Framing the history of Terroristic movements in the Translation of "The Looming Tower" into Arabic.

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Abstract

This paper attempts to examine the role of reframing in narration in light of the narrative theory developed by Mona Baker (2006). It applies this theory to study the narrative of the history of terrorist movements. To achieve this, it investigates the Arabic translation of the book The Looming Tower by Lawrence Wright to trace the reframing tools that the translator has used. The study mainly focuses on the translator's role in mediating political conflicts and how they use reframing tools to re-narrate the original narrative. After investigation, it is evident that the target text employs textual and paratextual framing to convey the main message of the source text.

Keywords: Narrative Theory, Narration, Framing, Mona Baker, political conflicts, terroristic movements, The Looming Tower.

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1-Introduction

How we understand and perceive the world around us depends on the narrative(s), as narratives are stories through which we interpret and form opinions about the world. According to Baker (2006), narrative is not an optional mode of communication but the principal way we experience the world; it constitutes rather than merely represents reality. Narratives are diffuse—not necessarily articulated in a single text or stretch of language—and are discursively elaborated conceptually but may also be conveyed through visual means.

Narrative is an important tool that helps us observe the world around us. Translation is considered a form of re-narration of the original narrative. Baker's (2006) work could be considered the first study of translation and conflict (Sahi & Reza, 2014). It provides a valuable lens through which to examine how translation shapes and sometimes alters narratives to align with specific ideological, cultural, or political frameworks. Baker addressed the impact of translation as re-narration in mediating political conflicts, using the example of the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), an organization established by Western actors to translate selective narratives. She demonstrated how narration and framing tools can be used for specific purposes, categorizing narratives into four types: personal, public, conceptual, and meta. She also highlighted key features of narrative: temporality, selective appropriation, relationality, and causal emplotment, defining each in detail.

This research applies Baker's (2006) narrative theory to The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11 (Wright, 2006) and its Arabic translation. Wright's meticulously

researched account traces the rise of Al-Qaeda and the events leading to the September 11 attacks, offering a Western perspective on Islamic extremism, U.S. intelligence failures, and geopolitical tensions. Given the sensitive subject matter, the Arabic translation inevitably engages in narrative reframing—whether through selective appropriation, temporal/spatial framing, or repositioning of participants—as outlined by Baker (2006). This study investigates how the Arabic translation negotiates the original narrative, examining potential shifts in emphasis, omissions of contentious details, or recontextualization to align with target-audience expectations and sensitivities.

By applying Baker's (2006) narrative theory, this research aims to reveal how translation functions not merely as linguistic transfer but as narrative (re)construction, influencing perceptions of historical and political events across cultures. The analysis focuses on key strategies such as framing, selective appropriation, and reframing, exploring how these techniques reinforce or challenge dominant discourses in source and target cultures. Ultimately, this study contributes to broader discussions on translation's role in mediating conflict narratives and shaping cross-cultural understanding.

1.1 Objectives

This paper aims to explore the significant and dynamic role that translation and translators play in mediating, shaping, and framing political conflicts, particularly those involving terrorism, through the lens of narrative theory as proposed by Mona Baker. Translation is not merely a neutral act of transferring meaning from one language to another; rather, it is a powerful tool that can influence perceptions, construct

narratives, and even alter the course of political discourse. Translators, as active participants in this process, often make deliberate choices that can either amplify or mitigate the intensity of conflicts, especially in the context of terrorism, where language and representation are deeply intertwined with power, ideology, and identity.

The paper will delve into the various strategies employed by translators when rendering the source text, examining how these strategies contribute to the construction of narratives surrounding political and terroristic conflicts. For instance, translators may choose to emphasize certain aspects of the source text, downplay others, or even reframe the narrative altogether to align with specific ideological or cultural perspectives. These strategies can include lexical choices, tone modulation, omission, addition, or the use of culturally specific references, all of which can significantly impact how the target audience perceives the conflict.

By analyzing these translation strategies, the paper seeks to shed light on the broader implications of translation in the context of political and terrorist conflicts. It will highlight how translators, as cultural and linguistic mediators, wield considerable influence in shaping public opinion—fostering understanding or, conversely, perpetuating misunderstandings and divisions. Ultimately, the paper underscores the importance of recognizing translation as a form of narrative intervention, where the translator's choices can have far-reaching consequences in political and social discourse.

1.2 Research questions

The paper seeks to address the following key questions:

1- What role do translations and translators play in mediating and -influencing political conflicts?

2- What kinds of narratives are present in both the source and target texts, and how do they differ or align?

3-What specific strategies has the translator employed to convey the message, particularly through the framework of narrative theory?

By exploring these questions, the paper aims to provide a deeper understanding of how translation functions as a tool for shaping narratives, particularly in the context of political conflicts, and how translators actively participate in this process through their strategic choices.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Narrative Theory in Translation

Mona Baker's (2006) work on narrative theory, particularly as outlined in her book Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account, represents a significant contribution to translation studies. Baker applies narrative theory to demonstrate how translation functions not merely as a linguistic act but also as a social and political one—deeply embedded in power dynamics and cultural contexts. She argues that translators actively

participate in constructing narratives, thereby influencing perceptions of events, individuals, and groups.

Baker views narratives as stories that individuals and societies tell to make sense of the world. These narratives are not neutral; they are shaped by power relations and cultural norms. Translators, as mediators, play a crucial role in how these narratives are transmitted across languages and cultures. Translators can "frame" or "reframe" narratives by selecting certain words, phrases, or cultural references that align with specific ideologies or perspectives. This process can either reinforce or challenge existing narratives. Framing and reframing are the two main concepts of the narrative theory developed by Baker.

Mona Baker (2006), in her work Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account, shifts the focus to how narratives are framed in translation, emphasizing the active role of translators in shaping and reshaping stories. Drawing on her typology of narratives—personal, public, professional, and meta-narratives—and the key features of narratives (temporality, relationality, selective appropriation, and causal employment), Baker explores how translators influence the way narratives are perceived across cultures. She classifies narratives into several types, each with distinct characteristics and implications for translation.

Personal Narratives: These are individual stories that reflect personal experiences, emotions, and perspectives. Translators must carefully navigate the nuances of voice and subjectivity to ensure the authenticity of the narrative is preserved while making it accessible to the target audience. Public Narratives: These are broader stories shared by

communities, institutions, or nations. They often reflect collective identities, values, and historical events. Translators must consider the cultural and political context of these narratives to ensure they resonate with the target audience without distorting their original meaning. Conceptual Narratives: These narratives are specific to particular fields or professions, such as legal, medical, or scientific discourses. Translators must have a deep understanding of the specialized terminology and conventions of these fields to accurately convey the narrative. Finally, Meta-narratives: These are overarching narratives that provide a framework for understanding the world, such as religious, ideological, or philosophical narratives. Translators must be aware of how these meta-narratives influence the reception of a text and how they might be interpreted differently in the target culture.

According to Baker (2006) there are four features of narratives, they are crucial for understanding how narratives are framed in translation.

1-Temporality: Narratives are situated in specific temporal contexts, and translators must consider how is time represented and perceived in both the source and target cultures.

2-Relationality: Narratives are interconnected, and translators must be aware of how a text relates to other texts and discourses in both the source and target cultures.

3-Selective Appropriation: Translators choose which elements of a narrative to emphasize or downplay, influencing how the narrative is received by the target audience.

4-Causal Emplotment: This involves constructing cause-and-effect relationships within a narrative. Translators can

discover how events are linked, shaping the audience's understanding of the narrative's logic.

By classifying narratives into these types and emphasizing their features, Baker provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex role of translators in framing and reframing narratives. This approach underscores the ethical and political dimensions of translation, highlighting the translator's active role in mediating and shaping political conflicts across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

2.2 Previous studies

Since Mona Baker developed narrative theory, numerous scholars and researchers have utilized this framework in various academic papers and dissertations. The application of narrative theory began to gain traction in 2008 when Baldo pioneered its use in his study, *"Translation as Re-Narration in Canadian-Italian Writing."* In this work, Baldo examines a trilogy of novels by Italian-Canadian author Nino Ricci, focusing on the novelist's use of code-switching between English, standard Italian, and dialect (Harding, 2009). This marked one of the earliest applications of narrative theory to analyze how language and translation contribute to the construction of cultural and literary narratives.

In 2009, several researchers expanded the application of narrative theory. For instance, Harding (2009) employed this theoretical framework in her thesis, News as Narratives: Reporting and Translating the 2004 Beslan Hostage Crisis. Her study examines the 2004 hostage crisis in Beslan, Russia—where armed militants seized a school in North Ossetia-Alania—through an analysis of reporting across three Russian and English news websites. This case study offers an in-depth

examination of online media narratives surrounding this specific event.

Harding's (2009) work not only analyzes crisis narratives but also develops a methodological framework applicable to media reporting of violent, politically motivated events. The Beslan crisis was selected due to its distinctive characteristics, which provide rich material for investigating media narrative construction. Significantly, Harding's study does not seek to establish factual accuracy ("what happened") but rather explores the narratives constructed about these events. This approach aligns with Baker's (2006) narrative theory, particularly in its focus on eyewitness accounts as crucial narrative components.

Similarly, Al-Herthani applied narrative theory in his thesis, *"Edward Said in Arabic: Narrativity and Paratextual Framing."* Drawing on Gérard Genette's concepts of paratextual materials (Genette, 1991, 1997), Al-Herthani examines the legacy of Palestinian-American cultural theorist Edward Said, focusing on the translation of his works into Arabic and the re-narration of these works by various Arab institutions and mediators, including academia, media, publishing houses, intellectuals, writers, and translators. His study highlights the role of paratextual elements—such as introductions, footnotes, and editorial comments—in framing and re-framing Said's ideas within the Arabic context (Harding, 2009, p. 288).

Al-Sharif (2009) applied narrative theory to examine how translated Arabic texts influence cultural and political discourses. Through her analysis of the Middle East Media

Research Institute's (MEMRI) online reports, she demonstrates how the organization employs translation as a framing device—particularly through dehumanizing and reductionist portrayals of Palestinians and Palestinian women. Her research reveals translation's potential as a tool for narrative manipulation and perceptual influence.

McDonoughh (2009) utilized narrative theory to study a catalog of translated non-fiction works about Quebec nationalism, independence movements, and the 1980 and 1995 referenda. His work examines how these texts have been reframed by various agents to serve different ideological or political purposes, offering a fresh perspective on the role of translation in shaping historical and political narratives.

Boéri (2009) adopted a socio-narrative approach to investigate the workings of Babels, an international network of volunteer translators and interpreters known for its highly politicized community. Her study analyzes online data posted by Babels members on their forum, as well as data published by the *Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence* (AIIC), to explore how Babels re-narrates its mission and activities within the broader context of political and social activism (Harding, 2009, p. 289).

In 2010, Ayoub applied narrative theory in her doctoral dissertation, Framing Translated and Adapted Children's Literature in the Kilani Project: A Narrative Perspective. Her study examines Egyptian author Kāmil al-Kilānī's collection of rewritten and translated children's stories, analyzing multiple framing strategies including:

Paratextual elements: introductions, titles, footnotes, cover blurbs, poems, and glossaries. Intratextual strategies: bracketed glossing, vocalization, headings/subheadings, Qur'anic and Hadith references, and textual additions/deletions.

Ayoub's (2010) research demonstrates how narrative theory elucidates the cultural and ideological reframing occurring in translated children's literature, particularly through these deliberate textual interventions.

3 Methodology

3.1 Data

The research excerpts are from the translation of the book "The looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11" by the American author Lawrence Wright.

The Looming Tower offers a sweeping and meticulously researched account of the events leading up to 9/11, providing a groundbreaking exploration of the individuals, ideologies, terrorist strategies, and intelligence failures that paved the way for the attacks on America. Lawrence Wright's extraordinary work is the product of five years of in-depth research and hundreds of interviews conducted across multiple countries, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sudan, and several Western nations.

At the heart of the book is an intimate and insightful portrayal of four key figures: al-Qaeda leaders Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, FBI counterterrorism chief John O'Neill, and former Saudi intelligence head Prince Turki al-Faisal. Through their interconnected lives, Wright unravels the complex forces that shaped modern Islamist extremism, the rise of al-Qaeda, and the series of failures that allowed the 9/11 attacks to occur. The narrative delves into the radicalization of Zawahiri and bin Laden, the evolution of al-Qaeda from a fledgling group to a global terrorist network, O'Neill's

relentless but ultimately thwarted efforts to combat the threat, and Prince Turki's shifting relationship with bin Laden from ally to adversary.

Wright also exposes the critical lapses in communication and coordination among U.S. intelligence agencies—such as the FBI, CIA, and NSA—that might have averted the tragedy. By weaving together personal stories, historical context, and behind-the-scenes details, The Looming Tower provides a vivid and comprehensive understanding of the path to 9/11. From Sayyid Qutb's disillusionment with Western culture in 1940s America to the inner workings of al-Qaeda's compounds and the bureaucratic rivalries within U.S. intelligence, the book offers a richly layered narrative.

The book was translated by Heba Naguib Maghraby, she graduated from faculty of Al-Alsun Ain Shams University. She works as Translation coordinator at Hindawi for Education and culture. She translated many books like The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11; Rama Revealed; and Dreams from My Father: Barack Obama (Story of Race and Inheritance) and many others.

3.2 Procedures of Data Analysis

The paper applies narrative theory developed by Mona Baker in 2006 in her book "Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account". This book can be considered as one of the first studies on translation and conflict. She elaborates on translation during conflict and on how different countries use various features of narrativity for their own purposes. (Shahi & Reza 2014).

This paper adopts a qualitative research design, focusing on textual analysis to examine the translation of The Looming Tower. The analysis is based on Mona Baker's narrative theory, which emphasizes the role of translation in shaping and reframing narratives tackling political conflicts. The source text (English) and the target text (translated version in Arabic) are compared to identify shifts, additions, omissions, and other strategies employed by the translator.

The primary data consists of Lawrence Wright's The Looming Tower (source text) and its translated version (Al broj el Moshayda) (target text). The translated text will be selected based on its availability and relevance to the study. It also presents the conflict between the Western and the Arab, Muslim communities. The book is viral and reaches a wide range of global audiences and has won a Pulitzer Prize for general non-fiction books.

The paper applies Baker's concepts of narrative framing, including:

1-Temporal and Spatial Framing: How time and space are reconstructed in the translation.

2- Selective Appropriation: The inclusion or exclusion of specific details to shape the narrative.

3- Labeling: The use of specific terms or labels to influence the perception of characters or events.

4-Positioning: How the translator positions the reader in relation to the narrative, characters, and events.

The analysis will also focus on how the translator reframes the narrative to align with the cultural, political, or ideological context of the target audience.

The source and target texts will be analyzed side by side to identify instances of reframing. Specific attention will be paid to:

Euphemism and Dysphemism: How sensitive or controversial topics are softened or intensified in the translation.

Cultural Adaptation: How cultural references, idioms, and metaphors are adapted for the target audience.

Ideological Shifts: Whether the translator introduces or alters ideological perspectives in the target text. The analysis will examine how the translator uses framing strategies to influence the reader's interpretation of the narrative.

Specific excerpts from the target and source texts that deal with sensitive or controversial topics (e.g., terrorism, political conflict, cultural differences) will be selected for in-depth analysis. These passages will be analyzed to identify how the translator reframes the narrative to suit the target audience's cultural and ideological context and to deliver the message in a narrative about political conflict.

The analysis will strive to accurately represent the translator's choices without imposing undue bias.

4. Data Analysis

By examining the Source Text (ST) and the Target Text (TT), we can identify an ontological narrative, particularly in sections that recount the lives of individuals who founded one of the most notorious terrorist organizations in modern history, Al-Qaeda. The first chapter, titled "The Martyr," serves as an ontological narrative as it delves into the biography of Sayyed Qutub. The author gathered insights into Qutub's life through meetings with his brother, as referenced in the ST. Subsequent

chapters feature personal narratives through quotes from prominent figures such as Bin Laden, Zawahiri, Azzam, and Abu Jandal, among others. Additionally, the text includes the biography of John O'Neill, the FBI's counterterrorism chief, and quotes from Prince Turki al-Faisal, the former head of Saudi intelligence. Both the ST and TT blend various narrative types. For instance, the narrative of Ayman al-Zawahiri, a central figure in Al-Qaeda, is deeply intertwined with his ideological beliefs. A key quote that encapsulates his ontological narrative is "Zawahiri's life was a testament to the power of an idea. He had sacrificed everything—his family, his career, his freedom—for the sake of jihad. It was not just a cause for him; it was his identity."

This shows how Zawahiri's personal narrative is inextricably linked to his ideological dedication, influencing his actions and worldview. It exemplifies the concept of ontological narrative, where an individual's self-concept is shaped by their experiences and the stories they construct about themselves.

The ST and TT focus on the 9/11 attacks, the individuals involved, and the motivations behind them. This event captured global attention and dominated news and media coverage at the time. As Baker notes, the September 11 attacks represent a recent example of a public narrative, as they resonate on a global scale and are embedded in collective memory.

In the "Prologue" on page 4, there is a quote from Bin Laden threatening the USA, dating back to 1996 when he first

declared war on the USA from a cave in Afghanistan. He stated,

"Terrorizing you, while you are carrying arms in our land, is a legitimate right and a moral obligation."

This was translated into Arabic as:

"إن إرهابنا لكم، وأنتم تحملون السلاح على أرضنا، هو أمر واجب شرعاً ومطلوب عقلاً"

In this personal narrative, the author translated Bin Laden's original Arabic quote, choosing the word "moral" instead of "mind" (عقلاً) to convey the intended meaning. The original Arabic term suggests that the act is rooted in a mindset or reasoning rather than ethics, as Islamic and Arabic cultural norms dictate that war cannot be declared on a country or group unless they have harmed or initiated aggression against one's own people or land. By using "moral," the author may have aimed to highlight that Bin Laden's declaration of war was a product of his personal mindset and ideology rather than a universally accepted ethical stance. The translator retained the original Arabic quote from Bin Laden.

The original statement presents "terrorizing" as both a "legitimate right" and a "moral obligation" when directed against armed individuals in "our land." This framing portrays the speaker's actions as justified, invoking ideas of self-defense, sovereignty, and morality. In the translation, the phrase "إرهابنا لكم" (our terrorizing of you) directly mirrors "terrorizing you," but the inclusion of the possessive pronoun "نا" (our) adds a collective dimension, emphasizing group identity and solidarity. This aligns with the theme of collective resistance or defense.

The phrase "أرضنا على" (on our land) underscores the theme of territorial sovereignty, a significant concept in many Arabic-speaking contexts, particularly in narratives of resistance against foreign occupation or intervention. The translation's reframing likely resonates more profoundly with an Arabic-speaking audience due to its use of culturally and religiously charged language. This could evoke stronger emotional and ideological reactions, reinforcing the narrative of resistance and moral duty.

In the same section and within the same quote attributed to Bin Laden, he directs threats toward the then US Secretary of Defense, William Perry. He states:

"I say to you, William, that: These youths love death as you love life…. These youths will not ask you for explanations. They will sing out that there is nothing between us that needs to be explained, there is only killing and neck-smiting."

This was translated into Arabic as:

وأقول لك يا ويليام إن هؤلاء الشباب يحبون الموت كما تحبون الحياة...وهؤلاء الشباب لن يسألوك تفسيراً، وسيكون العتاب لكم على لسان كل واحد منهم يقول: ليس بيني وبينكم من عتاب سوى طعن الكلى وضرب الرقاب" "

As evident, the translator rendered the first part of the quote with high fidelity. Here, the author of the source text (ST) acted as a translator by framing Bin Laden's words, and the translator reframed the back-translation to align with Bin Laden's original statement. In this section, Bin Laden contrasts the jihadists' embrace of martyrdom and love of death with the Western attachment to life. The translator, however, omitted certain elements and included a poetic reference from Bin Laden's speech.

The second part of the quote begins with “they will sing out….” The term “sing out,” as defined by the Cambridge Dictionary, means “to shout out or call out.” In the ST, the author uses this phrase to replace the Arabic word “/ʿitābuⁿ/” (blame or reprimand), conveying Bin Laden’s reproach toward the US for its actions in Arab countries. In this section, the translator employed omission and compensation as reframing strategies to achieve her purpose, aiming to convey to the Arabic audience that Bin Laden’s threats were a form of reprimand for US policies in the Arab world.

Additionally, the author substitutes the word “killing” with “kidney stabbing,” a phrase that signifies immediate death, as stabbing the kidneys is medically known to cause rapid fatality. The translation employs more culturally specific and graphic language, likely to evoke a stronger emotional response from an Arabic-speaking audience. Phrases like "طعن الكلى" (stabbing kidneys) and "ضرب الرقاب" (striking necks) intensify the imagery of violence and brutality.

The translator frames the narrative in a way that amplifies the threat and ideological divide. By using vivid, culturally resonant language, she underscores the themes of martyrdom and violence central to Bin Laden’s message. This approach reinforces the opposition between Western values—such as the love of life and dialogue—and the jihadist ideology of martyrdom and violence, aligning with Bin Laden’s broader narrative of a “clash of civilizations.” The translation also maintains the immediacy and inevitability of violence, suggesting that conflict is not only necessary but also imminent, consistent with Bin Laden’s portrayal of an existential struggle between Islam and the West.

On pg. 288 in the TT the translator has used semantic ambiguity while translating the word “Sheriff” which is found in the ST on pg.272 when John O’Neil was talking to one of his friends:

“Jhon, you’ve got this town weird,” O’Neil replied, “what’s the point of being sheriff if you can’t act like one?”

And it was translated into:

“يبدو أنك قد أحكمت قبضتك على هذه المدينة يا جون “فأجابه أونيل” وما فائدة أن تكون الشريف في بلدة إذا لم تستطع التصرف كشريف حقيقي؟! “

In the source text (ST), the word “Sheriff” carries specific cultural and contextual connotations. In Western contexts, a “Sheriff” is a law enforcement officer with authority over a town or county, often associated with a sense of duty, power, and moral responsibility.

In the target text (TT), the translator has chosen to use the word "الشريف" (al-sharif), which in Arabic can mean “noble,” “honorable,” or “virtuous.” While this translation captures a sense of moral authority, it does not explicitly convey the institutional or legal role of a “Sheriff.” This creates semantic ambiguity because the reader may interpret “الشريف” as a moral descriptor rather than a specific job title. This choice reframes the narrative by shifting the focus from John O’Neil’s institutional role as a law enforcer to his personal character as a “noble” or “honorable” figure. This reframing could alter the reader’s understanding of the character’s authority and responsibilities within the story.

The translator’s choice may reflect an attempt to adapt the concept of a “Sheriff” to a cultural context where such a role

does not exist or is not widely understood. By using "الشريف", the translator invokes a more universally recognizable concept of honor and nobility.

However, this adaptation comes at the cost of losing the specific institutional and cultural connotations of the word "Sheriff." This could affect the reader's understanding of the setting and the power dynamics within the story.

According to Mona Baker, translators actively participate in shaping narratives through their choices. By reframing "Sheriff" as "الشريف", the translator alters the narrative's emphasis on institutional authority and replaces it with a focus on personal morality.

This shift could influence how readers perceive the central conflict in the story. If the narrative revolves around John's struggle to fulfill his role as a Sheriff, the translation may dilute this conflict by framing it as a personal rather than professional dilemma.

The author mentioned on p342 the following:

"The targets were always Americans, either U.S. soldiers or vehicles, but there were other "enemies of Islam," according to the handwritten notes of a student in an al-Qaeda ideology class:

1. Heretics (the Mubaraks of the world)
2- Shiites
3- America
4- Israel"

It was translated on p 359 into:

"وكانت الأهداف دائماً؛ إما جنود أو مركبات. ولكن طبقاً لما ورد في الملاحظات التي دونها أحد الطلاب بخط يدخ في إحدى المحاضرات التي يدرسون

فيها مذهب القاعدة الفكري، فقد كانت الفئة التي يطلق عليها "أعداء الإسلام" تشمل أيضاً:

١- المرتدين (أمثال بعض حكام العالم)

٢- الشيعة

٣- أمريكا

٤- إسرائيل

The translation into Arabic reframes the original narrative in subtle but significant ways, which can be analyzed using Baker's concept of reframing, the translation generalizes the category of "heretics" by replacing "the Mubaraks of the world" with "some rulers of the world." This reframing removes the specific reference to Mubarak (a symbol of secular Arab authoritarianism) and broadens the category to include any rulers who might be deemed heretical. This could be seen as an attempt to make the narrative more universally applicable or to avoid singling out a specific political figure.

The translation retains the core narrative of al-Qaeda's ideology but adjusts the framing to fit the linguistic and cultural context of the Arabic-speaking audience. The phrase "أعداء الإسلام" (enemies of Islam) is a direct translation, but the surrounding context (e.g., the generalization of heretics) subtly shifts the emphasis. By omitting the specific reference to Mubarak, the translation loses some of the original text's contextual and political nuance. This could be seen as a form of reframing that makes the narrative less tied to a specific historical or political moment and more abstract.

The translation maintains the ideological consistency of the original narrative but adjusts its framing to resonate with the target audience. This is consistent with Baker's argument that translators often reframe narratives to align with the cultural and ideological expectations of their audience. Moreover, the generalization of "heretics" removes a layer of specificity that might be important for understanding the historical and political

context of al-Qaeda's ideology. This could be seen as a form of narrative mediation that simplifies the original text. The translation also reinforces the binary opposition between "Islam" and its "enemies," which is central to al-Qaeda's ideological narrative. This suggests that the translator has prioritized maintaining the ideological framework of the original text.

The translator employed various techniques to reinterpret the narrative of Al-Qaeda's history. On page 203 of the source text, the author describes Zawahiri's arrival in Switzerland as follows:

“He came from Bern, Switzerland, where al-jihad maintained a safe house. (Zawahiri’s uncle was a diplomat in Switzerland).”

In the translation, the translator introduced ambiguity by rendering this passage as:

“وقد جاء من مدينة بيرن في سويسرا حيث كان لدى الجهاد منزل آمن هناك، (وكان أحد أقرباء الظواهري دبلوماسياً في سويسرا). “

Translators frequently encounter difficulties when handling culturally specific terms, concepts, or relationships that lack direct equivalents in the target language or culture. In such instances, strategies like ambiguity are often used to bridge these differences while preserving the text's integrity. Here, the translator chose to render the word “uncle” as “one of his relatives,” which introduces ambiguity. In Arabic, the term “uncle” is specific, referring to either a paternal uncle (عم) or a maternal uncle (خال), each carrying distinct cultural significance. This specificity does not exist in English, where “uncle” is a more general term.

By opting for “one of his relatives,” the translator avoided specifying the exact familial relationship, leaving it open to

interpretation. This decision reflects the challenges of navigating cultural differences, as the translator sought to prevent potential inaccuracies or unintended cultural implications. In Arabic culture, the distinction between paternal and maternal uncles is meaningful, but this nuance is absent in English. By maintaining vagueness, the translator allowed readers to infer the relationship based on their own cultural context, rather than imposing a specific interpretation that might not align with the source material. This approach aligns with Baker's notion that translators must act as mediators between different cultural frameworks, ensuring that the translation remains faithful to the original while accommodating the target audience's cultural perspective.

In Chapter 4, on page 100 of the source text, the author discusses the global perception of Saudi Arabia's people following the first oil boom, describing them in highly critical terms:

"The spendthrift Saudi became a worldwide stereotype of greed, gluttony, corruption, hypocrisy, and—even more offensive to his dignity—a figure of fun. The sheer waste of fortunes at the gaming tables, the drinking, the whoring, the avarice of the Saudi women with their silver minks and their shopping bags on the Champs-Elysees, the casual buying of jewels that could capsize national economies, amused a world that was also shaken by the prospect of a future in which the Saudis owned practically everything."

However, in the translation on page 112, the translator employs euphemism and omission to soften the tone:

"وأصبح المواطن السعودي نموذجاً عالمياً للإسراف، بل نموذجاً لأكثر شيء قد يسئ إلى كرامته، نموذجاً للهو والعبث. ولقد كانت الأموال الطائلة التي تبدد على المسرات، وجشع النساء وهن يرتدين فراء المنك فضي اللون ويحملن حقائب التسوق في

الشانزليزيه، والشراء العابر للمجوهرات التي يمكن أن تقلب اقتصاد بلاد بأكملها رأساً على عقب، مصدر تسلية للعالم الذي اهتز بشدة أيضاً من توقع مستقبل يمتلك فيه السعوديون عملياً كل شيء."

As evident, the translator has used understatement and omitted several offensive elements present in the original text. The source text explicitly portrays Saudis as greedy, gluttonous, corrupt, and hypocritical, using strong, negative language. These harsh descriptors are absent in the translation, replaced by the milder term "الإسراف" (extravagance or wastefulness), which lacks the moral weight of the original. Additionally, the phrase "figure of fun," which implies mockery, is softened to "نموذجاً للهو والعبث" (a model of playfulness and frivolity), removing the demeaning undertone.

Furthermore, the original text includes specific examples of behavior deemed immoral, such as gambling, drinking, and promiscuity. These details are entirely omitted in the translation, which instead generalizes the behavior as " الأموال الطائلة التي تبدد على المسرات " (the vast sums of money wasted on pleasures). The critique of Saudi women's greed and conspicuous consumption is also toned down. While the translation retains references to shopping and luxury, such as " فراء المنك فضي اللون" (silver minks) and "حقائبالتسوق " (shopping bags), it omits the judgmental term "avarice" (جشع in Arabic), focusing instead on the act of shopping rather than moralizing about it.

The translator appears to have deliberately avoided including these insults to protect the sensibilities of Arab readers. By omitting or softening the offensive elements, the translator likely aimed to prevent reinforcing negative stereotypes about Saudis and to align with the cultural expectations of the Arabic-speaking audience. This approach results in a rewritten narrative that

presents a less critical and more neutral depiction of Saudi behavior during the oil boom, reflecting the translator's effort to mediate between the source text's harsh tone and the target audience's cultural sensitivities.

When discussing the corruption within the royal family, particularly King Fahd and his son Mohammed, the author highlighted that "other Saudi princes eagerly emulated his behavior, especially King Fahd's son Mohammed, who, according to British court documents, accepted over $1 billion in bribes. This money was reportedly spent on 'prostitutes, pornography, a fleet of more than 100 high-performance cars, palaces in Cannes and Geneva, and luxuries such as powerboats, chartered jets, ski chalets, and jewelry.'"

On page 180 of the translated text, this passage was rendered as:
"وبالطبع اتبع الأمراء السعوديون خطاه بحماسة، وخاصة الأمير محمد ابن الملك فهد الذى أنفق طبقاً لمستندات المحكمة البريطانية مليار دولار على الملذات حيث اشتري أكثر من مائة سيارة حديثة، وقصور في مدينتي كان وجنيف، بالإضافة إلى شراء الزوارق الآلية وتأجير الطائرات وشراء الشاليهات في مناطق التزلج على الجليد واقتناء المجوهرات." ".

Here, the translator employed understatement and omission. Specifically, the terms "whores" and "pornography" were left out and replaced with the single, more neutral word "ملذات" (pleasures). This choice reflects a deliberate softening of the language, likely to avoid offending Arab readers, particularly Saudis, who might view such explicit terms as insulting or accusatory. Additionally, the word "bribes" was omitted without any compensatory phrasing.

In the original text, there is a clear cause-and-effect relationship: the prince accepted bribes and then spent the money on morally questionable and extravagant luxuries, painting a vivid picture of corruption and excess. The Arabic translation, while preserving the causal link between bribes and lavish spending, dilutes the narrative by omitting morally charged details. This shifts the focus from moral decay to material excess, altering the overall tone and impact of the narrative.

5.Findings and conclusion

Narrative Theory, as proposed by Baker, has significantly enhanced our understanding of how translation is utilized in the context of political conflicts and how it can be employed to steer public opinion toward specific agendas. As previously noted, the translator functions much like a painter, aiming to create a comprehensive depiction of the source text to communicate its meaning, along with its underlying messages, to readers from diverse cultural backgrounds. The translator's role extends beyond merely conveying messages; it also involves the transfer of culture, which must align with the cultural context of the target audience.

Translation and translators hold a pivotal role in mediating political conflicts, often acting as eyewitnesses to these events. They possess the ability to influence their audience in various ways, making them key players in shaping perceptions and responses to political disputes. Translators can guide their audience toward feelings of complete hatred, sympathy, or support. They have the power to direct public sentiment to either rally behind or oppose a particular party, group, or individual in a position of authority (Baker, 2006). This influential capacity

underscores why translators are regarded as one of the primary factors in mediating political conflicts.

The source text (ST) reinforces the stereotype of Islam and Muslims as being associated with terrorism by narrating the life and ideologies of Sayyed Qutub, particularly his views on Western citizens. It also delves into the life of Osama Bin Laden, detailing his involvement in conflicts in Pakistan and Afghanistan against the Soviet Union under the guise of defending Muslim territories. The text further recounts various embassy bombings, the innocent lives lost in these attacks, and the planning and execution of the 9/11 attacks. The author employs a chronological sequence of personal and public narratives to demonstrate how extremist groups recruit young individuals in Arab countries by exploiting religious interpretations of Islam and the idea of protecting the faith. Additionally, the ST perpetuates the notion that some Arab citizens are wasteful and extravagant, especially after the oil boom, spending their wealth on frivolous pursuits.

In contrast, the target text (TT) makes a concerted effort to avoid reinforcing these stereotypes. The translator employs selective appropriation and omission to downplay these negative portrayals. She also uses foregrounding and backgrounding techniques to emphasize certain ideas while downplaying others, thereby shaping the narrative to align with her intended message.

Both the ST and TT address various concepts, one of which is "martyrdom." The meaning of this concept varies depending on the narrative context. In the ST, it is framed within the contemporary narrative of Islamic Jihad, particularly as represented in the stories of Al-Qaeda's formation and its founders. Here, "martyrdom" is portrayed in a highly negative light, used to

propagate harmful beliefs against non-Muslims and to further specific agendas. This concept has been manipulated to justify violence and has had a lasting negative impact, effectively brainwashing millions of young individuals who embraced extremist ideologies.

The translator often adheres closely to the syntactic structures of the ST, especially in sections involving eyewitness accounts. This fidelity to the original text's structure is evident throughout the translation, particularly in parts that rely heavily on personal testimonies and direct narrations.

In conclusion, this paper analyzes the role of translation in shaping narratives of political conflict, particularly in the context of historical accounts of terrorist movements. By applying Mona Baker's narrative theory, the research demonstrates that translation is not a neutral act but a politically and ideologically charged process. Translators and other textual agents actively frame conflicts through linguistic choices, selective emphasis, and the inclusion or omission of details, thereby constructing specific narratives about terrorism, its actors, and its causes. These narratives influence public perception and contribute to broader discourses on identity and conflict.

The analysis reveals that the translator, though largely faithful to the source text, employed reframing tools and stylistic adjustments to mediate the narrative. This visibility underscores the translator's role in navigating cultural sensitivities and avoiding content that might offend the target audience. Narrative theory highlights how translation can serve various agendas, often guiding public opinion while addressing cultural differences.

The paper focuses on written texts, excluding visual elements, and emphasizes the translator's use of Baker's narrative framework to convey the history of Al-Qaeda, its members, and their ideologies. It illustrates how narrative functions as a cognitive tool, shaping perceptions of events like the 9/11 attacks. By bridging narrative theory in translation studies with its application to political conflicts, the research underscores translation's power to perpetuate or challenge dominant ideologies.

Ultimately, the findings highlight the ethical responsibility of translators and scholars in mediating sensitive narratives. The study calls for greater awareness of the political implications of translation and encourages further research into the intersection of translation, narrative, and conflict, advocating for a more reflective approach to representing political violence in translated texts.

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