closing scenes of Susan Abulhawa's novel both show Amal, the main character, so close to the Israeli soldier that she can see he is wearing contacts, though the muzzle pressed against her forehead does not let her get even closer. These scenes represent Abulhawa's willingness to move beyond the conflict and its hostilities, and to negotiate with the 'other' and its rival narratives and historical realities (Abu-Shomar, 2015).

¹ For the accurate transliteration of the Arabic proper nouns into Persian, the Arabic translation of the novel was consulted (Abulhawa and Shanan 2012).

² Such as the non-governmental Playgrounds for Palestine organization founded by her (PlaygroundsforPalestine), or her involvement in the BDS Movement, to promote Palestinian right to return.

These first and last scenes, in fact, parenthesize so many other cases proving this claim that Abulhawa tries at getting close to the 'other', passing the wall war has erected between these two, with the clearest example of Ismael/David, the snatched Arab baby raised in an Israeli family, who is the emblem of this mingling, a mingling that is the heir of the plundering and looting. The empathy between Ismael/David's Israeli mother, Jolanta, and Abulhawa is also another obvious example. The sufferings of Ismael's Palestinian mother – Dalia's seeing all her family members get killed by Israeli army, and her baby's being taken away from her while escaping from the soldiers approaching and killing – don't seem to have made Abulhawa unable to recognize the sufferings David's Israeli mother has gone through – her losing her family during the holocaust and her sterility. Such empathy could be read as an effort on part of the writer to deplete at least pain and sufferings of ideological implications, leaving some space to causes transcending political ones, if any of such quality we could believe to exist. And even if one were not able to afford such an optimistically humanitarian outlook towards the issue, it could be read as the writer's effort to insinuate her personal narrative into the cache of narratives her audience has already stored upon the conflict.

For whatever reason it is, Abulhawa tries to keep her narrative as personal as possible – or to borrow Baker's terminology, as *ontological* as possible (Baker 2006a). It can be regarded as her strategy not to have her narrative mistaken with some public and collective narratives she seems unwilling to be considered subscribing to. However, such an effort of hers is left thwarted from the beginning when she unavoidably must make a choice between the already binarily formed names common for one of the place settings of her novel. *Jerusalem*, not the transliteration of the Arabic *al-Quds* is what she opts for. Such a choice might make readers more likely to locate her narrative too simplistically. Yet, as the novel goes on, the narrative Abulhawa carves out for herself defies such a simplistic location, particularly in regard to where collective narratives of 'self' end and where the ones of 'other' begin. For instance, Amal's being loving toward the Israeli young soldier betrayed by his demagogic leaders (238) is clearly one of these transgressions into the realm of the 'other'. Other ones are the understanding Amal cannot find in her own daughter, but she finds in Israeli Ari (223) and the pre-war friendship between Ari and Hasan (225) that lets her avoid generalizing her account on Israeli people and blocking the way for those of her 'other' who might be inclined to come into the realm of her 'self'. But the prime example of such fluctuations between narrative locations is the vagueness the novel is ended in (249). In the last chapter, Youssef, Amal's brother, proves all claims of his being the terrorist attacking the American ministry wrong without making it clear who is responsible for that. In doing so, Abulhawa just seems to be expurgating the account she has already given on the possibility of counter-violence on the part of Palestinians. The personal narrative she aims at, the one tried to be kept the farthest from some public ones though sheds light on larger narratives – some other public, conceptual or even meta – she backs.

Having briefly discussed which narrative position the writer of the main text has narrated from and how it has shown itself in the main text, it is time to consider the locatedness of the translator, to speak à la Edward Said. One of the features of narrativity proposed by Bruner is 'narrative accrual' (Bruner 1991) that is redefined by Baker as the outcome of repeated exposure to a set of related narratives, ultimately leading to the shaping of a culture, tradition, or history (Baker 2006a). It means every narrative, though a variant by itself, is located in a larger body of relative narratives whose size either lends a certain degree of validity to its components or invalidates them in the eye of seemingly rival narratives. Therefore, to begin to study where the translator is (re)narrating from, it is appropriate to study what larger body of relative narratives hers falls within. In the case of *Mornings in Jenin*, it can be said that all of its Persian translations (as this book has been translated by three different translators one of whom is the author of this article whose translation of the book is going to be available soon.) are situated in a large stock of narratives around Palestinian-Israeli conflict most of which attempt to frame the conflict from the point of view of the Palestinian side. This stock, whether created or held institutionally or individually, has achieved such a level of currency in the target language of this translation (meaning Persian) that in Bruner's words it has begun to have the force of a constraint, and has established interpretive and behavioral canons (Bruner 1991). Among Persian audiences, the normalizing effect of so much socialization into narratives on Palestine, despite its empowering effect on personal narratives of individuals who are prone to find such narratives more intelligible (Polletta 1998), can also suppress the relevant personal narratives deviated from the stock each in its own personal way. It is noteworthy here to say that it is this very deviation that makes each narrative worth telling. To help non-Iranian readers of this article get a better understanding of this socialization of Iranian audiences, it can be said that the names of the refugee camps of Jenin, Sabra and Shatila are by no means unknown to Persian audiences. But before Abulhawa or the translator can get their personal narratives across to the Iranian audiences, these names are preceded by their indispensable companion: "massacres of", leaving no space for any a posteriori reasoning whether to prove them to be sites of massacres or not.

Besides the hegemony of the accrued narratives in Persian literature discussed earlier, another potential pitfall making translating *Mornings in Jenin* into Persian challenging is the hegemonic understanding doubled by the shared linguistic material between cognate languages of Persian and Arabic such as Arabic-Islamic words like rukaa/رکعت (units of prayers) and adhan/اذان (the call to prayers) or some more controversial ones like kaffiyeh/کفیه or the ones simply pointing to the cultures that in some cases overlap like aroosa/عروس (bride) or nye/نی (flute). How such canonicity and socialization due to the two above-mentioned reasons in the target language society are treated in the second translation of the book is worth studying and probably a reason for its wide acclaim. The following section is going to pay it its due attention.

3. WHERE THE TRANSLATOR RENARRATES

As it was briefly mentioned in the previous section, there are two reasons behind the hegemonic attitudes among Iranian audiences toward the conflict narrated in *Mornings in Jenin*: certain narratives accrued in Persian literature and the shared linguistic and cultural materials between Arabic and Persian. To discuss the latter, it is vital to address the issue of the multilingualism in the novel: *in what language to speak* is obviously one of the concerns of the main text, as even flipping through the English text by Abulhawa speaks of the Arabic and Palestinian identity in it through its so many Arabic words transliterated into English and also the long glossary of these words defined for those unfamiliar with Arabic and Palestine at the end of the novel.

The same concern can be found in the Persian text too; it seems even to have taken a more elaborate appearance as there are three languages of Arabic, English, and the target language of Persian itself. But the question of which to maintain, where to maintain which one, and how to maintain each (transliterating or footnoting or glossing) does not carry out the same function as it does in the source text.

All Arabic words and expressions of the English text are retained in the form of transliterations and only glossed at the end of the book. It means the *Arabicness* of the text has been intended to fluently pull the reader into reading the language of the 'other' without being impeded by or reminded of the foreign alphabet of it. Besides that, the definitions of these words have not been conveniently given in a footnote right on the same page as those Arabic words have been used on. Therefore, the reader unlikely to consult the glossary at the end of the novel every time (that happens to be so frequent) is encouraged to try to learn from the context what those apparently readable words are used to convey, a strategy to get the 'other' assimilated into the reader's understanding.

Compared with the large number of these Arabic words and expressions of the source text, the Persian translation studied here can be said to have diluted this thick *Palestinianness* through two framing strategies: one that is textual is lots of omissions and domestications of these transliterations of Arabic words, and the other that is paratextual is footnoting what Abulhawa has given in her glossary at the end of the book. Both these modifications have stripped Abulhawa's narrative off the orientation to getting *Palestinianness* assimilated, and have accommodated it within the translator's narrative with a different consequence.

In many cases of Arabic words *not* commonly used by Persian speakers, both when usually understood by them (Allah, sallat, mama, ...) and when totally unfamiliar (the names of Arabic dishes or currencies, common Arabic words denoting approval like Maalesh (111)), the Arabic material retained in the English text has *not* been retained in Persian, reducing the effect of this

linguistic difference and holding it at bay. One of the clearest examples of such a point is found with some Arabic praying sentences retained in the English text which have been translated into Persian and even domesticated into the target culture (IsmAllah (149), which is used in praises to express lack of spite, has been translated as *بسم الله* /Besmellah, believed in Persian to help the user have a good and fruitful beginning), or with the names used by both Arabs and Persian speakers like Yasamin which has been Persianized as *ياسمن* /Yasaman. In the case of those Arabic words commonly used by Persian speakers, but not necessarily loaded with the same relational meanings, for instance: one like *كفّيه* /kaffiyeh, no effort has been done to keep the Arabic or Palestinian peculiarity of that word and to facilitate a more transformative reading experience by defying the hegemonic power of those shared linguistic materials.

The other foreign language used in the Persian translation is English. Nonetheless, the way in which it is treated is different from how Arabic has been dealt with. Those few English words of the novel have been left either untouched within the main text of Persian (the 'I love you' embroidered on a cushion by Amal's Palestinian student in Shatila (165)) or translated only in the footnote (like the conversation in English between Jach O'Maley and young Amal (105)) or transliterated into Persian (such as the first 'thank you' Amal utters in the U.S. (135)). Such a treatment might have been due to the paucity of the English material or the conjecture that such simple English sentences don't need to be translated, but it can be claimed to have created an impression on the reader that accentuates the difference between English and Persian rather than the difference between Arabic and Persian. In the translation, it is English (the western language) which seems to have been considered the 'other's language while Arabic either omitted or domesticated into Persian in so many cases does not seem to be a foreign language anymore; it is rather the language of the 'self'. This dual treatment can be interpreted as the product of the sense of common identity the power of narrative has established (Baker 2006b). The power of narrative that has let Abulhawa speak of the first component of her hyphenated identity, i.e. Palestinian-American, has been applied by the translator to show distrust of such 'hyphens' that are replaced by 'slashes' reinforcing the binary opposition of self/other. The slash between the 'self' and 'other' that here is moved from Arabic/Persian into Arabic and Persian/English.

The former of the reasons behind the hegemonic attitudes towards this novel, briefly introduced in the previous section, is the repeated exposure to the like-minded accrued narratives stored upon the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in Persian. This exposure which provokes either a progressive attitude towards this narrative accrual or a reactionary one has made translating narratives like the one in *Mornings in Jenin* highly contentious.

From the very beginning, entitling the second translation of the novel *David's Scar* or زخم داوود institutes reframing the narrative of the source text in a way that is strongly aligned with the accrued narratives of the target language society. The title of the English text, *Mornings in Jenin*, sums up all that the novel is about into the tie between Amal and *where she has come from*; it introduces what *where she has come from* is to Amal: to Amal, Palestine is her childhood dawns spent reading poetry on her father's lap in the refugee camp of Jenin; a view toward Palestine (the shrinking Palestine) that later through the story makes its loss, or its 'being stolen' as repeated several times in the source text, much more lamentable and so more objectionable. Though, in the new title adopted for the translation, such transcendence attributed to this tie is replaced by the political reasons for its loss, removing the significance from such a romantic property of the issue, that could be considered its most influential potential, to the hostile and venomous political debates which see what Palestine is to Amal first a scar. While the title of the English text prods the readers into a humane stance on the conflict before they are reminded of what narratives of the conflict they find valid or invalid, the title of the translated text triggers the narratives they are supporting or rejecting from early on. With *Mornings in Jenin*, Palestine is viewed as an entity existing by itself, and what has happened to it since 1948 has been added to it; but with *David's Scar* Palestine is not but what has happened to it since then.

Another early telltale sign of the divergence between the narrative of the source text and that of the target one is different names they choose for the same city: Abulhawa has chosen the name Jerusalem to refer to it. However, the translator has not repeated whatever name the writer has used without comment (Baker 2006a), and has adopted the name بيت المقدس (Beyt al-Muqqadis, another Arabic name for the city) for it. This name is what is almost always used to refer to the city in narratives about the conflict in Persian, and makes the narrative intelligible in a particular way to Iranian audiences from early on. Everywhere, "there may be rival systems of naming, 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," as Baker refers to what MacIntyre argues but what he says seems to be applicable here only to analyze the narrative of the translator. Abulhawa appears to have had her audience rather than her narrative position in mind when choosing between these rival place names. Jerusalem is a name that arouses less ideological controversies on the global scale (though it could be suggested that it is another hegemonic belief that 'al-Quds' is more heavily charged with ideologies than 'Jerusalem' is) and it has been chosen to make sure her narrative does not look like those ones that have always compelled her rival to shut ears to Palestinian narratives of some of which she is critical in some cases. In the novel, after having immigrated into the U.S., Amal describes herself as:

metamorphosed into an unclassified Arab-Western hybrid, unrooted and unknown... I spun in cultural vicissitude, wandering in and out of the American ethos until I lost my way (138).

This 'wandering in and out of the ethos' of the 'other' by Amal, which is unmistakably Abulhawa, has inspired her to let some space to their narratives to be heard; the narratives of the hostile 'other' of this conflict with some of which Abulhawa seems to be more sympathetic than the translator seems to be able to be. The critical attitude the translator has toward their ethos divulges itself in the diction she chooses to translate this part: 'the Arab-Western hybrid' is translated as جونور عرب-آمریکایی (backtranslation: the Arab-American beast) where western has been translated as 'American', the emblem of 'other', and a neutral word like hybrid is replaced by the word beast with its negative connotation. It does not but reveal the above-explained lack of trust in such minglings on the translator's part.

After having graduated, Amal, upon leaving America – this 'other'– to reunite with her family in Lebanon, feels sad because "the place I had called home for the past years had become part of me (144) or somewhere else she acknowledges Majid's earning a scholarship through the United Nations (151), or her own American scholarship. It is believed by some, especially within the society of the target language of this translation, that such acknowledgments are the very purpose for the sake of which these benevolences are bestowed upon the talented refugee students; the author acknowledges these benevolences regardless of the purpose behind them, while in the translated text the acknowledgments of such assumed goodwill with their following positive publicity have not been trusted and either omitted like the above examples or been modified as "so many papers and forms for health insurance, library registration, school ID" (137)

which has been translated as فرم پلیس و اقامت [backtranslation: police and residency papers] reducing those services to immigrants into just some forms needed to be filled out as the security and bureaucratic procedures.

Likewise, *aid organizations* implicitly referring to institutionalized aid to the refugees supported by government-related sections are translated as موسسات خیریه [backtranslation: charities] which removes that sense of institutionalism away from it and reloads it with ordinary people's intentions. Or Muhammad and Elizabeth, the supportive and good humane characters of the novel, have been emptied of their background and resumé of having worked for Medicine without Borders (169), as if for the translator it is impossible to do anything benevolent while having affiliations to institutions which she cannot endorse.

Another example of such numerous omissions which make one doubt their inadvertence is the local Amnesty International chapter (202) which is translated once more as موسسات خیریه [backtranslation: charities] serving the

same purpose.

Likewise, BBC (171) and Associated Press (29 and 178) when reporting on atrocities in Sabra and Shatila are just translated as TV and press with their specificity removed from them as if these names cannot be recorded to be showing these scenes revealing the atrocity of the Israeli side.

Towards these unsophisticated demonizing and angelizing, there is the omission of this part where Amal feels uncomfortable introducing herself:

Statelessness clung to me like bad perfume and the airplane hijackings of the seventies trailed my Arabic surname (135).

بی وطنی و آوارگی مثل یک بوی بد همراهم بود.

[backtranslation] statelessness and homelessness accompanied me like bad perfume.

where the translator, feeling uneasy about the author's self-confession, has omitted the account on the airplane hijackings of the seventies.

Some examples of this lack of trust are aimed directly at particular political figures or organizations:

Protecting the refugee camps was the priority. Toward that end, the PLO leadership ultimately struck a devil's deal to keep the women and children safe (166).

هرچند، حمله به اردوگاه خلاف قوانین بین المللی بود و یاسر عرفات قول داده بود از زن ها و بچه ها محافظت کند.

[backtranslation: though attacking the refugee camp was against international regulations, and Yasser Arafat had promised to protect women and children.]

In Abulhawa's narrative, the leadership and its decisions are not summed up in Yasser Arafat and he is not made the scapegoat. The bad deal is also justified as the deal inevitably struck to protect the women and children. But 'the causal emplotment' that is provided in the translated text does not allow the readers to weave the events into the same moral story the writer has intended the readers to subscribe to (Baker 2005). The translator is saying that guaranteeing protecting women and children preceded and was interrupted by that deal due to the inefficiency of Yasser Arafat.

Somewhere else the same blaming finger is pointed to Yasser Arafat by the translator. The blame that is not put on him by his fellow, Abulhawa the writer. The source text says:

Yousef and his comrades had been forced to leave their wives, children, and parents behind. These sacrifices were the small parts of Yasser Arafat's ragtag deals on behalf of his people (173).

و این یکی از معاملات پستی بود که یاسر عرفات با مردمش کرد.

[backtranslation: and this is one of the mean deals Yasser Arafat struck with his people.]

Once more the causal emplotment has been modified. "It is only when events are emplotted that they take on narrative meaning, because it is then that they are understood from the perspective of their contribution and influence on a specified outcome" (Baker 2007) While Abulhawa believes that those deals were between Arafat and the people he represented and the Western side, the deals for which many like Yousef made sacrifices, the translator renarrates that historical event representing the deal between Arafat and his people.

The most explicit of these modifications is found where the main text says:

He was not prone to demagoguery or conflict (201) (to describe the peace-seeking and wise character of Jacob, David's younger son)

او به مبارزه اسرائیل اعتقادی نداشت

[backtranslation: he did not believe in Israeli cause in fights.]

Where the main text has not used any articles before these nouns to keep them broad enough to be able to be attributed to anyone or anything, the translation recharacterizes Jacob by showing him an Israeli against Israeli cause.

On the same page we have:

The PLO resisted retaliation and so did the Lebanese government (166).

which is completely in accordance with the UN-pleasing tone of the source text. But the same has been translated as

حملاتی که با مقاومت پی ال ا و دولت لبنان مواجه میشد.

[backtranslation: but their attacks were answered with the PLO and the Lebanese government]

in line with hero-worshipping tone applied to talk about Palestinian resistance force in accrued narratives in Persian community.

Somewhere else, the main text says:

News of the Battle of Karameh spread across the Arab world like a bush fire. Its glory reverberated in Europe and the Soviet Union, and foreign youth took to wearing the Palestinian checked kaffiyehs as a symbol of revolution and the power of the weak (101).

فقط چند ساعت طول کشید تا خبر جنگ کریمه تو تمام دنیای عرب پخش بشه

و به اروپا و امریکا هم برسه. جوون های غربی شروع کرده بودند به پوشیدن چفیه که نماد انقلاب و طرف داری از ضعیف بود.

[backtranslation: it took only a couple of hours for the news of the Battle of Karameh to spread across the Arab world and to reach Europe and America. The western youth had taken to wearing kaffiyehs that was a symbol of revolution and supporting the weak.]

In the narrative of the translator, the glory of the Palestinians' victory needs to be reverberated in Europe and U.S. instead of the Soviet Union, and it was not all foreign young people around the world but just western ones who accepted the triumph of the Palestinian side in *Karameh* war. It seems that borders are redefined by the translated text and the line between self and other is too.

As Baker explains, the same set of events can be framed in different ways to promote competing narratives with important implications for different parties to the conflict; this often results in frame ambiguity (2006a). The word kaffiyeh and its transliteration into Persian as چفیه might be properly said to be the most instrumental in disrupting the source narrative and reconstructing a new narrative, integrated into it, and consequently resulting in frame ambiguity. Kaffiyeh is a traditional Middle Eastern headdress fashioned from a square scarf and commonly found in arid regions to provide protection from sunburn and sand. But it has become an iconic symbol since its adoption by some key historical figures or some organizations like Yasser Arafat or Hezbollah. In Iran, since its extensive usage by Iranian infantrymen in the Iran-Iraq War, it has been transformed into a politically loaded icon as well. It is now often worn to express support for Shi'a Political parties. The word the translator has used to replace the Arabic word transliterated into English is exactly the word used in the above mentioned context in Iran, without the slightest effort to strip it off such a load. Using it has created great opportunity for the translator to further assimilating the 'self' of the main text with that of the target language against the 'other' which, too, is supposed to be against both the main text and the translated one.

The last but perhaps the clearest case to mention in this article, where the translator appears to be far less sympathetic with the narratives of the 'other' than the writer is, is references of the main text to the holocaust which have been omitted entirely from the translated text.

She had been a young girl of seventeen, frightened and weak, when Allied soldiers had liberated her camp. Her entire family had been murdered during the holocaust of World War Two. The irony, which sank its bitter fangs into my mind, was that Mama, the mother who gave birth to David, also survived a slaughter that claimed nearly her entire family. Only the latter occurred because of the former, underscoring for me the inescapable truth that Palestinians paid

the price for the Jewish holocaust. Jews killed my mother's family because Germans had killed Jolanta's (213).

وقتی متفقین اردوگاه اونا رو آزاد کردن، جولانتا یه دختر هفده ساله تنها و ضعیف و وحشتزده بود. همه ی خونوادش مرده بودن و فقط اون تونسته بود فرار کنه. طنز تلخی منو گزید. یادم افتاد اون یکی مادر دیوید هم از کشتاری جون سالم به در برده بود که بقیه خانواده اش رو کشت. واقعیت انکارناپذیر این بود که فلسطینیا به یهودیا پناه داده بودن و یهودیا فلسطینیا رو میکشتن...

[backtranslation: when the Allied liberated their camp, Jolanta was a frightened and weak girl of seventeen, all alone. All of her family had died and she was the only one able to escape. The irony was biting me: I remembered that the other mom of David had also survived a slaughter that killed the rest of her family. The inescapable truth was that Palestinians offered the Jews refuge, and in return, the Jews were killing Palestinians...]

Or where Ari's family is being introduced, the main text goes as:

The limping boy with only one friend, taken to an Arab village to breathe fresh air, unpolluted by the awful memories of his parents, forever damaged by concentration camps no matter how much they tried to pick up the pieces of their lives (224).

پسر لنگی که فقط یه دوست داشت، دوستی که اونو به روستای عربا برد تا دور از پدر و مادرش و هوایی که با خاطراتشون مسموم شده بود، توی هوای بکر و تازه نفس بکشه.

[backtranslation: The limping boy with only one friend who took him to a village of the Arabs to breathe fresh air, away from his parents and the air empoisoned by their memories.]

These excerpts of the English main text amount to an open acknowledgment of the historical-causal entailment (to borrow Bruner's term defining how narrative accrual is achieved, 1991: 19) claiming the holocaust to be a reason behind the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The translation, seemingly in accord with the recurrent claim in the target language society recognizing such claims as bogus, once more cannot afford to allocate the space the writer has allocated to the narratives, or in this case meta-narratives, of the 'other' to them. The reference to the camps held by Nazis has been one of the many omissions of this type.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper, treating both the main English text and its Persian translation as local narratives, tries to show how the shape of our knowledge of the world is determined across different texts and media that help realize bigger narratives. It focuses on the Persian translation of *Mornings in Jenin* by

Susan Abulhawa that is presented to the Persian readership embedded in the Iranian society where the Palestinian narrative of the conflict between Israel and Palestine serves certain political ends supported by the state. Elaborating many divergent points between the two texts particularly in terms of the representation of the other, this paper seeks to exemplify the inadequacy of the traditional preoccupation with accuracy and equivalence in translation discussions. The Persian text seems to offer sufficient proof that the translator's textual and paratextual choices, for instance her omissions or decisions about where or how to gloss which words, cannot be considered simplistically linguistic as they link to other events and texts that subscribe to certain narratives that, in turn, have the power to mediate and construct reality differently in different regions of the world.

Following the narrative theory of Mona Baker, the study also tries not to ignore the narrative position of the Palestinian-American writer. It explains what gaze from that position the writer tries to adopt toward the 'other' in the conflict she is afflicted by, while the translated text does not seem to approve of adopting the same gaze: the wall between 'self' and 'other' which is tried to be gnawed at by the author to let her global audience hear her narrative has been cemented by the translator, unable to afford the trust in such minglings. Such locatedness of every creator of every text that inevitably propels a bigger narrative is also hinted at in this paper when this paper considers itself as a local narrative as well to recognize the complexity of human choices and their significance.

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