THE REPRESENTATION OF MIDDLE EAST IDENTITIES IN COMICS JOURNALISM

Kenan Koçak

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
PhD in Comparative Literature

School *of* Modern Languages and Literatures
College *of* Arts
University *of* Glasgow

February 2015

ABSTRACT

The present thesis investigates comics journalism, which is a subsection within the comics medium combining sequential images and journalism, and which has met with popular acclaim in the wake of Joe Sacco's popularity in the 1990s. Since then, many examples of comics journalism have been published. However, the subject has not been comprehensively studied except for extensive research focusing on Sacco. This study aims to go some way towards filling this gap.

This thesis focuses mainly on comics war journalism covering the turmoil in the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by selecting graphic novels by two different authors from divergent backgrounds: *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* (Ayşegül at War: The Iraqi Falcon) by Kemal Gökhan Gürses from Turkey, and *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* by the Quebecois author Guy Delisle.

There are four main chapters in this thesis. The first chapter, 'Comics Journalism', analyses this hybrid genre and tries to place it with a theoretical framework. The second chapter, 'National Identities and Comics Journalism', discusses how national identities are represented in comics journalism. The third chapter examines *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* and shows how comics journalism can function as a response to a war. The fourth chapter discusses *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* and explores comics journalism as cultural reportage.

This thesis argues that the roots of comics journalism can be found in the *Glasgow Looking Glass* of 1825. While Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle together created today's understanding of comics journalism, Joe Sacco popularized the genre via his coverage of the Palestinian issue and the Bosnian War.

Another conclusion is that the September 11 attacks explain the rise of comics journalism, as output related to comics journalism has since blossomed. I will claim that comics journalism functions as an alternative to mainstream journalism and serves to show unreported news.

Additionally this thesis will find that stereotypes play a very important role in picturing the relationship between comics and national identities, and will show how Muslim stereotypes have changed in comics, especially in superhero comics, produced after 9/11. This observation leads me to argue that comics journalists, regardless of their backgrounds, use essentially the same stereotypes when they draw Middle Easterners, Arabs especially, although negative Muslim stereotypes are very rare in comics journalism.

Since religion and nationalism are undeniably intermingled in the Middle East, the comics journalists studied here employ Islam as a part of their narratives.

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have spent my best years writing this thesis, but enjoyed every moment of it. This is a product of long sleepless nights, sugarless coffees, and good music.

I have to declare my gratitude to some 'wonderful people' who supported me during these years, *onlar iyi ki varlar*!

My first thanks goes to Professor Laurence Grove, without whose professional encouragement, this study would not be possible. I will never forget his friendship and support and also our trips to Glencoe Mountain.

My gratitude goes especially to Dr Peter Davies, who has offered me more support than a PhD candidate can ever hope for. This thesis is his work as much as mine; the shortcomings that remain are my responsibility.

I also thank Betül, my better half, *hayatımın en değerli varlığı*, without whom this thesis would not have been written, and of course my family: my father Muhittin, my mother Cemile, my sister Nazan, her husband İsmet, my nephew Mirza Emin and my niece Mina Nur, my brother Hasan and his wife Mehtap. *Siz olmadan mümkün olmazdı*!

Additionally, thanks are also due to my second family: my father-in-law Hüseyin, my mother-in-law Fatma, my sister-in-law Tuğba and *bacanağım* Emre. Also my 'aunts' Arzel and Şehime. And Mehmetcan, Cüneyt, Serpil and Şeyma. *Sizinle bir aile olmak ne güzel*!

I have to include my cousins Alican, Osman, Kemal and Seher. And there are some friends I need to add here: Münevver, Gökhan, İnciser, Deniz, Ibrahim, Zafer Recep, Osman, Hande, Dilek, Seda, Sabire, Burakhan, Taner, Özgü, Abdelkader, Pedro, Defne and Pilar.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

_____

_____Kenan Koçak_____

INTRODUCTION

In a poem of 1846 William Wordsworth comments regretfully on the proliferation of illustrated publications following the appearance of *The Illustrated London News* in 1842:

Illustrated Books and Newspapers
Discourse was deemed Man's noblest attribute,
And written words the glory of his hand;
Then followed Printing with enlarged command
For thought – dominion vast and absolute
For spreading truth, and making love expand.
Now prose and verse sunk into disrepute
Must lacquey a dumb Art that best can suit
The taste of this once-intellectual Land.
A backward movement surely have we here,
From manhood, – back to childhood; for the age –
Back towards caverned life's first rude career.
Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!
Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and ear
Nothing? Heaven keep us from a lower stage![1]

What would Wordsworth say if he saw graphic novels today? Would his hostility towards these illustrated publications and their readers remain unabated? Possibly these days, as someone fascinated by social issues and current affairs, he would be very interested in comics journalism, even though he might not previously have thought that illustrations could serve as a vehicle for serious journalism as distinct from sensationalism such as that often found in *The Illustrated London News* and *The Illustrated Police News* which it inspired.

Today, nearly 170 years after Wordsworth signed his poem, illustration and text appear together and are not generally regarded as an inferior composite medium for a minority or intellectually inferior readership. As a result of a long tradition of storytelling beginning with cave paintings and continuing with Trajan's column and the Bayeux Tapestry ─ a tradition reinforced by that of satirical prints and caricatures that have been especially popular since the 18th century ─, comic books have long been part of our lives and are nowadays dignified by the term graphic novel, first used on the cover of the second

---

[1] William Wordsworth, *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth: Student's Cambridge Edition* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1904), p. 786.

issue of *The Sinister House of Secret Love* in 1972 (Fig. 1) and popularized by Will Eisner's *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories* (1978).[2]

Comics journalism, which is a subsection within the comics medium combining sequential images and journalism, met with popular acclaim in the light of the works of Sacco, who started to produce his first journalistic work *Palestine* in 1993.[3] Since then, many examples of comics journalism have been published. However, it has not been comprehensively studied except for extensive research focusing on Joe Sacco. This study aims to go some way towards filling this gap.

1. Objectives

Although the roots of comics journalism can be found in *Glasgow Looking Glass*[4] magazine (published in nineteen instalments between 11 June 1825 and 3 April 1826), which is now being accepted by some as the first modern comics, and Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle are said to be the first creators of modern comics journalism thanks to their *Real War Stories*[5], the profile of comics journalism was raised by Joe Sacco in 1993, and its course was fundamentally changed by the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001. There were only a few comics journalists before 9/11, whereas subsequently the number of people producing comics journalism throughout the world has been gradually increasing. The main source of the topics covered in comics journalism is still primarily America and its global role, although a number of other issues have begun to be covered in recent years.[6] Together with digital journalism, albeit more slowly, comics

---

[2] Joe Orlando, Len Wein and Tony Dezuniga, 'To Wed the Devil: A Graphic Novel of Gothic Terror' *The Sinister House of Secret Love*, vol 1. no.2 (New York: DC Comics, 1972); Will Eisner, *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories*, 6th ed. (New York: DC Comics, 2000 [1978]). Three other graphic novels, viz. Alan Moore and Dave Gibbon's *Watchmen* (1986-1987), Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns* (1986) and Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (1991), are thought to have contributed to making the term graphic novel well-known. However, Will Eisner's *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories* is the first proper graphic novel in that graphic novel was defined.

[3] Joe Sacco, *Palestine* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003).

[4] The whole set of *Glasgow Looking Glass* is hold in the Special Collections of the University of Glasgow.

[5] Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle, *Real War Stories 1* (Forestville, CA: Eclipse Comics, 1987); *Real War Stories 2: Citizen Soldiers* (Forestville, CA: Eclipse Comics, 1991).

[6] Some examples of comics journalism whose focus is not war or conflict are:
Lucas Adams, 'An Illustrated Account of the 1830's Mulberry Craze', in *Modernfarmer.com* <http://modernfarmer.com/2014/02/illustrated-account-1830s-mulberry-craze/> [accessed 31 August 2014]; Dan Archer and Ruth Tam, 'Different Person, Different Life: A Survivor's Account of Domestic Violence in San Fransisco', in *Sfpublicpress.org* <http://sfpublicpress.org/files/section1-4web.jpg> [accessed 31 August 2014]; Andy Warner and Jeff Severns Guntzel, 'Invisible Injury: Beyond PTSD', in *Publicinsightnetwork.org* <https://www.publicinsightnetwork.org/2013/06/21/invisible-injury-beyond-ptsd-illustrated-story/> [accessed 31 August 2014]; Audrey Quinn and Lucy Bellwood, 'Greening Islam', in *Symboliamag.tumblr.com* http://symboliamag.tumblr.com/post/87605147693/yearsoflivingdangerously-this-comic [accessed 31 August 2014]; Emi Gennis, 'What is a Juggalo', in *Symboliamag.com* <http://www.symboliamag.com/what-is-a-juggalo/> [accessed 31 August 2014]; Gregory C. Johnson,

journalism acts as an alternative to mainstream journalism by reporting events, and their background, that are unlikely to feature in mainstream journalism.

This thesis will focus mainly on comics war journalism covering the turmoil in the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict rather than other trouble spots such as the Congo, Chechnya and Afghanistan.[7] What lie at the bottom of the ongoing conflicts and problems in all these regions are conflicting national and sectarian identities. Approaches to these identities vary from one comics journalist to another depending on the culture in which they were born. They mostly diverge from visual novelists working within the superhero genre in abstaining from regarding all Muslims as responsible for the September 11 attacks, and they tend to give Muslims a voice in a manner which is not very common in the mainstream media. However, long-standing Orientalist depictions and stereotypes still persist in comics journalism today.

This thesis aims to study how Middle East national and sectarian identities are represented in comics journalism.

2. Definitions

Certain terms used throughout this thesis merit explanation from the outset. Whereas in French and Japanese the terms *bande dessinée* and *manga* respectively are used to mean the whole comics medium, in English two terms are used to denote the genre: comics and graphic novel. So as to lend the genre greater prestige and academic respectability and also possibly thereby to boost its sales figures, the latter term has been coined as an upmarket synonym for the former 'comics', which for some people either carries overtones of juvenilia and humorous strip cartoons published in children's periodicals or has connotations of the American superhero genre. Yet those who in the quest for an acceptable English equivalent to *bande dessinée* or *manga* abstain from using the term 'comics' because of its juvenile connotations are arguably like parents who never expect their children to achieve anything worthwhile and find it difficult to acknowledge their success.

'Climate Change Science 2013: Haiku', in *Slightline.org* <http://daily.sightline.org/2013/12/16/the-entire-ipcc-report-in-19-illustrated-haiku/> [accessed 31 August 2014]; Scott McCloud, 'Google Chrome: Behind the Open Source Browser Project', in *Google.com* <http://www.google.com/googlebooks/chrome/big_00.html> [accessed 31 August 2014]; Chevelin Pierre and Pharès Jerome, 'Haiti: Tents Beyond Tents', in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/29> [accessed 31 August 2014].

[7] The following works can be given as examples of comics war journalism not focusing on the Middle East: David Axe and Tim Hamilton, *Army of God: Joseph Kony's War in Central Africa* (New York: Public Affairs, 2013); Tamada and Rash, *Chroniques du proche étranger: En Tchétchénie* (Paris: Vertige Graphic, 2007).

2.1 Comics

In his celebrated book *Understanding Comics* Scott McCloud defines comics as 'plural in form, used with a singular verb, juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and / or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer'.[8] Similarly, Will Eisner, one of the most influential writers on comics before McCloud, likewise described comics as sequential art:

> In its most economical state, comics employ a series of repetitive images and recognizable symbols. When these are used again and again to convey similar ideas, they become a language – a literary form, if you will. And it is this disciplined application that creates the 'grammar' of Sequential Art.[9]

Therefore, sequentiality is arguably the most important feature of the comics medium, and throughout the thesis the term comics will be used to mean sequential art combining text and images.

2.2 Graphic Novel

Will Eisner, the significance of whose 1978 work *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories* in popularizing the term 'graphic novel' has already been mentioned and who confesses in the preface that he drew inspiration from Lynd Ward's woodcut novels in the 1930s, states in what aspects his new style is different from comic books:

- Unique, with a structure and gestalt all its own, could deal with meaningful themes.
- Needs more work than superheroes who were preventing the destruction of Earth by supervillains.
- The people and events in these narratives may be accepted as real.
- Understanding the times and the place in which these stories are set is important.
- There is a realism which requires that caricature or exaggeration accept the limitations of actuality.[10]

Though the term 'graphic novel' was adopted as a selling strategy to charm people by ostensibly presenting them with something new which did not have the juvenile connotations of comics, it attained a place in the market in the late 1980s and early 1990s

---

[8] Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994), p. 9.
[9] Will Eisner, *Comics & Sequential Art* (New York: Norton, 2008 [1985]), p. 8.
[10] Eisner, *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories*, pp. i-ii.

with the appearance of *Watchmen* (1986) by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons and Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (1991).[11] According to Roger Sabin, there are three kinds of graphic novel:

- A one-shot book-form publication involving a continuous comics narrative, of a scope that is longer than a normal comic.
- A 'pre-serialised' work, which is to say that it appears in sections in an anthology comic [like Joe Sacco's *Palestine*, which was published in nine issues between 1993 and1995] before being collected into a volume.
- A section of a comics continuity. It can be a collection of four or six or twelve or however many instalments in a single volume. [12]

After having indicated the three types of graphic novel, Sabin defines the term as follows:

A graphic novel can be a complete story or a collection of linked short stories (or any variation in between) – either published as a self-contained whole, or as a part of a longer continuity. *The key to the concept is that it has to have a thematic unity. To put it another way, a graphic novel is a comic in book form, but not all comics in book form are graphic novels* (for instance, by our definition, a collection of self-contained newspaper strips does not qualify as a graphic novel, and nor does a collection of *Superman* comics that are not part of a finite story).[13]

Following Sabin's definition, throughout the thesis the term graphic novel will be used to mean book-length visual narratives, whereas comics will be used to mean short publications that mostly appear online or in printed periodicals.

---

[11] In an interview in 2000, Alan Moore provided the following story behind the term graphic novel:
It's a marketing term. I mean, it was one that I never had any sympathy with. The term "comic" does just as well for me. The term "graphic novel" was something that was thought up in the `80s by marketing people and there was a guy called Bill Spicer who used to do a brilliant fanzine back in the sixties called *Graphic Story Magazine*. He came up with the term "graphic story". That's got something to recommend it, you know, I can see "graphic story" if you need it to call it something but the thing that happened in the mid-`80s was that there were a couple of things out there that you could just about call a novel. You could just about call *Maus* a novel, you could probably just about call *Watchmen* a novel, in terms of density, structure, size, scale, seriousness of theme, stuff like that. The problem is that "graphic novel" just came to mean "expensive comic book" and so what you'd get is people like DC Comics or Marvel comics ─ because "graphic novels" were getting some attention, they'd stick six issues of whatever worthless piece of crap they happened to be publishing lately under a glossy cover and call it *The She-Hulk Graphic Novel*, you know? It was that that I think tended to destroy any progress that comics might have made in the mid-`80s. The companies, the marketing people, who are not terribly bright individuals, they're not terribly creative, they don't really have the hang of ─ well, I mean, they really haven't got the hang of the 1970s yet, so the 21st century is a long way behind them and they think in very short term measures and consequently they were more or less to blame for destroying whatever kind of momentum the comic book picked up in the `80s by immediately using it predictably to sell a load of *Batman*, *Spiderman* shit. But no, the term "graphic novel" is not one that I'm over-fond of. It's nothing that I might carry a big crusade against, it doesn't really matter much what they're called but it's not a term that I'm very comfortable with.
Alan Moore, interviewed by Barry Kavanagh, 17 October 2000
<http://www.blather.net/articles/amoore/northampton.html> [accessed 15 August 2014].
[12] Roger Sabin, *Adult Comics: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1993) pp. 235-36.
[13] Ibid., p. 236. Italics are mine.

2.3 Comics Journalism

There are numerous terms to describe the activity of those graphic artists who choose either to portray or to act as reporters such as comics journalism, reportage drawing, graphic journalism, observational cartooning, documentary illustration, and subjective visual reportage such as that of Joe Sacco. Works of this type may nevertheless be classed as comics journalism, even if one prefers the term 'graphic novel' to designate the whole hybrid genre, which will always retain an element of its illustrative visual ancestry. In this thesis, the term comics journalism will be used as other definitions do not exactly convey the combination of journalism and sequential images.

Reportage drawing (or observational cartooning and documentary illustration) is not sequential and generally does not have speech balloons. More often than not it consists of a one-page or a splash page drawing or illustration intended to document a situation, environment, conflict or an interview. Unless it is accompanied by an explanatory written text, it does not of itself generally convey a narrative. The British illustrator George Butler, who has recently covered the conflict in Syria,[14] '(Fig. 2) and the American artist Janet Hamlin, who has published a book with sketches from the Guantanamo courts,[15] are two exponents of the art.[16] (Fig. 3)

Although the term graphic journalism is extensively used, unlike comics journalism it does not necessarily imply sequentiality. Moreover, it is all too easily confused with nineteenth-century pictorial journalism which flourished as a result of Thomas Bewick's improvements to xylography after 1777 and Alois Senefelder's invention of modern lithography in 1796.[17]

---

[14] For his website, please see: <http://www.georgebutler.org> [accessed 16 August 2014].

[15] Janet Hamlin, *Sketching Guantanamo: Court Sketches of the Military Tribunals, 2006-2013* (Washington: Fantagraphics Books, 2013). For her website please see: <http://www.janethamlin.com> [accessed 16 August 2014].

[16] For a comprehensive list of documentary illustrations, please see: <http://reportager.uwe.ac.uk/projects.htm> [accessed 16 August 2014].

[17] Peter Dowling, 'Truth versus Art in Nineteenth-century Graphic Journalism: the colonial Australian case', *Media History* 5.2 (1999), pp. 109-125 (p. 109). Also note that 'often incorrectly credited with the invention of engraving on the end-grain of boxwood, Bewick can certainly be described as the reviver and improver of the craft.' Iain Bain, 'Bewick, Thomas (1753–1828)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed. (Oxford University Press, 2004) <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2334> [accessed 27 August 2014]. For Alois Senefelder, see most recently Winfrid Glocker, 'Sen(n)efelder, Johannes Nepomuk Franz Alois (auch: Aloys)', in *Neue Deutsche Biographie* <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz80036.html> [1 September 2014].

Similarly, use of the terms cartoon journalism or comic journalism would be confusing as they were also used to mean illustrated journalism of the nineteenth century.[18] (Fig. 4)

In order to give a proper definition of comics journalism, it would first be advisable to define journalism itself. Although dictionaries still define journalism simply as 'the work of collecting, writing and publishing news stories and articles in newspapers and magazines or broadcasting them on the radio and television',[19] and a journalist as one 'who writes news stories or articles for a newspaper or magazine or broadcasts them on radio or television',[20] for more than a century now scholars in a variety of institutional settings have tried to describe journalism in a broader context.[21] A more academic definition of journalism is provided in the 1998 study *The Sociology of Journalism* by Brian McNair, who sees it as 'any authored text in written, audio or visual form, which *claims* to be (i.e., is presented to its audience as) a *truthful* statement about, or record of, some *hitherto unknown* (new) feature of the *actual*, *social* world'.[22]

By combining McNair's definition of journalism with the definition of comics by Scott McCloud and Will Eisner, given above,[23] we may deduce that comics journalism is written and drawn in the comics medium, and claims to convey to its readers a truthful statement about or record of some hitherto unknown past or new feature of the actual, social or political world, charting events as they evolve. It is literary journalism in the comics medium. A comics journalist acts as an artist and writer and is the latest representative of the long tradition of visual and literary journalism that goes back to John McCosh and William Howard Russell or ultimately Thucydides. Comics journalism is therefore a subsection within the comics medium.

---

[18] For further discussion of this topic see:
Richard Noakes, '*Punch* and comic journalism in mid-Victorian Britain', in *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical: Reading the Magazine of Nature*, ed. by Geoffrey Cantor and others (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 91-122; Jung-Sun N Han, 'Empire of Comic Visions: Japanese Cartoon Journalism and its Pictorial Statements on Korea, 1876–1910', *Japanese Studies* 26. 3 (2006), pp. 283-302.

[19] *Cambridge Dictionaries Online*, s.v. journalism <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/journalism?q=journalism> [16 August 2014]

[20] Ibid., s.v. journalist <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/journalist?q=journalist> [16 August 2014]

[21] For this thesis, the development of journalism will be analysed from 1900 onwards. Scholarly study of journalism began with single university courses, which then developed into dedicated university departments and schools, although this organizational process varied in detail from one country to another, and every movement created its own journalism-related commentary.

[22] Brian McNair, *The Sociology of Journalism* (London: Arnold, 1998), p. 4. Italics are his own.

[23] See p. 14.

2.4 Representation

In this thesis, the term representation is used in a social context as defined by Sergei Moscovici, viz.:

> [a] system(s) of values, ideas and practices with a twofold function: first, to establish an order which will enable individuals to orient themselves in their material and social world and to master it; and secondly to enable communication to take place among the members of a community by providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history.[24]

In a similar way the French sociologist Emile Durkheim divides social representations into two types, the individual and the collective:

> In social life, everything consists of representations, ideas and sentiments, and there is nowhere better to observe the powerful effectiveness of representations. Only collective representations are much more powerful than individual ones: they have a power of their own, and relate to a distinctive science.[25]

But here the key question is how individuals (artists) represent themselves and others in their works. Scott McCloud offers the following explanation of how pictorial representation works in comics:

> Our identities belong permanently to the conceptual world. They can't be seen, heard, smelled, touched or tasted. They're merely ideas. And everything else – at the start – belongs to the sensual world, the world outside of us. Gradually we reach beyond ourselves. We encounter the sight, smell, touch, taste and sound of our own bodies. And of the world around us. And soon we discover that objects of the physical world can also cross over and possess identities of their own. Or, as our extensions begin to glow with the life we lend to them. By de-emphasizing the appearance of the physical world in favour of the idea of form, the cartoon places itself in the world of concepts. Through traditional realism, the comics artist can portray the world without and through the cartoon, the world within. When cartoons are used throughout a story, the world of that story may seem to pulse with life.[26]

As comics feature both image and text, two kinds of representation are involved: textual and pictorial. So, throughout the thesis these two representations will be discussed.

---

[24] Sergei Moscovici, 'Foreword', in *Health and Illness: A Social Psychological Analysis*, ed. by Claudine Herzlich, tr. by Douglas Graham (London: Academic Press, 1973), pp. ix-xiv (p. xiii).
[25] Emile Durkheim, 'The Method of Sociology (1908)', in *The Rules of Sociological Method*, ed. by Steven Lukes, trans. by Wilfred Douglas Halls (New York: The Free Press, 1982), pp. 245-47 (p. 247).
[26] McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, pp. 40-41.

2.5 Nation and Nationalism

Although the second chapter, 'National Identities and Comics Journalism', gives a section summarizing the chronological evolution of the terms nationalism, nation and national identity, they are briefly introduced here to show how they will be used in the rest of the thesis.

Many philosophers and academics have defined the terms nation and nationalism, but Benedict Anderson has become one of the best known of them with his seminal book *Imagined Communities* published in 1983.[27] However, a century before him, in a published Sorbonne lecture of 1882 Ernest Renan (1823-1892) asked his famous question: *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (What is a nation?). In a modern perspective he begins his lecture by rejecting the previous definition of nationhood as 'a dynasty, representing an earlier conquest, one which was first of all accepted, and then forgotten by the mass of the people'.[28] He believes that despite its etymology nationhood has no connection with ethnographic considerations since 'there is no pure race and that to make politics depend upon ethnographic analysis is to surrender it to a chimera'.[29] He does not consider language as necessary to the formation of a nation as one can 'have the same thoughts, and love the same things in different languages',[30] and religion cannot be a fundamental element of modern nationhood because it is 'an individual matter; it concerns the conscience of each person'.[31] Renan does not label a nation as a community of interest; instead he advocates that 'nationality has a sentimental side to it; it is both soul and body at once [...]'.[32] While geographical boundaries such as rivers and mountains may contribute to forming a nation, they are in his view insufficient to explain its existence. For him, a nation is a mortal, spiritual thing:

> A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form. [...] A nation is therefore a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future. [...] The nations are not something eternal. They had beginnings and they will

---

[27] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2006).
[28] Ernest Renan, 'What is a Nation?' in *Becoming National: A Reader*, ed. by. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 42- 55 (p. 46).
[29] Ibid., p. 48.
[30] Ibid., p. 50.
[31] Ibid., p. 51.
[32] Ibid.

end. […] A large aggregate of men, healthy in mind and warm of heart, creates the kind of moral conscience which we call a nation.[33]

The Scottish political theorist Professor Tom Nairn (1932-) argues that it is not possible to say that any form of nationalism is one hundred per cent good or bad and likens nationalism to the Roman two-faced god Janus:

> Nationalism can in this sense be pictured as like the old Roman god, Janus, who stood above gateways with one face looking forwards and one backwards. Thus does nationalism stand over the passage to modernity, for human society. As human kind is forced through its strait doorway, it must look desperately back into the past, to gather strength wherever it can be found for the ordeal of "development".[34]

Throughout the thesis these two terms 'nation' and 'nationalism' will be used with particular reference to countries of the Middle East such as Palestine, Israel, Iraq, Syria, and even Turkey.

2.6 National Identity

According to the Austrian Social Democrat Otto Bauer (1881-1938), a leading member of the Austro-Marxist school who prefigured and inspired both the New Left movement of the 1960s and 1970s and Eurocommunism in the 1970s and 1980s, every nation has a character that cannot be substituted — a view that is diametrically opposed to Renan's:

> If we take any German to a foreign country, if we place him, say, among the English, he will immediately be conscious of the fact that he is among people different from himself, people with a different way of thinking and feeling, people whose reactions to the same external stimuli are quite different from those he finds in his usual German environment. For the moment, we will call the complex of physical and intellectual characteristics that distinguishes one nation from another its natural character.[35]

He argues that a nation is 'a community of fate'[36] because 'the character of human beings is never determined by anything other than their fate; the national character is never anything other than the precipitate of a nation's history'.[37] For this 'community of fate', survival depends on interaction and communication through mass media in which national

---

[33] Ibid., pp. 52-53.
[34] Tom Nairn, *The Break Up of Britain* (London: New Left Books, 1977), pp. 348- 349.
[35] Otto Bauer, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*, ed. by Ephraim J. Nimni, trans. by Joseph O'Donnell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 20.
[36] Ibid., p.35.
[37] Ibid.

codes are hidden. Since an individual is 'the product of nation',[38] it is highly possible for a whole community to absorb the same codes:

> […] fellow nationals are often affected by the same "channels" of communication: workers and bourgeois of the same national community often live in the same city, read similar newspapers, and […] are subjected to the same media, see similar TV programmes, take part in the same elections, and are subjected to the same forms of propaganda.[39]

This thesis will use the term national identity in a similar way to show how a European feels when s/he is away from his / her 'fellow nationals'. In other words it will examine how Joe Sacco, Guy Delisle and Kemal Gökhan Gürses depict themselves and their characters when they are in the Middle East.

3. Methodology

In order to clearly show that there are many other exponents of comics journalism besides Joe Sacco (who has hitherto been the focus of most academic work on the subject), this study does not devote a separate chapter to him so as to avoid the unnecessary repetition of points that have already been well made.[40] However, he has been widely referred to throughout the thesis as it would be impossible not to mention his contribution to comics war journalism from 1993 onwards.

Two graphic novels in particular have been chosen as case studies from among those works of comics journalism that deal with the Middle East: Kemal Gökhan Gürses' *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* (Ayşegül at War: Iraqi Falcon)[41] and Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*.[42] They are by two people with (two) different

---

[38] Ibid., p. 77.

[39] Ibid., pp 77-78.

[40] Some important research on Joe Sacco is listed below:
Oyvind Vagnes, 'The Unmaking of the World: Trauma and Testimony in Two Stories by Joe Sacco', *Afterimage: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism* 39. 1&2 (2012), pp. 60-62; Tristram Walker, 'Graphic Wounds: The Comics Journalism of Joe Sacco', *Journeys* 11.1 (2010), pp. 69-88; Rose Brister and Belinda Walzer, 'Kairos and Comics: Reading Human Rights Intercontextually in Joe Sacco's Graphic Narrative', *College Literature* 40.3 (2013), pp. 138-55; Edward C. Holland, '"To Think and Imagine and See Differently": Popular Geopolitics, Graphic Narrative, and Joe Sacco's "Chechen War, Chechen Women"', *Geopolitics* 17 (2012), pp. 105-29; Richard Todd Stafford, 'Towards an Epistemological Theory of Comics Journalism: Case Studies in Joe Sacco's War Reportage', *Public Knowledge Journal* 3.1 (2011) <http://pkjournal.org/?page_id=1490> [accessed 26 August 2014]; Rebecca Scherr, 'Shaking Hands with Other People's Pain: Joe Sacco's Palestine', *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 46.1 (2013), pp. 19-36; Jeff Adams, 'Documenting Oppression in Sacco's *Palestine*', in *Documentary Graphic Novels and Social Realism* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008), pp. 121-60; Martin Barker, 'The Reception of Joe Sacco's *Palestine*', *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies* 9.2 (2012), pp. 58-73.

[41] Kemal Gökhan Gürses, *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* (İstanbul: Cadde Yayınları, 2006).

[42] Guy Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, trans. by Helge Dascher (London: Jonathan Cape, 2012).

cultural backgrounds and artistic styles. With the Turkish artist Kemal Gökhan Gürses, we see how comics journalism can mediate a political response, whereas with Canadian-born French resident Guy Delisle, discussion centres on how comics journalism can serve as a vehicle for cultural observations.

Kemal Gökhan Gürses is the first Turkish comics journalist to treat the Middle East, and his fictional protagonist is the first genuine female war correspondent in comics journalism.[43] His Middle East identity gives him an inside view of the invasion of Iraq and the turmoil in the Middle East in general. On the other hand Guy Delisle has produced graphic novels telling his memories not only of the Middle East but also of rather more hard-to-reach parts of the world such as Shenzhen, Pyongyang and Burma. His last graphic novel *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* portrays an outlander's daily life in one of the most conflicted zones in the world: Jerusalem. His French Canadian identity gives him and his readers an outsider's view of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

After this introduction outlining the aim and methodology of the thesis and defining some of the terms it uses, there follow four main chapters, a (thread-drawing) conclusion and three appendices.

The first main chapter, 'Comics Journalism', analyses this hybrid genre in five sections. Firstly, the origins of comics journalism is sought and the pioneers and the popularisers of it are given. Secondly, comics journalism and its journalistic aspects are defined. Thirdly, comics journalism is compared with the New Journalism movement of the 1960s. Fourthly, the similarities between comics journalism and autobiographical travel writing are discussed before a concluding consideration of visual journalism, of which comics journalism forms a part.

The four sections of the second main chapter, 'National Identities and Comics Journalism', discuss how national identities are represented in comics journalism. The first section gives a brief chronological evolution of the term nationalism as seen by six particularly insightful theoreticians, viz. Elie Kedourie, Ernest Gellner, Anthony Smith, Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson and Michael Billig. By way of preparation for the ensuing discussion the second section focuses on Middle East nationalism with also providing background information on the sectarian identities in the region and the Israeli – Palestinian Conflict, whereas the third section talks about the depiction of national identities in comics in general. The last section shows how comics journalism represents these Middle Eastern identities.

---

[43] In *Real War Stories*, Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle are only seen sitting on their desks questioning their Felipe who gives his own account of Salvadoran Civil War; for this reason, it is not wrong to label Ayşegül as genuine.

The third and fourth main chapters provide case studies. The third chapter examines the graphic novel *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* by the Turkish comics journalist Kemal Gökhan Gürses. After an introductory overview of the history of Turkish comics including background information about Gürses and the graphic novel, the second section examines the protagonist Ayşegül, the first female war correspondent in comics journalism, and shows how the graphic novel is a response to the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq. The third section discusses journalistic elements in the book, whereas the last section stays focused on the representation of national identities.

The fourth main chapter discusses Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*. This chapter has again been divided into four sections. The first gives a brief overview of Delisle's works and introduces his shorter works and other graphic novels. The second section focuses on how Delisle pictures his everyday life whereas the next section deals with the journalist's approach to the events and environments depicted in his graphic novels and concerned with the interaction between journalism, travelogue and memoir in his works. The fourth section presents an analysis of Delisle's portrayal of nationalism and national identities.

Finally the thread-drawing conclusion indicates directions for further research.

CHAPTER I
COMICS JOURNALISM

1. Introduction

Journalism has frequently impacted upon the novel since the rise of the latter as a literary genre in the early modern period. There are many examples of writers who were both prominent journalists and novelists. A selective list of such figures will here suffice to prove the point.

Daniel Defoe is not only recognised as one of the founders of the novel, but also he is regarded as one of the world's first exponents of modern journalism for his account of the hurricane that hit Britain on 29 November 1703, though *The Storm* was not published until the following summer, and newspapers and newsbooks had already been intermittently or regularly published for some sixty or seventy years in Germany, England and France and since 1541 in Mexico.[44] Charles Dickens published his first short story, *A Dinner at Poplar Walk* in a London periodical, *Monthly Magazine*, a few months before becoming a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*, to which he also contributed short stories under the pseudonym 'Boz'.[45] Conversely, Mark Twain contributed to a newspaper run by his older brother, Orion Clemens, as well as to the Virginia City *Territorial Enterprise* before he gained his popularity thanks to a short story called *Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog*,[46] which was published in *The Saturday Press*.[47] Ernest Hemingway and George Orwell were two journalists who voluntarily went to fight in the Spanish Civil War, and produced two fine novels filled with their war memories, viz. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *Homage to Catalonia* respectively. Tom Wolfe and Truman Capote were two pioneers of

---

[44] John J. Miller, 'Writing Up a Storm', *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 August 2011, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424053111904800304576476142821212156> [accessed 3 October 2011]

[45] Michael Allen, 'A Sketch of the Life' in *A Companion to Charles Dickens*, ed. by David Paroissien (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 3-17 (p. 7).

[46] Later he altered the title into *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*.

[47] Mark Twain, 'Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog' *The Saturday Press*, 18 November 1865, pp. 248-52. <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/cdm4/nysp_viewer.php?DMTHUMB=1&search=&ptr=605&CISOPTR=595> [accessed 3 October 2011]

the New Journalism movement that flourished in 1960s and 1970s,[48] and their reporting underpinned works that are regarded as novels today.

Possibly the most recent development in the fusion of journalism and literary prose fiction is comics journalism. It combines drawings and text in order to inform people about events, issues and situations. Additionally, it resembles New Journalism in that both aspire to the status of novel-writing.

This chapter aims to examine comics journalism in six sections. After the introduction, the first main section seeks the origins of comics journalism and introduces two important figures who have contributed to today's comics journalism. The third section analyses comics journalism in terms of journalistic aspects within its historical, social, and theoretical contexts, whereas the following one compares comics journalism with new journalism. The fifth section discusses to what extent comics journalism consists of autobiography and travel writing. The penultimate section gives a very brief history of visual journalism to show where comics journalism fits in this historical evolution. The conclusion summarizes the overall findings.

2. On the Origins, the Pioneers, and the Populariser of Comics Journalism

2.1. The Origins

The origins of comics journalism could be sought in the *Glasgow Looking Glass* – a title that was changed to the *Northern Looking Glass* with the sixth issue –, which is now becoming accepted as the first modern comic, created by William Heath (*c.* 1795-1840), published in nineteen instalments between 11 June 1825 and 3 April 1826.[49] (Fig. 5) The comics scholar Professor Laurence Grove states his argument why this should be accepted as the first modern comic as follows:

> We could say, of course, that people have always told stories with pictures. We could go back to cave drawings, we could go to Rome and steles where stories are being told by inscriptions or we could go to medieval manuscripts. But the nineteenth century was the time of mass production when comics as in the publication and the journals could be distributed on a broad scale. If we look at

---

[48] Tom Wolfe strictly rejects the term 'movement' for his New Journalism: 'It was no movement.' Tom Wolfe, 'Seizing the power', in *The New Journalism*, ed. by Tom Wolfe and E. W. Johnson (London: Picador, 1975), pp. 37-51 (p. 37).

[49] William Heath republished the magazine as *The Looking Glass* in London in 1830, but it lasted only seven issues. 'The Looking Glass (1825 ~ 1839)', in *The Print Shop Window Archive*, 29 November 2011 <http://printshopwindow.blogspot.co.uk/2011/11/looking-glass-1825-1839.html> [accessed 21 September 2014].

that period, this is the one that comes before all of the other ones that have been quoted as being the first comic. In these ones, we have the example of speech bubbles. People will often say what makes comics is speech bubbles and the *Glasgow Looking Glass* does have that.[50]

An additional reason in favour of the claim to chronological precedence as a modern comic is that the *Glasgow Looking Glass* includes sequential stories. Sequentiality is the main feature that sets the publication apart from coetaneous graphic journalism as broadly discussed in the introduction. What the *Glasgow Looking Glass* found newsworthy was mostly taken from local Glaswegian life, but it also mentioned some topics of relevance worldwide:

> The magazine is an early example of topical graphic journalism, a genre that became increasingly popular throughout the nineteenth century. While many of these satirical publications were short-lived, several – such as *Punch* – became national institutions. Despite its name change, the content of our journal focuses predominantly on the eccentricities of Glasgow. In it, William Heath takes an irreverent view of the leading concerns and news of the time. As well as satirising political issues, he pokes fun at all levels of society, including the prevailing fashions and popular pursuits of the day. All in all, it provides us with a fascinating and entertaining – if somewhat skewed – view of Glaswegian life in the 1820s. The 'prospectus' on the first page of the first issue encompasses its wide range of targets. The confused medley of figures includes the legs and posterior of George IV (projecting from behind the chest at the top), and the aristocratic sovereigns of Europe (the King of Prussia sits upon shackles, with the Emperor of Austria looking over his shoulder; besides him is Charles X of France in coronation robes; Alexander looks to the right, his arm linked with that of the King of Spain, who is depicted with the head of a mule), with Britannia beneath threatening them with her spear; she, in turn, is held up by a fat John Bull, a ragged Irish peasant and a Scot in Highland dress. Cats escape from a bag at the base. […] The absurdities of the contemporary style are mocked in the exaggerated tailoring of the clothes, with elaborate frills and bows and impractically over-sized hats.[51]

To illustrate the magazine's being first example of comics journalism, let us examine the front page of the first issue of the *Northern Looking Glass* (the sixth one in the series), which satirizes the then King of France Charles X. According to John Richard Moores,

> Depictions of French leaders [in graphic satire] were used to emphasise and articulate the perceived superiorities of British rulers and the British system of government. They also, however, made more general comments about the nature of power, authority, religion and legitimacy, and regularly highlighted

---

[50] Laurence Grove, interviewed by Amanda McCall, 20 June 2013 <http://news.stv.tv/west-central/230141-glasgow-looking-glass-first-ever-comic-debate-at-glasgow-university/> [accessed 21 September 2014: my transcription].

[51] 'Glasgow / Northern Looking Glass', in *Glasgow University Library Special Collections Department: Book of the Month*, June 2005 <http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/month/june2005.html> [accessed 22 September 2014].

and criticised the inadequacies of domestic monarchs and statesmen, both explicitly and implicitly, and at times unintentionally perhaps, as satirists projected British failings onto images of the French 'Other'. Along with the projection of British anxieties onto images of France, and the constant contrasts and comparisons between British and French rule, the prominence of France in graphic satire gave observers at home the opportunity to share and experience France's political turbulences (albeit in a skewed and often inaccurate form). There emerged many parallels by which images of each nation and their rulers developed. They continuously informed and influenced one another, and if conceptions of British kings and leaders had been redefined over the course of our period, as is contended, then so too, and in very similar ways, had British conceptions of French figures.[52]

Accordingly, on our sample page mentioned above, (Fig. 6) the King of France is satirised with eight sequential frames interrelated with each other under the subtitle of France within the title of Politics. The page is divided into two columns having four frames each, and creates a flow of narrative from the top to the bottom of each column. The comic strip is introduced with the caption 'The following is the manner in which the King of France passes his time at St Cloud', and the King is portrayed as a coward, tired, unhappy, long-suffering, weak and almost deaf ruler.

The first frame shows him crowned, sitting on his throne, which is actually a modest chair, and using no fewer than two ear-trumpets as a hearing aid with the caption saying 'He has all the Journals read to him', whereas the second frame sets him at the breakfast table (still with ear-trumpet) with the caption 'Breakfasts, & receives the Officers of his household.' Reflecting the alliance of Church and State during the Restoration, the third frame shows the King in church praying on his knees in front of a corpulent priest with a caption saying 'Goes to Mass', and the fourth one draws him indolently lying on a sofa (but still wearing his crown and attended by yawning or slouching footmen) with the words 'Reclines on his Sofa'. The second half of the page also shows the second half of the King's day. The fifth frame shows him hunting outdoors now surrounded by poodles ridiculously dressed as courtiers and with the crown as ever on his head as the caption reads 'Plays with his Dogs, and shoots sparrows, in the Park of St Cloud.' In the sixth Charles X 'Plays with his grandchildren' on all fours while his granddaughter rides on his back, whip in hand, although he miraculously manages to retain his crown. In the seventh frame the King 'Dines' without using his hands as he is spoon-fed by his servants, while in the last frame he is glimpsed in a large canopied and curtained bed, dreaming of Napoleon while a footman carries away a chamber-pot, suggesting the gap between reality and

---

[52] John Richard Moores, 'Representations of France and the French in English Satirical Prints, c. 1740-1832' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2011), p. 76.

Charles X's aspirations. The caption 'Goes to bed, and sleeps till morning' underlines the message that his hopes of glory are but a dream.

Our foregoing analysis of this sample page suggests that the *Glasgow Looking Glass* has all the qualities necessary for it to be considered comics journalism: sequentiality, a theme, newsworthiness and even meta-narrative.

2.2. The Pioneers

The Cleveland-based liberal social activist Joyce Brabner together with fellow-activist Lou Ann Merkle, who coedited the two-volume comics *Real War Stories*[53] (Fig. 7) can be seen as the pioneer of comics journalism as they predate Joe Sacco. Even though Brabner is often referred without mentioning Lou Ann Merkle, it is clear from what Braber wrote in the first volume of the *Real War Stories* that it was actually Lou Ann Merkel who came up with an idea of publishing a pamphlet, which was possibly put into this shape by Joyce Brabner herself with her background in comics:[54] 'When I first met Lou Ann, CCCO [Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors] was thinking (reasonably) about getting some stories out by self-publishing a black and white quick-copy pamphlet, drawn by anybody they could find.'[55] As Jeff Williams states

> Brabner's work exhibits a wide range within the nonfiction genre. Her work includes general histories and personal accounts related to the military, wars, and military/CIA involvement in Central America (*Real War Stories* and *Brought to Light*). She edited *Activists!*, a work of personal accounts focused on non-violent protest and social issues (e.g., war, racism, and homophobia), and also began a history of the US animal rights movement (*Animal Right Comics*). Brabner [and Merkle] started work on the experiences of Cambodian American teenagers, who had experienced and/or witnessed war and torture, growing up in the US. […] Whether Brabner [also Merkle] is adapting information from an interview, relating her own account, or writing a history, her nonfiction accounts engage the reader, convey ideologies that call for

---

[53] Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle, *Real War Stories 1* (Forestville, CA: Eclipse Comics, 1987); *Real War Stories 2: Citizen Soldiers* (Forestville, CA: Eclipse Comics, 1991).
The others who contributed to the volumes are as follows: Bill Sienkiewicz (Artist), Dean Mullaney (Publisher), Catherine Yronwode (Editor-in-Chief), Mike W. Barr (Writer), Steve Bissette (Artist), Brian Bolland (Artist), Mark Farmer (Artist), Rebecca Huntington (Artist), Mark Johnson (Artist), Steve Leialoha (Artist), Paul Mavrides (Artist), Alan Moore (Artist), Nancy O'Connor (Colorist), Denny O'Neil (Writer), Sam Parsons (Colorist), Leonard Rifas (Artist/Writer), John Totleben (Artist) and Tom Yeates (Artist).
[54] Joyce Brabner's other works include:
Joyce Brabner and Thomas Yeats, 'Flashpoint: The LA Penca Bombing', in *Brought to Light: A Graphic Docudrama* (London: Titan Books, 1989) [A Flip Book].
Harvey Pekar, Joyce Brabner and Frank Stack, *Our Cancer Year* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1994).
Joyce Brabner, Mark Badger and Wayne Vansant, *Activists!* (Stabur Press, 1995).
Joyce Brabner and Mark Badger, *Animal Rights Comics*, 2 vol. (Stabur Press, 1996).
[55] Joyce Brabner 'How This Happened and Who We are', in *Real War Stories* 1, p. i.

action, and present a narrative. Her [also Merkle's] work exemplifies the commonality between fiction and nonfiction. Some obvious, general occurrences within the comics medium demonstrates this point through the portrayals of the narrators and other persons.[56]

Brabner and Merkle's story 'A Long Time Ago & Today' in the first volume of *Real War Stories*[57] can be accepted as very close to our understanding of comics journalism today which has been mostly shaped by Joe Sacco. This story is a clear-cut example of subjective reportage. Brabner and Merkle appear in the story as journalists, sitting on their desk, asking questions to Felipe who tells his own account of Salvadoran Civil War (Fig. 8):

> The story chronicles Felipe's experiences growing up in El Salvador, his escape, and entry into the US armed services and exhibits a sense of the metanarrative. The story opens in a building in Philadelphia in 1986. The second panel on the page shows Joyce Brabner, Lou Ann Merkle, and Felipe sitting at a table, and Brabner asks Felipe to tell his story in his own words. The narrative contradictions are obvious. The speech balloons come from Felipe's mouth and relate his story, but Brabner and Merkle wrote the script, and much of the story is told through images, not words. Also, Felipe describes the types of photographs he had to take in order to document the human rights abuses in Central America, and Brabner asks Merkle, "Lou Ann, do we use this? [Lou Ann]: It could turn a lot of people off… Do it! They have to know" (6 [40]). The obvious discrepancy lies in the fact that the reader sees and reads the scene before the question is entertained and, of course, the decision was already made before the comic book was published.[58]

Brabner and Merkle's story has real characters and is newsworthy. The main difference from Joe Sacco is that they do not tell their account of the incident, but rather reflect it from the point of a real character.[59]

---

[56] Jeff Williams, 'Joyce Brabner and the New Journalism in Comics', in *Academia.edu*, p. 2, <https://www.academia.edu/4826100/JOYCE_BRABNER_AND_THE_NEW_JOURNALISM_IN_COMICS> [accessed 22 September 2014].

[57] Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle, 'A Long Time Ago & Today', in Real War Stories 1 (Forestville, CA: Eclipse Comics, 1987), pp. 38-51.

[58] Jeff Williams, pp. 3-4.

[59] To show how effective comics journalism can be, it should be also noted that the story of the ex-navy officer Tim Merrill ('The Elite of the Fleet', in Real War Stories 1, pp. 4-10) drew reaction from the U.S. Department of Defense as it mentioned an officer who was violated by his colleagues. According to what Joyce Brabner wrote in the second volume's Editor's Statement, 'In an Atlanta, Georgia, Federal Court, Lieutenant Colonel John Cullen, a special witness dispatched by the Department of Defense in an attempt to stop CCCO's [Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors] distribution of the comic, testifies that he did not find *Real War Stories* very real at all. Specifically, Cullen stated that "greasing," a vicious form of hazing portrayed in *Real War Stories* #1, did not exist. However, Lieutenant Colonel Cullen's arguments were defeated after the U.S. Navy's own records were introduced as evidence. The Department of Defense later notified the CCCO that they were calling it quits. CCCO won. A comic book threat to national security went back into public high schools – something to pick up with the recruitment pamphlets that get handed out on Career Day.'

2.3. The Populariser

Such is Joe Sacco's importance in the history and development of comics journalism, that he merits a section (if not several theses) of his own, especially as his name recurs throughout this study.

Joe Sacco was born in Malta, on October 2, 1960. When he was one year old, his family immigrated to Australia. He spent his childhood there until 1972 when they moved to the United States, living first in Los Angeles, then from 1974 in Portland, Oregon, where Sacco currently resides. He graduated from Sunset High School in 1978 and obtained his BA degree in journalism from the University of Oregon in 1981. After finding journalism 'exceedingly, exceedingly boring,'[60] he began working for a local publisher writing guidebooks. In the mid-1980s, he worked for *The Comics Journal*. In 1988, he left the USA to travel across Europe, also with a rock band, and compiled his memories in *Yahoo* series,[61] subsequently printed under the titles *But I Like It*,[62] and *Notes from a Defeatist*.[63]

His visit to Europe, especially to Germany allowed him to think about the Palestinian issue more seriously when he met some Palestinians in his German class and also under the influence of ongoing Gulf War. (Fig. 9) As a product of those days, he created some stories for his fourth issue of *Yahoo* series which is subtitled as 'Airpower through victory', and they could be seen as Sacco's first comics journalism.[64] (Fig. 10) In 1993 he published *Palestine* series in nine issues (later gathered in a single volume) following a visit to that country two years earlier. Meantime in 1992, he travelled to Bosnia and documented his memories in his later books, *Safe Area Goražde: The War in Eastern Bosnia 1992–1995*,[65] and *The Fixer and Other Stories*.[66] In 2009 Sacco returned to Palestine and published *Footnotes in Gaza*.[67] In 2012 he compiled his short journalistic works in *Journalism*.[68] Over the years he has won a series of awards including the Eisner Award for Best Original Graphic Novel in 2001.

---

[60] Duncan Campbell, 'I do comics, not graphic novels', *The Guardian*, 23 October 2003 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2003/oct/23/comics.politics> [accessed 21 September 2014].
[61] Joe Sacco, *Yahoo*, 6 issues (Seatle: Fantagraphics Books, 1988-1992).
[62] Joe Sacco, *But I Like It* (Seatle: Fantagraphics Books, 2006).
[63] Joe Sacco, *Notes from a Defeatist* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003).
[64] These stories dating back to 1990-1991 are included in *Notes from a Defeatist* as chapters: 'When Good Bombs Happen to Bad People' and 'More Women, More Children, More Quickly'.
[65] Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde: Special Edition* (Seattle: Fantagraphics, 2011 [2000]).
[66] Joe Sacco, *The Fixer and Other Stories* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2009).
[67] Joe Sacco, *Footnotes in Gaza* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2009).
[68] Joe Sacco, Journalism (London: Jonathan Cape, 2012).

In his Benjaminian reading of photography Eduardo Cadava says that 'History begins where memory is endangered', [69] and that at this moment, writers come into existence to keep history alive for us. Joe Sacco is one of those who try to remind us about what we have seen in the past. He is one of the prominent cartoonists[70] who touch on the 'serious' side of life, and he becomes unique by combining his artistic skills with the power of his journalism.

He witnesses history, especially wars in his books. His aim in doing this is to teach western readers about a story that is not told by the mainstream media, especially in the U.S.[71] Edward Said clearly states how he appreciated Joe Sacco's 'political and aesthetical work of extraordinary originality' when he saw *Palestine* for the first time:

> Without any warning or preparation, about ten years ago my young son brought home Joe Sacco's first comic book on *Palestine*. Cut off as I was from the world of active comic reading, trading and bartering, I had no idea at all that Sacco or his gripping work existed. I was plunged directly back into the world of the first great intifada (1987-92) and, with even greater effect, back into the animated, enlivening world of the comics I had read so long ago. The shock of recognition was therefore a double one, and the more I read compulsively in Sacco's *Palestine* comic books, of which there are about ten, all of them now collected into one volume which I hope will make them widely available not only to American readers but all over the world, the more convinced I was that there was a political and aesthetic work of extraordinary originality, quite unlike any other in the long, often turgid and hopelessly twisted debates that had occupied Palestinians, Israelis, and their respective supporters.[72]

The influence of Sacco's original training as a journalist can be seen in his books. He puts himself into his stories and questions the idea of objectivity. He suggests that it is by way of a reaction that he puts himself into his stories and questions the idea of objectivity. When he is asked in an interview about this personal intrusion, he says:

> Yes. I studied American-style journalism and at some point that began to break down for me. Because I feel that in the case of a lot of topics, you can't be objective. For example, when American or British journalists go somewhere, they bring themselves with them, obviously, and they bring their culture with them. And that isn't often reflected in their stories.[73]

---

[69] Eduardo Cadava, *Words of Light: Theses on the Photography of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 63.

[70] Joe Sacco refuses to use the term 'graphic novels', and prefers 'comics'.

[71] Jared Gardner, 'Home/fronts: Joe Sacco's Footnotes in Gaza (Metropolitan Books, 2009)', *The Huffington Post*, 13 April 2010 <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jared-gardner/homefronts-joe-saccos-emf_b_457789.html> [accessed 22 September 2014].

[72] Edward Said, 'Homage to Joe Sacco', in *Palestine* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003), p. iii.

[73] Joe Sacco, interviewed by Roger Sabin, 29 November 2009 <http://www.eyemagazine.com/blog/post/notes-on-saccos-footnotes-in-gaza> [accessed 22 September 2014].

He also uses eyewitness accounts in his works. He takes notes from oral accounts of people he interviews. It is very obvious that Joe Sacco knows the advantages of comics over mainstream journalism as he indicates in an interview with Kristine McKenna:

> I've been doing comics since I was 6 years old, so it's a medium that's been with me for a very long time, and I think there are advantages to it. It's accessible and immediate — right away, the reader is thrust into a small town in Bosnia. I can make the crane that allows me to hover above a city — I don't have to hire a helicopter to get the picture — and I can take the reader into someone's past. I can ask visual questions that allow me to render it as faithfully as a film director.[74]

As for his style, he goes back to underground commix, and confesses that he admires Robert Crumb. His drawing and narrative style is quasi-documentary, although it never abandons its cartoonish quality:

> Well, in some ways what you see in your head translates more on to the page. But you never get it exact. And you have to realise that you have your limitations and you just have to live with them. But I think this [style] worked well for me. I wanted it to be relatively representational but on the other hand I never want to lose that cartoonishness that I think that helps people put themselves into that situation.[75]

Political aspects are relatively absent from Sacco's earliest work, produced when his concerns as a long-haired artist were primarily artistic. Yet from the time of his first trip to Palestine in 1991, his appearance and outlook changed: he no longer wore long hair and started to draw political and documentary graphic novels. This 'funny' unusual situation can be thought of as the turning point for Joe Sacco because thereafter he became the man who shaped — and continues to shape — comics journalism as we know it today.

3. Comics Journalism and its Journalistic Aspects

In order to appreciate more fully the degree of overlap between mainstream journalism, comics journalism and novelistic writing, it seems advisable to understand the term journalism within its historical, social, and theoretical contexts.

---

[74] Joe Sacco, interviewed by Kristine McKenna, 1 January 2004 <http://www.laweekly.com/2004-01-01/news/brueghel-in-bosnia/?showFullText=true> [accessed 22 September 2014].
[75] Ibid.

Comics journalists are in pursuit of news which, according to Mitchell Stephens, refers to 'new information about a subject of some public interest that is shared with some portion of the public'.[76] For the origin of news, Barbie Zelizer interestingly argues that:

> Roughly in use in the same way for at least the past 500 years, the term "news" derived from the word "new" and originally spelled in the Old English "newes" or "niwes" during the late 16th century and was rumoured to be an acronym for the four directions in which news travelled – north, east, west, south.[77]

This etymology explains why comics journalism may also be seen as a kind of travel writing.[78]

Communication and information are two other words used for journalism though their semantic fields are far wider. It was in the twentieth century that thanks to technological developments such as broadcasting, the term 'media' became used to refer to the main means of mass communication, especially the press and oral journalism.[79] These two related words media and communication elevate journalism and make it a sub-field of communication. Thus a 'journalist' becomes implicitly if not explicitly a 'news-worker', a 'media-professional' and a 'communicator'.[80] This is not an invalid situation for comics journalists, even though they work in an environment that is less pressurized by immediate deadlines.

Journalists' own, often down-to-earth ways of referring to their activities are also worthy of consideration. In discussion of their craft, the first thing they believe is that journalism needs a sixth sense, which means they have 'a nose for news'.[81] Comics journalists have definite knowledge of where to get news; Joe Sacco went twice to Palestine, Ted Rall travelled to Afghanistan, Guy Delisle settled in the world's lesser known places like Palestine, Burma (Myanmar), Shenzhen and Pyongyang. Similarly in his graphic narrative Kemal Gökhan Gürses sends his protagonist Ayşegül to war-torn Iraq, Palestine and Russia. Recently Sarah Glidden has sneaked into Syria from across the Turkish border.

---

[76] Mitchell Stephens, 'Journalism and News: Untangling Their Histories',in *Beyond News*, 13 March 2011, <http://journalism.nyu.edu/publishing/beyondnews/2011/03/13/journalism-and-news-untangling-their-histories/> [accessed 3 October 2011]

[77] Barbie Zelizer, *Taking Journalism Seriously: News and the Academy* (London: Sage Publications, 2004), p. 24.

[78] This argument will be broadly discussed later.

[79] Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (London: Flamingo, 1983), p. 72.

[80] Zelizer, p. 28.

[81] Ibid, p. 30.

Secondly, journalism is a container in which 'news is a phenomenon with volume, materiality, dimension, depth, and possibly complexity'.[82] Comics Journalism adds another dimension to this container by its use of images or drawings.[83] The reading of comics journalism is more complex than that of other forms of journalism because a reader is not only supposed to follow a written text but also s/he needs to comprehend images or drawings, and this arguably takes longer than reading a newspaper or watching news on television, at least in a casual manner. S/he needs to pay attention to small details in the frames in order to appreciate the atmosphere of the story which may be conveyed exclusively through images rather than the written word. From the broadcast media comics journalism borrows the notion of adherence, which is 'the ability to keep a radio audience listening […] in order to hear the end of the story.'[84] Drawings are a way of conveying information. For example, in *Jerusalem*, Delisle does not directly write about the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, he just shows it by drawing armed soldiers, firing guns, shouting people and chaotic streets. (Fig. 11) With similar intent Sacco constantly keeps streets muddy throughout *Palestine* (Fig. 12) and Gürses depicts Iraq in ruins in *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini*. (Fig. 13)

In order to stress the 'vulnerability and fragility of the news',[85] journalists view their craft as their child that they need to take care of. When they prepare a story for publishing, they may claim to protect it like a parent keeping its offspring away from the possible dangers of other agencies. Likewise comics journalists develop an emotional relationship with the works they are producing. They proudly declare how much time they are lavishing on their creation.

Last but not least, journalism is a service in the 'public interest',[86] and has as its mission the aim to defend and protect the 'citizens' rights to freedom of information and the right to know'.[87] Nearly all comics journalists advocate this freedom and more often than not produce a form of journalism which reports facts that cannot be found in mainstream journalism.[88] This public interest involves journalists in duties in the name of

---

[82] Ibid.

[83] More will be discussed in Visual Journalism sub-section.

[84] Todd Schack, 'A failure of language': Achieving layers of meaning in graphic journalism', *Journalism*, 15.1 (2014), 109-127 (p. 112).

[85] Zelizer, p. 30.

[86] Ibid.

[87] 'Status of Journalists and Journalism Ethics: IFC Principles', in *International Federation of Journalists* <http://www.ifj.org/en/articles/status-of-journalists-and-journalism-ethics-ifj-principles> [accessed 4 October 2011]

[88] The differences between Mainstream Journalism and Comics Journalism will be broadly discussed later.

society. It is consequently possible to adapt the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics for comics journalists:[89]

- [Comics] Journalists should be honest, fair and courageous in gathering, reporting and interpreting information.

Comics journalists are mostly honest reporters and not afraid of being in war zones like Sarah Glidden in Syria, Joe Sacco in Palestine and Bosnia, Ted Rall in Afghanistan.

- Ethical [comics] journalists treat sources, subjects and colleagues as human beings deserving respect.

Most of the time, comics journalists become friends with their news sources as do Joe Sacco and Edin in *Safe Area Gorazde*.

- [Comics] Journalists should be free of obligation to any interest other than the public's right to know.

Most comics journalists are freelancers.

- [Comics] Journalists are accountable to their readers, listeners, viewers and each other.

In the preface to their books most acknowledge to their readers the sources they have used in their works including those that inspired them. For example, Joe Sacco cites Edward Said, Michael Herr and Noam Chomsky, while Gürses recounts how his journalist friends inspired him.

In a similar way, where graphic representation is concerned, Joe Sacco draws a path for a comics journalist to follow with reference to his own standards. According to him, comics journalists should 'draw people and objects as accurately as possible whenever possible'.[90] This is not the case for most comics journalists studied in this thesis, however. For example, Guy Delisle prefers simple lines. Secondly, Sacco argues that in order to recreate a specific time, place and situation, a comics journalist should draw in a realistic, down-to-earth fashion. This precept is observed by nearly all comics journalists because even those such as Joe Kubert and Kemal Gökhan Gürses, who draw places they have not visited, research photographs, films, documents and others' drawings to create the exact

---

[89] 'Code of Ethics', in *Society of Professional Journalists* <http://www.spj.org/pdf/ethicscode.pdf> [accessed 5 October 2011]
[90] Joe Sacco, 'Preface: A Manifesto, Anyone?', in *Journalism* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2012), p. x.

environment. Thirdly, according to Sacco, visual questions about the thing or situation to be depicted should be asked when comics journalists rely on eyewitness testimonies. Most comics journalists do the same while listening to their interviewees. Fourthly, unlike mainstream journalists, comics journalists are in Sacco's view not supposed to be objective, a tenet which is accepted by all comics journalists because of the subjective nature of the comics medium as it is created with one's subjective drawings and narration. Comics journalists can be subjective and filter their observations according to their priorities. Fifthly, somewhat paradoxically perhaps, while looking at two sides of a story a comics journalist 'must strive to find out what is going on and tell it, not neuter the truth in the name of equal time'[91]. Lastly, for Sacco as for all comics journalists, one's output should be 'concern[ed] with those [who] seldom get a hearing [as] the powerful are generally excellently served by the mainstream media or propaganda organs.'[92] This precept reminds us of Gürses' declaration that his work aims 'to be a part of the tragedy of the people I do not know.'[93]

Scholars see journalism as multi-faceted and primarily as a profession or expertise that requires a qualification gained through education and training. However, this view hardly holds true where comics journalism is concerned because, except for Joe Sacco, most comics journalists lack any training or education in journalism. Secondly, traditional or mainstream journalism is an institution 'characterized by social, political, economic, and/or cultural privilege'.[94] While these privileges have admittedly also shaped comics journalism, they have done so in a different way. A third definition sees journalism as the production of a text, which means a report, a record or a document produced by a correspondent.[95] According to James Carey, there are significant implications to seeing all forms of 'journalism as a text that said something about something to someone [and as a means] to grasp the forms of consciousness, the imaginations, the interpretations of reality journalism has contained'.[96]

It is possible to add James Carey's definition that comics journalism carries mainstream journalism's limits one step forward by offering readers a combination of written text and image which gives them a more complex and challenging experience and

---

[91] Ibid., p. xii.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Gürses, p. 5.
[94] Zelizer, p. 36.
[95] Ibid., p. 38.
[96] James W. Carey, 'The Problem of Journalism History', *Columbia Journalism Review*, 13.2 (1974); reprinted in *James Carey: A Critical Reader*, ed. by Eve Stryker Munson and Catherine A. Warren (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 86-94 (p. 93).

consciousness inviting different interpretations. As Todd Schack writes, comics journalism expands and enriches the literature of journalism by creating three layers of meaning:

- an emotional immediacy, created by the ability to provide atmospheric content,
- the formal aspects of the genre that relate to the concept of 'stickiness', both in terms of keeping an audience 'tuned in', and in using images to express complex ideas,
- the mnemonic value of blending words with images that both inform and enhance each other, and that together create a multi-layered narrative that carries the potential to create understanding on an intellectual level as well as feeling on an emotional, visceral level.[97]

All journalists are the products of the society in which they live, so it is not possible to understand journalism (or indeed the media in general) without reference to sociology, which determines what kind of topics it includes, how news is selected and the values and external factors that affect and govern that selection. Every news story is shaped by the individuals who collectively form society whether their role is that of participant, witness or reporter. The people who choose these stories for dissemination as news are, of course, journalists whose selection of news depends on the influence of intangible and invisible values in the selection period such as their background, education, personal judgements, working atmosphere, the environment in which they grew up, their experiences in dealing with bureaucracy, and their relations with readers and the community. Philip Gaunt states the importance of journalists' own experiences:

> On an individual level, the role and image of the journalist is affected by the details of their own experience – their training, the size, type and culture of organization(s) worked for, editorial pressures and personal idiosyncrasies. Journalists' view of themselves 'as disseminators, interpreters, investigators or adversaries' depends on 'the society they live in, the image of the press in general, and the image of the organization in which they work'.[98]

The relationship between journalism and sociology stems from the idea of seeing journalism as a profession. This concept views journalists as scientists, in other words as 'social beings who systematically [act] in patterned ways that [have] bearing on the stature and shape of the journalistic collective at large'.[99] Thinking of journalism as a sociological phenomenon requires taking its social determinants into account. Brian McNair divides these determining factors into five main categories which are in mutual interaction:

---

[97] Schack, p. 110.

[98] Philip Gaunt, *Choosing the News: The Profit Factor in News Selection* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), p. 142.

[99] Zelizer, p. 37.

- The system of professional ethics, aesthetic codes and routine practices:

As discussed above, comics journalists follow these codes, too.

- Influence of politicians, and the political systems:

Comics journalists are all independents and away from any immediate political influence, though not necessarily free of political bias in view of their openly acknowledged subjectivity (discussed below).

- Influence of the mechanism of economic ownership and control:

It is not possible to show any example of comics journalism produced under the influence of any economic control owing to the generally small-scale nature of artistic production.

- Influence of technologies of newsgathering and production.

Technological developments are less relevant for comics journalists than for their mainstream counterparts because they mostly need just a pen, a drawing pad, a camera, and a voice-recorder. They may of course use computers to create their works, and technology will almost inevitably come into play if their graphic productions are subsequently converted into animated cartoon films.

- Influence of the information management activities of *extramedia* social actors.[100]

This definition of the sociology of journalism in turn suggests new factors and terms to be added to the discussion such as 'gatekeeping', 'agenda-setting', and the 'selectivity process'.

Although the terms 'gatekeeping' and 'gatekeeper' (aka 'Mr. Gates') were first used by social psychologist Kurt Lewin to describe 'a wife or mother as the person who decides which foods end up on the family's dinner table',[101] it was soon applied to journalism by David Manning White. The term basically refers to the figure or editor who decides which news will go forward and which will not. Without understanding 'gatekeepers', it is impossible to understand what news really is.[102]

---

[100] McNair, pp. 15-16.
[101] Kurt Lewin, 'Frontiers in Group Dynamics', in *Human Relations*, 1. 2 (1947), pp. 143-53 (p. 145).
[102] David Manning White, 'The "Gatekeeper": A Case Study in the Selection of News', in *Journalism Quarterly*, 2 (1950), pp. 383–91; reprinted in *People, Society and Mass Communications*, ed. by Lewis Anthony Dexter and David Manning White (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1964), pp. 160-72 (p.161).

According to White, in choosing news stories, gatekeepers are affected by their prejudices, the category of news, and their conception of the audience they are addressing.[103] White also mentions the subjectivity of gatekeepers in the conclusion to his article:

> This is the case study of one "gatekeeper," but one who, like several hundred of his fellow "gatekeepers", plays a most important role as the terminal "gate" in the complex process of communication. Through studying his overt reasons for rejecting news stories from the press associations we see how highly subjective, how based on the "gatekeeper's" own set of experiences, attitudes and expectations the communication of "news" really is.[104]

The gatekeeper in comics journalism is the comics journalist himself/herself who acts as writer and artist.[105] The comics journalist decides on what to include into her/his reporting. As Kristian Williams writes, 'at the end of the strip, the reader is left fully outside the frame, but inside the narrative. We see what the narrator sees'.[106] Comics journalists are affected by their prejudices: for example, Joe Sacco and Kemal Gökhan Gürses use nearly the same racial stereotypes for Arabs. (Fig. 14)

For Joe Sacco, in the absence of control by an external authority, comics journalism must be subject to a self-imposed 'filter' of subjectivity that is evident to the reader:

> It's important for me to put the reader in my position, of being in a situation which they are not familiar with. It's important for the reader to know that I have prejudices, just like they have prejudices, so they can judge what I say and what I write about. It's very clear I'm from the West, so when I talk to a woman about the hijab I don't want to come across as some Know-it-all, or some moral person who can make decisions about what they wear. That's not really my position. I can comment on that but it has to be clear that I am commenting from the viewpoint of someone from the West. It's important to show you are telling someone else's story and to actually show that is an essential part of it to me. I am and act as a filter and I want them to see that filter openly. Most journalists pretend there's nothing in between you and the experience. That's bullshit. They are between you and the experience. I focus on exchanges with people. I do it almost accidentally, because I don't have the money to pursue that big general, big official point of view, which is of no interest to me anyway. Hanging out is a big part of it. Letting people get to know you is a big part of it.[107]

---

[103] Ibid., pp. 170-71.
[104] Ibid., p. 171.
[105] But in collective works, the gatekeeper is probably the writer, not the artist.
[106] Kristian Williams, 'The Case for Comics Journalism', in *Alternet.org* <http://www.alternet.org/story/21520/the_case_for_comics> [accessed 18 December 2013]
[107] Joe Sacco, interview by Ernesto Priego, 2 August 2011, <http://blog.comicsgrid.com/2011/08/sacco-interview/> [accessed 27 November 2013]

Comics journalists are aware of their audience's needs, in particular, the need for the truth that they cannot find easily in the mainstream media. Except for some very brutal amateur videos posted online, Sarah Glidden's short piece *The Waiting Room*,[108] in which she talks about the Iraqi refugees in Syria, (Fig. 15) and David Axe's *Everyone Told Us Not to Go to Syria*,[109] which relates a group's dangerous journey into that country from the Turkish border, (Fig. 16) are two of the best examples of journalism showing the ongoing Syrian civil war from within. Like Sacco, both Glidden and Axe accept the inevitably subjective nature of the comics journalist's viewpoint, making it comparable to that of the gatekeeper as defined by White. According to Adam Bessie, comics journalists serve as a counterbalance to purveyors of mindless jingoism:

> Insurgent pen in hand, this is precisely what Rall did, traveling to Afghanistan months after 9/11 to "serve as a counterbalance to the mindless jingoism ... being pumped out by major American newspapers and television networks." And when there, Rall worked outside the corporate media establishment – [much like Glidden and Sacco] – and found that what we've learned of the war is more cartoonish than anything he's drawn: corporate reporters rarely travelled to the real war zones and when they did, they were often so heavily escorted they were unable to see anything other than what the American military or local warlords wanted them to see; most damningly, Rall saw Northern Alliance soldiers paid to shoot rounds into empty desert for exciting TV footage and women paid $200 to take their burqas off on camera, only to put them on again immediately thereafter, fearful of Taliban reprisals.[110]

Agenda-setting, the second term listed above, means in a nutshell that the media decide what the public should talk about, which issues are important, and which are not. Its origins can be traced back to Walter Lippmann's seminal study, *Public Opinion*, in which the author alludes to an 'out of reach, out of sight, out of mind' world shaped by news media.[111] Later Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw developed the term. In their research on the 1968 American presidential campaign, they found that the media were responsible for what voters thought to be major issues of the campaign period: 'The political world is reproduced imperfectly by individual news media. Yet the evidence in this study that voters tend to share the media's composite definition of what is important strongly suggests an agenda-setting function of the mass media'.[112] Although today the ever-

---

[108] Sarah Glidden, 'The Waiting Room', in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/10> [accessed 20 September 2014]

[109] David Axe, 'Everyone Told Us Not to Go to Syria', in *Medium.com* <https://medium.com/war-is-boring/everyone-told-us-not-to-go-to-syria-b942d3c4dea9> [accessed 20 September 2014]

[110] Adam Bessie, 'Warning: This Article Contains Graphic Journalism', in *Truthout* <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/2569:warning-this-article-contains-graphic-journalism> [accessed 20December 2013]

[111] Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1998 [1922]), p. 29.

[112] Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw, 'The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media', *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36.2 (1972), pp. 176-87 (p. 184).

growing number of news channels that are now simultaneously available online, on radio and even on terrestrial televisions offer some liberations from the agenda-setting, as the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann states, 'whatever we know about our society, or indeed about the world in which we live, we know through the mass media'.[113]

Comics journalism does not have any agenda-setting power over a society. On the contrary, it presents an alternative to mainstream journalism which frames – or attempts to frame – public attitudes. Most of the time comics journalists aim to break this oligopoly. Outspokenly, nearly all of them say that they want to show what mainstream journalism hides. Kemal Gökhan Gürses says that he wanted to 'remind people of the incident [the invasion of Iraq] that happened a while ago',[114] thoughts of which have already been expunged from the mainstream agenda. Ted Rall thought before going to Afghanistan that his travel would 'serve as a counterbalance to the mindless jingoism then being pumped out by major American newspapers and television networks'.[115] Joe Sacco complains that the things that he saw in the Middle East do not feature in the American media:

> Americans really think that they're hot shit when it comes to journalism, but all those years of so-called objective journalism have really obscured the reality. For instance, going to the Middle East myself and seeing what I saw, I thought: Why isn't this stuff in the paper?[116]

Though it is claimed that comics journalism cannot set any agenda, given the left-wing bias of most of its exponents it is nevertheless possible to argue that it does indeed have an agenda shaped by the problems and unsuccessful policies of the world's superpower America. Comics journalism mainly comprises its authors' responses towards the failings of the USA, especially with regard to its Middle and Far East regional policies. For example, Gürses' *Ayşegül Savaşta* is a highly political response to the American invasion of Iraq. Sarah Glidden's and David Axe's short works are about Syria, where America has been opposed to president Bashar al-Assad, whom it has nevertheless informed about the latest US air-strikes against ISIS on Syrian territory. Ted Rall travelled to Afghanistan, parts of which America blamed for being the base of Osama Bin Laden's Al-Qaeda, and upon which it consequently soon waged war. Joe Sacco has produced a plethora of works on the Bosnian and Palestinian conflicts in which America remained incapable of effective intervention. Without going so far as to blame the USA overtly — as

---

[113] Niklas Luhmann, *The Reality of the Mass Media*, trans. by Kathleen Cross (California: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 1.
[114] Gürses, *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini*, p. 5.
[115] Ted Rall, *To Afghanistan and Back: A Graphic Travelogue* (New York: NBM, 2002), p. 2
[116] Joe Sacco, interviewed by Liz Crain, July 2011 <http://progressive.org/crainjuly11.html> [27 November 2013]

a French Canadian he is after all in a slightly delicate position ⸺ Guy Delisle has chosen to write travelogues from North Korea, China, Myanmar and Palestine where there is almost no American hegemony.

Finally, the selectivity process is the series of decisions by which issues and events are considered worthy of being disseminated as news items. In effect it amounts to the very creation of featured news stories. In this process, news creates its own value simply by being selected. Although more than a million potentially newsworthy events happen every day in the world, just a few of them become dominant news items. As Stuart Hall argues:

> "News values" are one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All "true journalists" are supposed to possess it: few can or are willing to identify and define it. Journalists speak of "the news" as if events select themselves. Further, they speak as if [choices as to] which is the "most significant" news story, and which "news angles" are most salient are divinely inspired. Yet of the millions of events which occur daily in the world, only a tiny proportion ever become visible as "potential news stories": and of this proportion, only a small fraction are actually produced as the day's news in the news media. We appear to be dealing, then, with a "deep structure" whose function as a selective device is un-transparent even to those who professionally most know how to operate it.[117]

As discussed above, comics journalists mostly tend to select news about America's problematic issues since with its economy and political power,

> [It] guarantees the subjugation of other cultures and competing ideologies, and results in news that is lacking in accurate and generous depictions of other cultures, especially those in the Middle East, where America has a vested interest in democratic ideology. It is a power that controls what stories are told, whose stories get told, and who listens. It is a power that makes peoples and cultures visible or invisible to the Western world.[118]

In their selections of topics for coverage, comics journalists also have other motivations. For example, Guy Delisle claims he does not find news, but that news finds him. He draws and writes about the places he went to with his wife, who works for Médecins Sans Frontières. Kemal Gökhan Gürses – although he remains secretive on this topic – was inspired to create Ayşegül by one of his close friends, physically Nevin Sungur, and others. Sarah Glidden was engaged in tracing her Jewish origins when she produced

---

[117] Stuart Hall, 'The Determinations of News Photographs', in *The Manufacture of News: Deviance, Social Problems and the Mass Media*, ed. by Stanley Cohen and Jock Young, rev. edn (London: Constable, 1981), pp. 226-43 (pp. 234-35).
[118] Molly Scanlon, 'Comics, Journalism, and War Discourse', *Public Knowledge Journal*, 3.1 (2011) <http://pkjournal.org/?page_id=1443> [accessed 22 December 2013]

How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less.[119] By writing on Palestinian issues, Joe Sacco wanted to renounce his childhood view of Palestinians as terrorists:

> […] My impetus for going [to Palestine] was that I felt the American media had really misportrayed the situation [between Israel and the Palestinians] and I was really shocked by that. I grew up thinking of Palestinians as terrorists, and it took a lot of time, and reading the right things, to understand the power dynamic in the Middle East was not what I had thought it was... And basically, it upset me enough that I wanted to go, and, in a small way, give the Palestinians a voice – a lens through which people could see their lives. There are two ways in which Palestinians are portrayed - as terrorist and as victim. There may be truth in certain situations for both descriptions, but Palestinians are also people going to school, who have families, have lives, invite you into their home, and think about their food. I'm deeply saddened by what's going on there ... the same is true for Bosnia. I was appalled by what was going on and went to see what I could do. I was compelled to go and do these stories, as this was the only form of solidarity that I could offer from within me.[120]

The subjective decisions of gatekeepers or journalists in the selectivity process often vary from one country to another across the world depending largely on political and ethnic factors. Reviewing international news reporting in the Norwegian press in the early 1960s, Galtung and Ruge proposed some twelve or fifteen criteria as possible determinants of news value.[121] Nearly four decades later a study of 1276 news articles in three leading UK newspapers published in March 1999 led Harcup and O'Neill to criticise Galtung and Ruge's twelve criteria and to suggest the following alternative determinants of news value, at least some of which are also valid for comics journalism:

- The Power Elite: Stories concerning powerful individuals, organisations or institutions (including political leaders or parties):

The Guardian US Interactive Team's interactive comics journalism *America: Elect! The Action-packed Journey to US Election Day* is a good example for this category.

- Celebrity: Stories concerning people who are already famous

Not very often seen in comics journalism.

- Entertainment: Stories concerning sex, show business, human interest, animals, an unfolding drama, or offering opportunities for humorous treatment, entertaining photographs or witty headlines.

---

[119] Sarah Glidden, *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* (New York: Vertigo, 2011).
[120] Joe Sacco, interviewed by Omar Khalifa, 19 July 2008
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2007/11/2008525185042679346.html> [accessed 27 November 2013]
[121] Johan Galtung, Mari Holmboe Ruge, 'The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers', *Journal of Peace Research*, 2.1 (1965), pp. 64-90.

While relatively few comics journalists deal with such topics as sex, show business, or relate stories that lend themselves to humorous or witty treatment, some do focus on human interest stories involving natural disasters, ecological issues and the abuse of human and / or animal rights.

- Surprise: Stories that have an element of surprise and/or contrast.

Some comics journalism works may include elements of surprise.

- Bad News: Stories with particularly negative overtones, such as conflict or tragedy.

Most comics journalists choose to feature a tragedy or a conflict such as the turmoil in the Middle East which is broadly the subject treated by authors discussed in this thesis.

- Good News: Stories with particularly positive overtones such as rescues and cures.

This is a rarely seen topic in comics journalism, which like the mainstream news media tends to emphasize the world's problems.

- Magnitude: Stories that are perceived as sufficiently significant either in the numbers of people involved or in the potential impact.

This criterion is met by comics journalism, which repeatedly treats the Middle East crisis affecting millions of people.

- Relevance: Stories about issues, groups and nations perceived to be relevant to the audience (such as when shared ethnic identities or political allegiances are involved).

Comics journalism dealing with the turmoil in the Middle East is again a good example of this.

- Follow-up: Stories about subjects already in the news.

Joe Sacco followed up his investigative coverage of Palestine, a region already only too well known internationally, by producing two graphic novels.

- Newspaper Agenda: Stories that set or fit the news organization's own agenda.[122]

---

[122] Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill, 'What Is News? Galtung and Ruge revisited', *Journalism Studies*, 2.2 (2001), pp. 261-80 (p. 279).

The Bosnian War, the Palestinian Issue, the Invasion of Iraq and 9/11 arguably meet this requirement.

4. Comics Journalism and New Journalism

To consider comics journalism without linking it to New Journalism would be futile and myopic. In the following discussion New Journalism will be defined broadly by comparing its evolution with that of comics journalism.

In their quest for originality, literary authors frequently claim to have created new genres just as they give new names to their works. When Henry Fielding wrote *Joseph Andrews*, which is considered by some to be the first full-length English novel, he called it a 'comic epic poem in prose'. Similarly, Truman Capote used to call some of his works 'non-fiction novels', although they have proved to be either partly or largely fabricated. Underlying this so-called experimentation is a concern on Capote's part to appear simultaneously unique and observant of traditionally accepted genres, as he confesses in an interview:

> The author lets his imagination run riot over the facts! If I sound querulous or arrogant about this, it's not only that I have to protect my child, but that I truly don't believe anything like it exists in the history of journalism.[123]

Tom Wolfe, the coiner of the term New Journalism, defines Capote's purpose as follows:

> What [Henry Fielding] was doing, of course – and what Capote would be doing 223 years later – was trying to give his work the cachet of the reigning literary genre of his time, so that literary people would take it seriously. The reigning genre in Fielding's time was epic poetry and verse-drama of the classical sort. The status of the novel was so low – well, it was as low as the status of magazine journalism in 1965 when Capote started publishing *In Cold Blood* in *The New Yorker*.[124]

The same concern still exists among comics journalists today. As discussed in the introduction, there are several other terms which at times have been used in preference to 'comics journalism', although they do not mean exactly the same thing.

Capote's claim to uniqueness also stems from the idea of the death of the novel. Although the novel has never yet died, from time to time people have thought of it as

---

[123] George Plimpton, 'The Story Behind a Nonfiction Novel', *New York Times Book Review*, 16 January 1966, <http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/12/28/home/capote-interview.html> [accessed 3 March 2012]
[124] Wolfe, 'Appendix', p. 52.

moribund.[125] In a 1923 essay called 'Ulysses, Order and Myth', in order to show how different James Joyce's *Ulysses* was from the work of his immediate predecessors T. S. Eliot asserted that 'the novel ended with Flaubert and with James'.[126] Two years later, the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset similarly wrote that 'it has become practically impossible to find new subjects' for the novel.[127] And according to the American literary scholar and critic Louis Decimus Rubin, although novels are still written, all possible literary forms of the genre have been exhausted, and authors should invent new techniques to pursue their writing careers. In tongue-in-cheek fashion he also reminds his readers that the novel is generally seen as a 'nineteenth-century phenomenon':

> So the novel is dead. Who killed the novel? There has been no lack of answers. We are told that the Age of Prose Fiction is over, that the Novel was a nineteenth-century phenomenon which depended for its life on the breakdown of the traditional class structure, and now that the class structure is permanently fluid (try that one at the Country Club), there is no place for the novel.[128]

In *Waiting for the End*, the late American literary critic Leslie Fiedler says that, if the novel dies, it will be for two prime reasons: 'First because the artistic faith that sustained its writers is dead, and second because the audience-need it was invented to satisfy is being better satisfied otherwise'.[129] John Bart, in his essay 'The Literature of Exhaustion', defines 'exhaustion' as 'the used-upness [*sic*] of certain forms or the felt exhaustion of certain possibilities – by no means necessarily a cause for despair,'[130] and he comments further on the lack of what Fiedler calls 'artistic faith':

> Literary forms certainly have histories and historical contingencies, and it may well be that the novel's time as an art form is up, as the "times" of classical tragedy, grand opera, or the sonnet sequence came to be. No necessary cause for alarm in this at all, except perhaps to certain novelists, and one way to handle such a feeling might be to write a novel about it. Whether historically the novel expires or persists as a major art form seems immaterial to me; if enough writers and critics feel apocalyptical about it, their feeling becomes a

---

[125] For the most recent discussion concerning the 'death of the novel', please see Will Self's article on the *Guardian*: Will Self, 'The novel is dead (this time it's for real)', *The Guardian*, 2 May 2014 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/may/02/will-self-novel-dead-literary-fiction> [accessed 5 May 2014]

[126] T. S. Eliot, '"Ulysses, Order, and Myth," Review of *Ulysses* by James Joyce', *The Dial*, 75.5 (1923), pp. 480-83 (p. 483).

[127] José Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Essays on Art, Culture, and Literature* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 59.

[128] Louis Decimus Rubin, 'The Curious Death of the Novel: Or, What to do about Tired Literary Critics', in *The Curious Death of the Novel: Essays in American Literature* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), pp. 3-23 (p. 5).

[129] Leslie Fiedler, *Waiting for the End: The American Literary Scene from Hemingway to Baldwin* (London: Cape, 1965), p. 173.

[130] John Barth, 'The Literature of Exhaustion', in *The Friday Book: Essays and Other Non-Fiction* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), pp. 62-76 (p. 64).

considerable cultural fact, like the feeling that Western civilization, or the world, is going to end rather soon.[131]

Similarly, although comics journalists do not mean to imply the death of journalism, most of them in the USA and elsewhere complain about the bad journalism done by the mainstream media. Joe Sacco has criticised the offensive and distorted aspects of news reporting:

> I still read *The New York Times* — not that I find its reporting always particularly good. There are some subjects that I know well, and when I read the *New York Times* correspondent writing about it — I can't tell if it's the correspondent or the editor who's played with the story — there's some stuff that I find really offensive and wrong based on my own personal experience. So it makes me a little suspicious of the rest of it somehow.[132]

Sarah Glidden asserts that she, together with her friends who formed the non-profit multi-media journalism collective called the Common Language Project, chose to become involved in international issues because of the general attitude of US mainstream media towards international coverage:

> We were in the middle of two expensive and disastrous wars, a collapsing economy, and a handful of other tense conflicts and relationships with other groups and governments. Instead of expanding coverage of these issues, American journalism seemed to be turning inward. There are a bunch of reasons for this, of course. The business model the news media had been using for almost a century wasn't working anymore, and it couldn't adapt. Foreign bureaus and investigative reporting were the first things that newspapers cut to save money. International reporting still exists, it's just that there is much less of it and there are fewer people doing it.[133]

In the Turkish context Kemal Gökhan Gürses also mentioned the same problem in my interview with him as will be seen in the chapter studying his work.

Among the new genres produced as a result of the aforementioned attempted rejection of the novel is New Journalism, which derives from the effort to liken journalism to novel-writing. Before any analysis of New Journalism and its relationship to comics journalism, it is advisable to contextualize its birth by examining the social, political, and economic situation of the United States of America of the 1960s.[134] It was a decade of wars, uprisings, revolutions, freedom movements and technological developments. Colour

---

[131] Ibid, pp. 71-72.
[132] Joe Sacco, interviewed by Liz Crain.
[133] Sarah Glidden, interviewed by Sara Drake, 12 May 2013 <http://badatsports.com/2013/meanwhile-on-comics-journalism-and-an-interview-with-sarah-glidden/> [accessed 27 November 2013]
[134] Although the term 'New Journalism' was first coined by Matthew Arnold in 1887, I use it here in this thesis to mean the movement in the United States of America during the 1960s and 1970s.

television, already a part of daily life for some Americans in the 1950s, became widely available and people watched the landing on the moon live. While the political left was rising, right-wingers were hunting them down. Three major political figures, John F. Kennedy, his brother Robert ('Bobby') and Martin Luther King, were assassinated; the U.S. army was fighting in Vietnam. 'Those years – 1965-1973 – were the American High Sixties. The Vietnam War was in overdrive through most of the period; the U.S. economy was fat and bloody; academic imperialism was as popular as the political kind'.[135] This decade created its counterculture and sense of alienation epitomized by the Kent State massacre on 4 May 1968. As Nicholas Klar explains in his essay:

> The growing affluence of American society contributed by blurring class and race lines, and undermining the self-denying ethic. New wealth and liberal policy also ensured the huge growth of higher education [in institutions] which were to become hotbeds of student radicalism. Students of the 'baby boom' generation had more time, and more money, than their parents to indulge in protest activities. Universities brought forth the 'new left' thinking, which due to clashes of ideology, eventually split into several different variants.[136]

In this sense, there is a relationship between New Journalism and the era in which it flourished. New Journalism tried to be the voice of the counterculture. Phyllis Frus writes about the field that it covered:

> New journalism was defined by the dominant as "Other" in much the way the subcultural and countercultural phenomena that the New Journalists covered – Vietnam War protests; civil rights, Black Power, labor-organizing, and student-militancy campaigns; the "human potential" movement and Utopian communes; and the myriad subcultures revolving around race; reggae, rock, drugs, and clothing styles – were seen by the dominant culture as departing from the consensual values and practices of society as a whole.[137]

Likewise, as has been broadly indicated above, comics journalism is 'other' for exponents of and subscribers to the 'dominant' journalism. Comics journalists cover the topics that are generally ignored by the mainstream media. Just as the Vietnam War may be seen as the main cause for the emergence of New Journalism, so September 11 explains the increase in comics journalism. After 9/11, together with the Istanbul Bombings on the 15th and 20th November 2003 and the 7th July 2005 London Bombings, the trauma that had affected America nearly triggered a worldwide trauma thanks to President Bush who

---

[135] Barth, p. 62.

[136] Nicholas Klar, 'How did the 1960's protest movements force American society from a position of consensus, to accommodation, and finally to division?', in *Klarbooks.com* <http://klarbooks.com/academic/1960s-protests.html> [accessed 11 December 2013]

[137] Phyllis Frus, *The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative: The Timely and the Timeless* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 129.

famously said 'Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists'.[138] Throughout its history, America has always found an enemy to blame, because, to quote David Ryan:

> Much of US identity and one basis of its nationalism is formed in opposition and opprobrium directed at an 'Other'. Despite the early injunctions in US foreign policy not to go in search of monsters to destroy, they have usually animated its foreign policy and provided it with an overarching purpose. Broad conceptual dichotomies have provided a momentum and a point of contrast to bring US identity into sharp relief. […] These dichotomies returned in the early Cold War, at the outset of which President Truman enjoined audiences to make a choice at that juncture in world history between two – and only two – ways of life. His doctrine of 1947 represented the popular articulation of containment, which according to the dominant narratives of US diplomatic history took the US into Vietnam. […] Similarly, Bush's early response after 9/11 presented another dualistic choice of either standing with the US or against it. The administration's rhetorical conflation of all sorts of disparate opponents belied reality and set Washington on course for Iraq, thus evading the implications of 9/11.[139]

According to Michael Schudson, 9/11 imposed knee-jerk uniformity on American journalism at the expense of informed analysis:

> September 11 combined all three moments into one: tragedy, public danger, and a grave threat to national security. Journalists did not have to be instructed to speak reverently of the victims of the terrorist attacks. They did not have to be directed to pronounce the firefighters and police officers at the World Trade Center heroes. They did not have to be commanded to reassure citizens when anthrax infection threatened public panic. In tragedy, public danger, and threats to national security, there are no "sides." We are all in it together. Much reporting after September 11 turned toward a prose of solidarity rather than a prose of information.[140]

Thirteen years later, the same problem persists. In order to protect the security of the nation, news items are filtered through this created paranoia. Former CIA employee Edward Snowden who released around 200,000 classified documents to the press chose a documentary filmmaker, Laura Poitras, rather than a journalist from big media cartels to help him reveal the secret files because

---

[138] George Walker Bush, 'Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People', in *Whitehouse.archives.gov* <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html> [accessed 18 January 2014]

[139] David Ryan, '9/11 and US Foreign Policy', in *American Thought and Culture in the 21st Century*, ed. by Martin Halliwell and Catherine Morley (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), pp. 49-64 (pp. 56-57).

[140] Michael Schudson, 'What's unusual about covering politics as usual', in *Journalism after September 11*, ed. by Barbie Zelizer and Stuart Allan (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 36-47 (p. 41).

after 9/11, many of the most important news outlets in America abdicated their role as a check to power — the journalistic responsibility to challenge the excesses of government — for fear of being seen as unpatriotic and punished in the market during a period of heightened nationalism. From a business perspective, this was the obvious strategy, but what benefited the institutions ended up costing the public dearly. The major outlets are still only beginning to recover from this cold period.[141]

The main source of comics journalism before 9/11 was the Bosnian War, where America was blamed for being late to intervene in the conflict. Joe Sacco and Joe Kubert produced their documentary comics on the conflict which include *Soba* (1988), *Safe Area Gorazde* (2000), *The Fixer* (2003) and War's End (2005) by Joe Sacco and *Fax from Sarajevo* (1996) by Joe Kubert, and *Shenzhen* (2000) by Guy Delisle on the Far East China.

In the post 9/11 era, there have also appeared many examples of comics journalism by comparison with the pre-9/11 era. Since 2001 comics journalism has gradually developed into a serious sector with contributions by new exponents like Sarah Glidden, David Axe, Ted Rall, Josh Neufeld, Dan Archer, Kemal Gökhan Gürses, and websites solely devoted to the genre like News Manga (Japanese), The Common Language Project, The Cartoon Picayune, Archcomix and The Cartoon Movement.[142]

Additionally, most of the works produced on the above-mentioned websites cover topics that are inadequately mentioned enough in mainstream journalism. *Army of God* by David Axe and Tim Hamilton tells the story of the African militant Lord's Resistance Army led by Ugandan ICC fugitive Joseph Kony. (Fig. 17) Sarah Glidden focuses on the Middle East with *The Waiting Room* and her forthcoming work *Rolling Blackouts*. Josh Neufeld's *Bahrain: Lines in Ink, Lines in the Sand* tells of Bahrain's short-lived Pearl Revolution through two young Bahraini editorial cartoonists who found themselves on opposite sides. (Fig. 18) Dan Archer's interactive comic *The Nisoor Square Shootings* is a retelling of the incident where seventeen Iraqi civilians were killed. Ted Rall draws and details the student movement that exploded in Quebec in the summer of 2012 in *Quebec's Not-So-Quiet Revolution*.[143] (Fig. 19)

The exponential increase in comics journalism after 9/11becomes clearer thanks to Fred Halliday's reading of 9/11 according to which 'the main target of 11 September is not U.S. power or a somewhat carelessly defined "civilized" or "democratic" world, but the

---

[141] Edward Snowden, interviewed by Peter Maass, 13 August 2013, in 'Peter Maass Blog', <http://www.petermaass.com/blog/the_snowden_interview/> [accessed 29 November 2013]
[142] For an up-to-date list of comics journalism, please see Lukas Plank's website: <http://lukasplank.com/2013/06/04/comics-journalism-index/> [accessed 22 September 2014].
[143] Ted Rall, 'Quebec's Not-So-Quiet Revolution', in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/47> [accessed 20 September 2014]

states of the Middle East themselves',[144] which in the end were reduced to turmoil. This argument chimes with Samuel Huntington's famous 'Clash of Civilizations' thesis which basically claims that

> the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.[145]

In his article expressing the viewpoint of a US conservative political scientist Huntington, so to speak, created a path for people who want to follow the tradition of blaming Muslims as he sought to revive the medieval conflict between Islam and the West and tried every way to prove the superiority of the latter. Edward Said reminds us to read Bernard Lewis' 1990 article entitled 'The Roots of Muslim Rage' together with Huntington's in order to see the extent and nature of the hostile attitude towards Muslims because

> in both articles, the personification of enormous entities called "the West" and "Islam" is recklessly affirmed, as if hugely complicated matters like identity and culture existed in a cartoonlike world where Popeye and Bluto bash each other mercilessly, with one always more virtuous pugilist getting the upper hand over his adversary.[146]

In the footsteps of Huntington and Lewis, just a decade afterwards, the president of America, as mentioned above, told the world to choose which side it was on which basically meant a choice between us (the West) or them (Muslim terrorists). Inevitably, political cartoons capitalized with remarkable speed on the frantic aftermath of 9/11. In the slow build-up to war on 18th February 2002 the cover of Germany's leading weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel* portrayed President George Walker Bush as Rambo, Secretary of State Colin Powell as Batman, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld as Conan, Vice

---

[144] Fred Halliday, *Two Hours that Shook the World: September 11, 2001: Causes and Consequences* (London: Saqi Books, 2002), p. 40.

[145] Samuel Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?' *Foreign Affairs*, 72. 3 (1993), p. 22. Huntington's thesis that a 'clash of civilizations' would become the animating force in post–Cold War world affairs was first presented as a Bradley Lecture at the American Enterprise Institute on October 19, 1992. <http://www.aei.org/issue/society-and-culture/samuel-p-huntington-1927-2008/> [accessed 27 September 2014].

[146] Edward Said, 'The Clash of Ignorance', The Nation, 4 October 2001 <http://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance?page=full> [accessed 25 March 2014]; Bernard Lewis, 'The Roots of Muslim Rage', *The Atlantic Monthly*, 266.3 (September 1990), pp. 47-60 <http://pages.pomona.edu/~vis04747/h124/readings/Lewis_roots_of_muslim_rage.pdf> [accessed 25 March 2014]

President Richard Cheney as Mr Halliburton and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice as Valeria of the Red Brotherhood with a subtitle of 'The Bush Warriors: America's Crusade Against Evil'.[147] (Fig. 20)

Not only did weekly news magazines respond to this call to arms, but also comics, especially those belonging to the superhero genre. In the aftermath of September 11, many superhero comics and special issues supported the American government's war on terror by just mentioning a few words which implicitly or explicitly identified Muslims as being responsible for the attacks. For example there is a panel in 'Static Shock: Wednesday Afternoon' by Dwayne McDuffie, Denys Cowan and Prentis Rollins in which Mr Akkad is attacked in his arcade by his old customers, local youngsters who see Mr Akkad as fitting the profile of 'terrorists'. It is noteworthy that one of the youngsters utters a sentence which closely matches the above-mentioned views, especially those of Huntington in 'The Clash of Civilizations': 'This is about *civilization*. Are you for it or against it?'[148] '(Fig. 21) Or in Frank Miller's *Holy Terror*, when a 'Muslim' suicide bomber tries to hit a saloon but fails because of a blown fuse in his suicide belt, 'a cop [in the crowd] happened by just in time to spare the slob a nasty trip to paradise'.[149] (Fig. 22) All this, of course, conveniently forgets America's earlier experience of home-grown terrorism, namely the Oklahoma City bombing of 1995 perpetrated by Timothy McVeigh, although publications on the topic were still appearing a decade later.[150]

After September 11, comics journalists mostly produced work on the Axis of Evil countries proscribed by President Bush on 29 January 2002 and including Iran, Iraq and North Korea which were believed to have weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).[151] This axis was developed 'Beyond the Axis of Evil' to cover Cuba, Libya and Syria by John Bolton, then Undersecretary of State, on 6 May 2002.[152] Later the list was completed by Condoleezza Rice's 'Outposts of Tyranny' with the addition of new countries Belarus,

---

[147] On 27 October 2008, *Der Spiegel* put them on the cover again but in a completely war-worn depiction with a subtitle of 'The Bush Warriors: End of the Performance'. Please see 'Die Bush Krieger: Amerikas Feldzug gegen das Böse (The Bush Warriors: America's Crusade Against Evil)' *Der Spiegel*, 18 February 2002; 'Die Bush Krieger: Ende der Vorstellung (The Bush Warriors: End of the Performance)' *Der Spiegel*, 27 October 2008.

[148] Dwayne McDuffie, Denys Cowan and Prentis Rollins, 'Static Shock: Wednesday Afternoon', in *9-11: The World's Finest Comic Book Writers and Artists Tell Stories to Remember*, vol. 2 (New York: DC Comics, 2002), pp. 29-37 (p. 34). Italics are mine.

[149] Frank Miller, *Holy Terror* (California: Legendary Comics, 2011), p. 76.

[150] Kathy Sanders, *After Oklahoma City: A Grieving Grandmother Uncovers Shocking Truths about the Bombing ... and Herself* (Arlington, TX: Master Strategies, 2005); *9:02 am, April 19, 1995: The Official Record of the Oklahoma City Bombing* (Oklahoma City: Oklahoma Today, 2005).

[151] George Walker Bush, 'President Delivers State of the Union Address', in *Whitehouse.archive.gov* <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/print/20020129-11.html> [accessed 30 January 2014]

[152] John Bolton, 'Beyond the Axis of Evil', in *Acronym.org.uk* <http://www.acronym.org.uk/docs/0205/doc01.htm> [accessed 30 January 2014]

Burma and Zimbabwe,[153] although only one of these six additional countries is dominated by a Muslim majority. U.S. concern consequently centred mainly the Middle East, where states were either attacked by the U.S. itself or reduced to a state of turmoil owing to the so-called 'Arab Spring'. As already demonstrated, much comics journalism has focused on these countries.

Superhero and journalism comics treating the September 11 attacks differ mainly in the attitude they take. Whereas superhero comics have mostly supported the U.S. government's hunt for Muslim terrorists by creating Muslim enemies in their panels, comics journalism has given Muslims the right to speak. While superheroes have shown how powerful America is, comics journalists have revealed what kind of suffering it has caused, especially in the Middle East. It is possible to argue that comics journalists have had a mission, the mission of informing people all around the world about what really has been occurring in the so-called 'Axis of Evil' countries and the Middle East.

One of the pioneers of New Journalism, Tom Wolfe denies that it constituted a movement: '[…] Nevertheless, New Journalism was the term that caught on eventually. It was no "movement". There were no manifestos, clubs, salons, cliques; not even a saloon where the faithful gathered, since there was no faith and no creed'.[154] Although Wolfe says that there are no rules and manifestos for New Journalism, he defines it in such a strict way that his 1973 article becomes a manifesto in itself. On the other hand, the pioneer of comics journalism Joe Sacco writes an overt manifesto in the preface to his recent book *Journalism*. His attempt to create a general manifesto for all journalists from his experience of comics journalism has inevitably failed to suit everyone.

New Journalism's proponents aimed 'to excite the reader both intellectually and emotionally',[155] by blending the techniques of realism with journalism.[156] For the New Journalist, it was and still is vitally important to narrate his or her facts to the reader through novelistic techniques:

> The new journalist, then, will have to have something of the novelist's eye and ear, the novelist's ability to project himself into the head and viscera of others, the novelist's cauterizing skills at self-exploration. This doesn't mean he has to be able to write novels.[157]

---

[153]Condoleezza Rice, 'Excerpts: Condoleezza Rice', in *BBC.co.uk* <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4184751.stm> [accessed 30 January 2014]

[154] Wolfe, 'Seizing the Power', p. 37.

[155] Wolfe, 'Seizing the Power', p. 28.

[156] Ibid, p. 46.

[157] Nat Hentoff, 'Behold the New Journalism – It's Coming After You', in *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy*, ed. by Ronald Weber (New York: Hastings House, 1974), pp. 49-53 (p. 53).

In one of his interviews, Tom Wolfe expresses the same view:

> I think the New Journalism is the use by people writing nonfiction of
> techniques which heretofore had been thought of as confined to the novel or to
> the short story, to create in one form both the kind of objective reality of
> journalism and the subjective reality that people have always gone to the novel
> for.[158]

Comics journalism develops this notion of crossover as it is a medium where journalism, novelistic writing and art meet. It would consequently be conceptually deficient not to mention the tie between New Journalism and comics journalism. The prime difference is quite simply the visual support that comics journalism offers through its images. When asked about the relationship between comics journalism and New Journalism, Joe Sacco said that

> It [New Journalism] definitely has been [meaningful to my work]. *Dispatches*,
> by Michael Herr, which is considered New Journalism — the strength of that
> book is in the atmosphere it creates. It gives you a taste of Vietnam in your
> mouth. It's not about "On April 12, 1965, the Americans landed and I drank…."
> or something like that. It's about mood, in a way. I've read many books about
> the Vietnam War, because once I was doing a comic about it, which I
> scuttled.[159]

New Journalists and comics journalists often use first person narrative since the use of the first person helps authors to make their readers potentially share their viewpoint and/or possibly empathize with or react against their protagonists. It is one of the easiest ways of writing about the interior monologues of the writer or his/her chief character:

> At its best, the first person singular can reflect the context of events, give a
> passionate depth sounding, resonate with social need, answer for a moment the
> avidity for touch and intimacy which is one of the diseases of a mass society,
> and thus truly justify what this writer says, feels, suffers.[160]

Comics journalists do not have to force themselves to use a subjective viewpoint because by setting themselves in the narrative, they achieve the same immediate success as New Journalists gain thanks to the use of 'I'. That said, as a form of creative non-fiction, the work of comics journalists also offers the possibility of ironically skewed or unreliable reporting in the tradition of the borrowed first-person narrator used by certain authors since

---

[158] Leonard Wallace Robinson, 'The New Journalism: A Panel Discussion with Harold Hayes, Gay Talese, Tom Wolfe and Professor L. W. Robinson ', in *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy*, ed. by Ronald Weber (New York: Hastings House, 1974), pp. 66-75 (p. 67).

[159] Joe Sacco, interviewed by Hilary Chute, June 2011, <http://www.believermag.com/issues/201106/?read=interview_sacco> [accessed 5 December 2013]

[160] Herbert Gold, 'On Epidemic First Personism', in *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy*, ed. by Ronald Weber (New York: Hastings House, 1974), pp. 283-287 (p. 286).

The Arabian Nights.[161] Most comics journalists include themselves in their stories. Joe Sacco and Guy Delisle are protagonists throughout their stories, whereas Kemal Gökhan Gürses only appears in the prologue and uses Ayşegül as a vehicle to express the first person point of view. Joe Kubert follows Gürses in telling the story through the mouth of a character, Ervin, in *Fax from Sarajevo*.

The main reason for exponents of New Journalism and comics journalism to use a subjective, first person viewpoint is that they do not believe in objectivity. New Journalism found subjectivity by likening itself to the novel, while comics journalism realized itself through the medium of comics which are 'interpretive even when they are slavish renditions of photographs'.[162] Art Spiegelman goes so far as to argue that the subjectivity of comics journalism makes its message more trustworthy than that of the mainstream news media:

> The phony objectivity that comes with a camera is a convention and a lie in the same way as writing in the third person rather than the first person. To write a comics journalism report you're already making an acknowledgment of biases and an urgency that communicates another level of information.[163]

Comics journalism is, according to its exponents, one step beyond New Journalism in terms of inviting readers into the story because readers can easily identify with comics characters. McCloud says that

> When you look at a photo or realistic drawing of a face, you see it as the face of another. But when you enter the world of the cartoon, you see yourself. I believe this is the primary cause of our childhood fascination with cartoons though other factors such as universal identification, simplicity and the childlike features of many cartoon characters also play a part. The cartoon is a vacuum into which our identity and awareness are pulled, […] an empty shell that we inhabit which enables us to travel in another realm. We don't just observe the cartoon, we become it![164]

From this observation it is possible to argue that the simpler the drawing, the more identification it invites and receives. For this reason, Joe Sacco draws himself in a very cartoonish manner while his depictions of others are realistic. Among the three comics journalists that are covered in this thesis, Guy Delisle is the one who uses the simplest drawings. Except in his self-portrayal Joe Sacco prefers the most accurate depictions possible as indicated in his manifesto. Kemal Gökhan Gürses likewise tends to draw as

---

[161] For a list please see: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Fiction_with_unreliable_narrators> [accessed 27 September 2014].
[162] Sacco, 'Preface: A Manifesto, Anyone?', in *Journalism*, p. ix.
[163] Quoted in Kristian Williams.
[164] McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, p. 36.

realistically as possible, although he uses some fictional elements. Guy Delisle prefers simple lines. In this regard, it is arguable that within comics journalism, the works of Joe Sacco constitute a strict mainstream within comics journalism, while on the contrary other comics journalists remain aloof from this vein and stay more independent.

Reportage is the essence of New Journalism. What is different from classic reportage is that in their interviews its exponents feature 'live events and people'.[165] The American writer and columnist Gay Talese clearly defines this difference in one of his interviews:

> Interviewing from time of birth right through, and interviewing lots of other people who know your subject. And then having finished that, that work, the interviewing and understanding of your character, then you start. You start to follow the person around. And in the old form of magazine writing, they would have stopped at that point. They would have interviewed, asked the direct questions, throw it all together and do the piece. Well, that's where the old ended, and that's where now I would begin. With all that background just as an understanding of character, so that if something happened on the Broadway stage, I would know how that might have related to something in a person's career earlier or in childhood, or I would have an understanding of that.[166]

Reportage is not, however, the essence of comics journalism. As seen in the works of Guy Delisle, Kemal Gokhan Gurses and Joe Kubert, comics journalists need to relate a current or past event drawing on real documents and witnesses. But, especially for Joe Sacco and Sarah Glidden, reportage is nevertheless highly important since their work mostly depends on interviews. They act as reporters in the first instance: they interview people, recording them on tape, taking notes or photographs or drawing rough sketches, before later giving full rein to their artistic skills when they are at their drawing board. Since they do not want to miss a key point in their interviews, at that stage they do not spend much time in drawing. Comics journalists are reporters first, then artists. They act as correspondents in public and become artists only when they are on their own. When they interview people, they keep silent and listen alertly to the eyewitnesses while collecting and memorizing visual details to draw later.

According to Tom Wolfe, the extraordinary power of New Journalism stems from the following four devices:

- Scene-by-scene construction, telling the story by moving from scene to scene and resorting as little as possible to sheer historical narrative.
- Witness [to] the scenes in other people's lives as they took place – and record[ing] the dialogue in full.

---

[165] Newfield, p. 61.
[166] Robinson, p. 72.

- Third-person point of view, the technique of presenting every scene to the reader through the eyes of a particular character, giving the reader the feeling of being inside the character's mind and experiencing the emotional reality of the scene as he experiences it.
- Recording of everyday gestures, habits, manners, customs, styles of furniture, clothing, decoration, styles of travelling, eating, keeping house, modes of behaving toward children, servants, superiors, inferiors, peers, plus the various looks, glances, poses, styles of walking and other symbolic details that might exist within a scene.[167]

These four rules of presentation and observation largely match the practices of comics journalism. Firstly, most works of comics journalism are divided into chapters depicting different scenes that imply the evolution of narrative visually rather than verbally. Secondly, comics journalists mostly tend to tell the stories of people by following them very closely. Thus Joe Sacco's *The Fixer* tells the story of the protagonist, Nevan, by watching him throughout the book. Thirdly, instead of describing characters' emotions with words, comics journalists show them via their drawings. In *Ayşegül Savaşta,* Kemal Gökhan Gürses gives two full long strips (which means two days in a row in a newspaper comic strip) so as to stress the heroine's reaction to the chaotic atmosphere right after the bombing. (Fig. 23) Joe Sacco spends eight pages in order to reflect Ghassan's feelings of confinement during his nineteen-day stay in custody, dividing each of these eight pages into equal vertical frames as narrow as Ghassan's cell.[168] (Fig. 24) Lastly, in keeping with Wolfe's fourth rule of procedure in New Journalism, all comics journalists depict details as much as they can, hiding them in their frames for readers to find rather than indicating them explicitly in words. Details are vital to the nature of comics journalism. Sacco often draws two-page-wide frames to give a detailed view of the scenes he depicts. Delisle uses images to give us interesting facts about local life in his works while looking for a playground for his children or wandering around on his own. In *Fax from Sarajevo* Joe Kubert shows the progressive destruction of the city in the background of his drawings. (Fig. 25)

New Journalism is not a movement that flourished and disappeared in a decade. It still survives, continuing to share the same contrarian viewpoint opposed to the mainstream and to advocate telling the hidden truth. These days it has, however, taken a new guise, appearing in a new mixed medium: comics. For example, in his hybrid work combining prose diary and comic strip *To Afghanistan and Back*, Ted Rall suggests that covering Afghanistan is not as easy as it is said to be. Guy Delisle's comics give insightful

---

[167] Wolfe, 'Seizing the Power', pp. 46-47.
[168] Sacco, *Palestine*, pp. 105-112.

documentation of far and hard-to-reach places such as, Pyongyang, Burma, and Shenzhen. Hence, it is more than plausible to suggest that comics journalists are as revolutionary and radical as were the New Journalists and should be accepted as their successors.

To exclude new journalism when assessing comics journalism is, as previously indicated, like talking about Marxism without mentioning Karl Marx. Unfortunately, Benjamin Woo fails to include new journalism in his review of Sacco's *Palestine*, which in terms of traditional journalism, he labels a non-journalistic work despite its general acceptance as one of the first examples of comics journalism. Woo's first concern is that *Palestine* 'was produced without the support of a news agency and released by a publisher of alternative and pornographic comic books'.[169] There is no necessity for a work to be published by a news agency for it to be accepted as journalism if we take account of new journalists' works which have been published by book companies. Secondly, Woo accuses Sacco of not meeting any 'notable people'.[170] Who are these notable people? Can an ordinary person not be notable? Is s/he not worth interviewing? Possibly, these notable people are from 'the power elite' which is one of the determinants of news value that Harcup and O'Neill suggested.[171]

5. Autobiography, Travel Writing and Comics Journalism

5.1. Autobiography and Comics Journalism

Autobiography has long been a part of literature. According to the well-known definition by Philippe Lejeune, autobiography is 'a retrospective account in prose which a real person gives of his/her own existence, with the accent on his/her individual life, and in particular the history of his/her personality'.[172] Autobiography in comics goes back to early 1970s' underground comics, or comix, especially to the work of Robert Crumb, who put himself in drawings which 'established a new type of graphic confessional, a defiantly working-class strain of autobiography.'[173]

---

[169] Benjamin Woo, 'Reconsidering Comics Journalism: Information and Experience in Joe Sacco's Palestine', in *The Rise and Reason of Comics and Graphic Literature: Critical Essays on the Form*, ed. by. Joyce Goggin and Dan Hassler-Forest (North Carolina: McFarland, 2010), pp. 166-177 (p. 173).
[170] Ibid.
[171] Harcup and O'Neill, p. 279.
[172] Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, ed. by. Paul John Eakin, trans. by. Katherine Leary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989 [1975]), p. 4.
[173] Charles Hatfield, *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), p. 111.

Comics journalism is intermingled with autobiography basically because the journalist or protagonist in comics journalism tells the events from his/her point of view. In both genres, the storyteller includes himself/herself in the drawings and the texts. Furthermore, New Journalism and underground comics, from which comics journalism takes its roots, have undeniable ties with autobiography. In order to identify the differences between comics journalism and autobiography, we should again consult Philippe Lejeune, who states that there are four criteria which characterize an autobiography:

- Form of Language: narrative, and in prose.
- Subject treated: individual life, story of a personality.
- Situation of the author: the author (whose name refers to a real person) and the narrator are identical.
- Position of the narrator: the narrator and the principal character are identical, and retrospective point of the narrative.

As may be seen from this list, the main difference between comics journalism and autobiography is the subject. Comics journalists focus on the interest of humanity whereas autobiographies are by definition primarily self-centred, even though many raise wider issues in passing. Comics journalists do not primarily aim to tell their own stories or memories; instead they are in search of events that occurred in the relatively recent past and which qualify as news. In this pursuit, they may of course choose to include stories in which they also play a minor role.

Some of the most popular autobiographical comics include the late Harvey Pekar's album series *American Splendor,* begun in 1976 and continued posthumously thanks to his collaborators, Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, Craig Thompson's *Blankets* and Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* are some of the most popular autobiographical comics. It is an undeniable fact that, while they overload the reader with trauma and tragedy, they lack widely significant news value and so fail to represent journalistic values.

Conversely, the works of Joe Sacco and Guy Delisle, Kemal Gökhan Gürses's *Ayşegül Savaşta* and the other arguably more minor pieces of comics journalism mentioned above all talk about past or ongoing events which qualify as newsworthy because of their wider human implications.

Autobiographical comics are only an alternative to the mainstream superhero genre, whereas, when it uses the first person, comics journalism offers an alternative both to mainstream journalism and to the superhero genre.

5.2. Travel Writing and Comics Journalism

People have always enjoyed reading travel writing for the vicarious pleasure of hearing different voices from the far side of the world which they would possibly never visit. Travel writing, which has been studied as an interdisciplinary subject including culture, geography, ethnography and literature, also has a place as a genre within comics studies.

It is arguable that comics owe oriental stereotyping to Western travel writers who introduced the East to Western readers through their detailed descriptive texts, sketches, drawings and paintings. As Edward Said argues in *Orientalism*:

> [The] thesis is that the essential aspects of modern Orientalist theory and practice (from which present–day Orientalism derives) can be understood not as a sudden access of knowledge about the Orient, but as a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, predisposed, and re–formed by such disciplines as philology, which in turn were naturalized, modernized and laicized substitutes for (or versions of) Christian supernaturalism. In the form of new texts and ideas, the East was accommodated to these structures.[174]

Also, from the late fifteenth century until the end of the seventeenth century, i.e. after the medieval Crusades, the Ottomans, in other words 'Muslims', reached the borders of Europe and successfully besieged the continent not only with their military and naval forces but also with their culture. And, while Western society nevertheless quietly embraced and admired some aspects of this culture for its exoticism, the European authorities generally responded in Said's view by sharpening the difference between the West and the East and defending themselves from this 'perilous' culture by creating stereotypes which still abound in Western culture and literature.

These stereotypes are still so strong after hundreds of years that even today they are found in many a Middle Easterner's works. Especially after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey turned into a republic which in its haste to modernize and industrialize turned its face to the West, rejecting its ancestral roots dating back thousands of years. In order to seem more occidental than the West, Turkey began to differentiate herself from the rest of the Middle East, or the Muslim part of the world, which Turkish writers and artists depicted in their works by resorting to Oriental stereotypes. As will be discussed in the next following chapter, Turkish cartoonist Kemal Gökhan Gürses also follows the same stereotypes that Joe Sacco and other Western artists use.

Travel writing and journalism meet on the road because a journalist needs to pursue news stories and, in order to find them, s/he needs to travel. Hence Zelizer's proposed

---

[174] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 122.

etymology of 'news' as an acronym for the four directions in which news travelled – north, east, west, south. So, what makes a piece of travel writing journalism? Firstly, the destination that a journalist aims for should be off the beaten track. People do not want to hear about a place or a city that they already know too much about. Secondly, the destination should arouse curiosity. People are always interested in learning more about closed societies like Burma, North Korea, Iran or Cuba. It is not possible to count a London travelogue as journalism. Lastly, there should be a problem, turmoil, oppression or a conflict in the destination. Popular destinations in this category today are mostly the Middle East countries like Iraq, Palestine, Syria, and Afghanistan.

One of the earliest examples of travel journalism to employ illustrations, possibly the first of its kind, is Homer Davenport's *My Quest of the Arab Horse*.[175] It could have been the first specimen of comics journalism if it had been solely written and drawn in the comics medium. An American political cartoonist of the yellow journalism era and one of the first major American breeders of Arabian horses, Homer Davenport wanted to travel to the Ottoman Empire in his quest to purchase pure desert-bred Arabian horses. In December of 1905 he approached President Roosevelt for help, and in January 1906, Roosevelt provided him with a letter of support that he was able to present to the Turkish Ambassador to the United States, Chikeb Bey (Şekip Bey), who contacted the Sultan. To the surprise of both Davenport and the Ambassador, the permit, called an *irade*, was granted, allowing the export of 'six or eight' horses. It was the first time that Arabian horses officially had been allowed to be exported from the Ottoman Empire in thirty-five years. Before Davenport left Constantinople to travel to Aleppo and then into the desert, he visited the Sultan's stables, and also took advantage of an opportunity to view the Sultan during a public appearance. He displayed his artistic ability and talent for detail by sketching several portraits of the Sultan from memory about a half-hour after observing him, as he believed the Sultan to be unwilling to have his image drawn. Davenport's personal impression of the Sultan was sympathetic, viewing the ruler as a frail, elderly man burdened by the weight of his office but kind and fatherly to his children. Davenport wrote in his book about the moment when he saw Sultan Abdulhamid II, who was one of the lesser known but very important figures of his era (Fig. 26):

> Can you imagine my feelings? Here was a man, not twenty-five feet from me, whose features most of the world did not know and wanted to see; one of the great rulers of the earth who had never posed for a picture—and I did not dare pull a sketching pad from my pocket![176]

---

[175] Homer Davenport, *My Quest of the Arab Horse* (New York: B. W. Dodge & Company, 1909).
[176] Ibid., p. 39.

Likewise, *The Photographer: Into War-torn Afghanistan with Doctors without Borders*,[177]an example of hybrid comics journalism mixing photographs, comics and text, which 'illuminates many of the challenges that Americans have been struggling to understand since 9/11',[178] could be seen as travel writing since it narrates the journey of the humanitarian mission in Afganistan under the Taliban. (Fig. 27)

As discussed widely above, nearly all of the comics journalists travel by themselves or they use protagonists who travel to gather information to create a kind of journalism.

6. Visual Journalism

In order to understand what comics journalism is, it is vital to look at the history of visual journalism, i.e. the strategic combination of words and images with the aim of conveying information. Visual journalism covers paintings, drawings (including cartoons and caricatures), engravings, graphics, illustrations, photographs and in today's world, comics.

As previously noted, throughout history since classical antiquity, it is possible to see the use of paintings and drawings so as to enlighten the public such as Trajan's column and the Bayeux Tapestry.

In the eighteenth century, William Hogarth, famous for his satirical depictions of daily life in London, was one exponent of the art. As can be seen in one of his masterpieces, *Beer Street and Gin Lane* (1751) (Fig. 28), by combining two drawings in juxtaposition Hogarth highlights the problem of 'gin and the negative effects it has when consumed in high quantities as opposed to the "healthy" consumption of much weaker English beer which was believed to cause less [*sic*] social problems'[179]

The paintings and etchings by the somewhat later Spanish artist Francisco Goya can likewise be read as examples of visual journalism. Although he was not a journalist and concealed his polemical intention when producing the set of aquatint prints known as *Los Desastres de la Guerra* in the 1810s, this work still speaks volumes about what happened in the Peninsular War of 1808-1814 just as a newspaper might do today. Two hundred years after the event his works continue to provide a graphic commentary upon the barbarity of war. (Fig. 29)

---

[177] Emanuel Guibert, Didier Lefevre and Frederic Lemercier, The *Photographer: Into War-torn Afghanistan with Doctors without Borders*, trans. by Alexis Siegel (London: First Second, 2009).
[178] Alexis Siegel, 'Introduction' in *The Photographer: Into War-torn Afghanistan with Doctors without Borders*, p. v.
[179]William Hogarth, 'Beer Street and Gin Lane', in *Artble* <http://www.artble.com/artists/william_hogarth/drawings/beer_street_and_gin_lane> [accessed 8 May 2012]

One of his masterpiece paintings, *The Third of May 1808* (completed in 1814), likewise recounts more poignantly than any words could convey the horror of the aftermath that followed the popular uprising against the occupation of Spain by Napoleon's armies in 1808. (Fig. 30) When closely examined, the work clearly shows that despite his position as court painter to the Spanish Crown Goya did not use any heroic model for his painting. It resembles a snapshot by a photo-journalist who is present to witness the history:

> The painting also appears modern through its subject matter, as if it were a journalist's snapshot of an event worth remembering. There is an immediacy and personality to the painting, as if Goya had actually been there as a witness of French retaliation. It is all thrown in the viewer's face, with a no-holds-barred realism. It is brutal and direct, with "no rhetoric, no contrived symbolism, no traditional pictorial formula, no stale studio atmosphere."[180]

The world's first real combination of regular news and supporting illustrations was achieved with the emergence of *The Illustrated London News* whose first issue was published on May 14, 1842. Its publisher Herbert Ingram had discovered the power of the image upon noticing that, on the days when existing newspapers such as *The Weekly Chronicle* and *The Observer* occasionally featured illustrations, they sold more readily than at other times.

In their anonymous address on the first page of the first issue, Frederick W. N. Bayley and John Timbs declared as editors that these illustrations would make the news visible for readers:

> The public will have henceforth under their glance, and within their grasp, the very form and presence of events as they transpire, in all their substantial reality, and with evidence visible as well as circumstantial. And whatever the broad and palpable delineations of wood engraving can be taught to achieve, will now be brought to bear upon every subject which attracts the attention of mankind, with a spirit in unison with the character of such subject, whether it be serious or satirical, trivial or of purpose grave.[181]

The drawing on the front page of the first issue was used to support the news of 'Destruction of The City of Hamburg by Fire' like a small photograph with the subtitle of 'View of the Conflagration of the City of Hamburg'. It presented a general distant view of the city under flames. (Fig. 31)

The invention of photography took journalism a step forward. In 1886, Gaspard Felix Tournachon, better known by his pseudonym Nadar, is credited with having made the first

---

[180] Tim McNeese, *The Great Hispanic Heritage: Francis Goya* (New York: Chelsea House Publishing, 2007), pp. 124-25.
[181] *The Illustrated London News*, 14 May 1842 <http://www.iln.org.uk/iln_years/year/1842.htm> [accessed 26 March 2014].

photo-interview for *Le Journal Illustré* in 1886 when his subject was the great chemist M. E. Chevreul who was celebrating his hundredth birthday and with whom Nadar spoke on three separate occasions.[182] 'Thirteen of the photographs were published as half-tone blocks in this newspaper on the 5th September 1886, with Chevreul's lively answers, noted down by a stenographer, serving as captions'.[183]

The years 1923 to 1925 marked a crucial point in the history of visual journalism. 'Oskar Barnack's genius idea of creating the small format 35 mm camera created a revolution in photography in 1925, paving the way for the birth of the Leica Legend. His diminutive, lightweight Leica offered a new, undreamed-of freedom in reportage and artistic photography'.[184] This invention of this high quality compact camera led to the golden age of photojournalism between the 1930s and 1950s. In this era there appeared the most important photojournalists together with various magazines dedicated to featuring their work.

Following the trail blazed by earlier photojournalists such as Roger Fenton and the Austro-Hungarian Carol Szathmari in the Crimean War and by Malcolm Riall in the Boer War, among many others Henri Cartier-Bresson (1908-2004) and Robert Capa (1913-1945) were two supreme exponents of the art among many in the Golden Age of photojournalism. While Cartier-Bresson was famous for his candid photographs of everyday street life, Robert Capa (who was a fellow co-founder of the international photographic cooperative Magnum Photos in 1947) was a pioneer in war photography thanks to his ability to capture violent action frozen in a still frame.

Visual journalism is always concurrent with technological developments. During the 1980s and 1990s with the introduction of more capable electronic devices such as video cameras and mobile phones, it became quicker and easier to transmit and obtain news than in the days of exclusive reliance on telegraph, cable, landlines, celluloid film and print media. People for the first time watched a war, The Gulf War (2 August 1990 – 28 February 1991), live on their televisions at home.

Since the mid-1990s, use of the internet has become widespread and allows people not only to access news but also to contribute to the news-gathering process. Today social media such as Facebook and Twitter enable people to share their opinions with each other instantaneously.

---

[182] *Le Journal illustré*, XXIIIe année, n° 36, 5 September 1886, with illustrations on front and back covers and text on page 29.
[183] Helmut Gernsheim, *A Concise History of Photography* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), p. 129.
[184] 'Leica History', in *Leica-camera.com* <http://uk.leica-camera.com/culture/history> [accessed 15 May 2012]

What comics journalism gains from these technological developments can be seen in interactive comics such as Dan Archer's *The Nisoor Square Shootings*,[185] (Fig. 32) and Darril Holiday and E. N. Rodriguez's *Kathy has a Question*.[186] (Fig. 33)

7. Conclusion

The origins of comics journalism are to be found in the *Glasgow Looking Glass* magazine, which is becoming generally accepted as the world's first modern comic. Comics journalism as the term is understood today goes back to Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle, who published *Real War Stories* in late 1980s during the rise of graphic novels. It was Joe Sacco who popularised the comics journalism genre in the early 1990s especially with his books on the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and the Bosnian War.

There are undeniable similarities between comics journalism and the New Journalism of the 1960s and 1970s such as subjective reporting and the effort to liken the genre to novel writing. Both comics journalism and new journalism are a kind of literary journalism and have roots in the underground tradition of the 1960s.

Just as the New Journalism movement grew bigger through its opposition to the Vietnam War, comics journalism has expanded after the September 11th attacks. Whereas before 9/11 there were only a few comics journalists, subsequently their number has more than tripled.

The issues covered by comics journalism are mostly shaped by American politics, although there are also a number of examples dealing with topics like global warming and protests movements.

Comics journalism is also a kind of travel writing as the author is supposed to be a roving reporter (and indeed a good number are) and comics journalists additionally make their works a form of autobiography by including themselves in their stories.

Lastly, comics journalism represents the latest phase in the long history of visual journalism, which can arguably even be traced back to cave paintings. Recent technological developments have created additional potential for comics journalism such as the use of video clips on web-comics and interactive comics journalism.

---

[185] Dan Archer, 'The Nisoor Square Shootings', in *Cartoon Movement* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/icomic/11> [accessed 22 September 2014]

[186] Darril Holiday and E. N. Rodriguez, 'Kathy has a Question', in *Thinglink.com* <http://www.thinglink.com/scene/324735881179037697> [accessed 22 September 2014]

CHAPTER II
NATIONAL IDENTITIES AND COMICS JOURNALISM

1. Introduction

When Albert Einstein was asked if he looked upon himself as a German or as a Jew, he replied that 'I look upon myself as a man. Nationalism is an infantile disease. It is the measles of mankind'.[187] It is such a disease that has shaped (and is still shaping) today's world with two world wars, and many conflicts and massacres. Whether or not one sympathises with the philosophical tenets of nationalism, viewing its all-pervasive presence as an epidemic of collective madness or, on the contrary, a means of self-fulfilment and liberation from the tyranny of external oppression, its undeniable importance in forming political standpoints, hostilities and alliances, makes it a topic that cannot be ignored in any discussion of the world reflected in comics journalism.

This chapter focuses on the representation of the Middle East identities in comics journalism in four sections. The first section gives a brief chronological evaluation of nationalist theories whereas the second one gives an overview of the nationalism in the Middle East by also providing some background information about the sectarian identities in the region and the Palestinian issue. The following section examines how national identities are represented in comics in general whereas the fourth section focuses on the Middle East.

2. Nationalism Theories

In order to understand what nationalism is, to what extent it affects the Middle East, and how it is depicted in graphic novels, it would perhaps be best to begin by discussing and evaluating theories of nationalism.

Nationalism, as a theory, does not have specific founders or pioneers although it derives ultimately from age-old tribalism and patriotism. 'Unlike most other isms, nationalism has never produced its own grand thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles,

---

[187] Cited in George Sylvester Viereck, 'What Life Means to Einstein', *The Saturday Evening Post*, 26 October 1929, p. 117. Interestingly, in the same interview Einstein said 'I support Zionism, in spite of the fact that it is a national experiment, because it gives us Jews a common interest. This nationalism is no menace to other peoples. Zion is too small to develop imperialistic designs.'

Marxes or Webers'.[188] And there is no need to look for any fathers of nationalism since 'we shall not learn too much about nationalism from the study of its own prophets'.[189] Although there are two complementary approaches to the subject of nationalism (sometimes misrepresented as two opposing schools of thought regarding the theory of its origins), viz. the primordialist (or evolutionary) and modern interpretations, for concision I prefer to study the chronological evolution of the term 'nationalism' by focusing on six particularly insightful theoreticians since 1945, viz.; Elie Kedourie, Ernest Gellner, Anthony Smith, Eric Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson and Michael Billig, most of whom — interestingly and perhaps significantly — hail from communities that have traditionally been marginalized or persecuted (Jewish, Irish).[190]

2.1 Elie Kedourie and Nationalism as an Invented Doctrine

In 1960, Elie Kedourie (1926-1992), a British historian of Iraqi Jewish origin specializing in the Middle East and regarded in his lifetime as the most formidable dissident of Middle Eastern historiography who rejected the post-colonial dichotomy between Western guilt and Eastern innocence, published his famous book *Nationalism*, whose opening lines are as follows:

> Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It pretends to supply a criterion for the determination of the unit of population proper to enjoy a government exclusively its own, for the legitimate exercise of power in the state, and for the right organization of a society of states.[191]

Kedourie, who traces the origins of modern nationalism, believes that the French Revolution 'created new classes of society which had never dreamt of exercising power',[192] but that they failed to benefit from the transmission of 'political habits and

---

[188] Anderson, p. 5.
[189] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), p. 125.
[190] Although it is not possible to give an exact date of the birth of nationalism, according to one school of thought the conceptualization of its existence can be traced back to the eighteenth century, to the German Romantics. As I see Elie Kedourie as the first most important figure in nationalism studies after the second World War, I have preferred to start with him. I have chosen six important theoreticians who created their own nationalism theories. I put them in chronological order according to the dates of their first publications in which they commented on nationalism. To be sure, there are other names to be mentioned here such as those of Immanuel Kant (1724-184), Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), Ernest Renan (1823-1892), Carlton J. H. Hayes (1882-1964), Hans Kohn (1891-1971), Edward Hallett Carr (1892-1982) and Tom Nairn (1932-).
[191] Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 4th ed (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994[1960]), p. 1.
[192] Ibid., p. 87.

religious beliefs from one generation to the next'. [193] This failure produced a conflict between fathers and sons:

> The sons rejected the fathers and their ways; but the rejection extended also to the very practices, traditions, and beliefs which had over the centuries moulded and fashioned these societies which suddenly seemed to the young so confining, so graceless, so devoid of spiritual comfort, and so unable to minister to the dignity and fulfilment of the individual. [194]

Even when, inspired by 1789, the young revolutionaries of the 19th and 20th centuries chose to identify themselves as named groups, they tended to do so in terms that flaunted their newness and hatred against the elders (Young Italy, Young Egypt, the Young Turks, the Young Arab Party)[195] because such movements satisfied a need:

> […] the need is to belong together in a coherent and stable community. Such a need is normally satisfied by the family, the neighbourhood, the religious community. In the last century and a half such institutions all over the world have had to bear the brunt of violent social and intellectual change, and it is no accident that nationalism was at its most intense where and when such institutions had little resilience and were ill-prepared to withstand the powerful attacks to which they became exposed. [196]

Kedourie's argument is tailor-made for explaining the origins of nationalism in the Middle East, where after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire new-born nation-states came into existence one by one.

2.2 Ernest Gellner and Nationalism as Political Principle

In contrast to Kedourie, the Judeo-British-Czech philosopher and social anthropologist Ernest Gellner (1925-1995) sees it as a mistake to think of nationalism as natural:

> The central mistake committed both by the friends and the enemies of nationalism is the supposition that it is somehow natural. A man has a "nationality" just as he has a height, weight, sex, name, blood-group, etc., and the supposition that this is so in the nature of things is embodied in countless questionnaires, which inquire after nationality as they do after name, marital state, etc. [197]

---

[193] Ibid., p. 94.
[194] Ibid., p. 95.
[195] Ibid., p. 96.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ernest Gellner, *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964), p. 150.

For Gellner, nationalism is a 'political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent'.[198] Developing this notion of a political principle, he distinguishes between nationalistic feeling and the political movement that it can inspire: 'Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment. A nationalist movement is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind'.[199]

He believes that nations are created over a long period and his answer to his own question 'do nations have navels?'[200] that serve to remind themselves of their origins is that 'some nations possess genuine ancient navels, some have navels invented for them by their own nationalist propaganda, and some are altogether navel-less.'[201]

He is against not only the naturalistic approach but also three other conceptions that he adds to his black list of 'false theories of nationalism':[202]

- It is an artificial consequence of ideas which did not need ever to be formulated, and appeared by a regrettable accident.
- The Wrong Address Theory favoured by Marxism: the awakening message was intended for classes, but by some terrible postal error was delivered to nations.
- The Dark Gods Theory: the re-emergence of the atavistic forces of blood or territory.[203]

Gellner sees education as a vital point in shaping one's national identity because 'the culture in which one has been taught to communicate becomes the core of one's identity'[204] and he stresses the importance of a high culture on which he establishes his nationalism theory:

> Nationalism is, essentially, the general imposition of a high culture on society, where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority, and in some cases of the totality, of the population. It means that generalized diffusion of a school-mediated, academy-supervised idiom, codified for requirements of reasonably precise bureaucratic and technological communication. It is the establishment of an anonymous, impersonal society, with mutually substitutable atomized individuals, held together above all by a shared culture of this kind, in place of a previous complex structure of local groups, sustained by folk cultures reproduced locally and idiosyncratically by the micro-groups themselves.[205]

---

[198] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 1.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism* (London: Phoenix, 1997), p. 92.
[201] Ibid., p. 96.
[202] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 129.
[203] Ibid., pp. 129-130.
[204] Ibid., p. 61.
[205] Ibid., p. 57.

In his study of nationalism, Gellner begins to examine society in its transition from the agrarian to the industrial period. In this long timeline, he postulates five stages 'on the path from a world of non-ethnic empires and micro-units to one of homogeneous nation-states':[206]

- Baseline: A world exists where ethnicity is still not yet self-evidently present, and where the idea of any link between it and political legitimacy is almost entirely absent.
- Nationalist Irredentism: A world which has inherited and retained most of its political boundaries and structures from the previous stage, but within which ethnicity as a political principle – in other words, nationalism – is beginning to operate […] The old borders and polities are under pressure from nationalist agitation.
- National Irredentism triumphant and self-defeating: Plural empires collapse, and with them the entire dynastic-religious style of political legitimation, and it is replaced by nationalism as the main effective principle. A set of smaller states emerge, purporting to fulfil the national destiny of the ethnic group with which they are identified. This condition is self-defeating, in so far as these new units are just as minority-haunted as the larger ones which had preceded them. The new units are haunted by all the weaknesses of their precursors, plus some additional ones of their own.
- *Nacht und Nebel*: This is a term employed by the Nazis for some of their operations in the course of the Second World War. Under cover of wartime secrecy, or in the heat of conflict and passion, or during the period of retaliatory indignation, moral standards are suspended, and the principle of nationalism, demanding compact homogenous ethnic groups within given political-territorial units, is implemented with a new ruthlessness. It is no longer done by the older and benign method of assimilation, but by mass murder or forcible transplantation of populations.
- Cultural Convergence: High level of satiation of the nationalist requirement, plus generalized affluence, plus cultural convergence, leads to a diminution, though not the disappearance, of the virulence of nationalist revindications.[207]

Gellner himself accepts that this above-mentioned transition from agrarian to industrial society is not globally applicable. He notes that in Europe this evolution 'played itself out in different ways in *four* various time zones':[208]

- Atlantic seaboard of Europe. Strong dynastic states based on London, Paris, Madrid and Lisbon had existed since early modern times, if not longer, and could transform themselves into homogeneous nation-states. A centralized culture is established against peasants, and not on the basis of their culture. Peasants have to be turned into real citizens, rather than being used for the

---

[206] Ernest Gellner, 'The Coming of Nationalism and Its Interpretation: The Myths of Nation and Class', in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. by Gopal Balakrishnan (London: Verso, 1996), pp. 98-145 (p. 111).
[207] Ibid., pp. 111-112.
[208] Ibid., p. 127.

definition of a new national culture. Ethnography is here irrelevant to nation-building.

- Second time zone corresponds to the territory of the erstwhile Holy Roman Empire. The two cultures which make up the majority of its inhabitants have been extremely well endowed, for a long time, with a well-defined High Culture, sustained by an extensive literate class, a well-articulated Italian and German High Culture. All that nationalism needed to do here was to endow an existing High Culture, well suited to define a modern nation, with its political roof.
- Things were different in the third zone further East. It was here that all the five stages, postulated earlier, played themselves out to the full. There were neither well-defined and well-sustained High Cultures, nor any political shells to cover and protect them. There were only the old non-national empires and the patchwork of folk cultures and cultural diversities separating social strata as well as distinguishing adjoining territories. In the marriage between culture and polity which is required by nationalism, both partners had to be brought into existence before they could be joined unto each other. This made the task of the nationalists correspondingly more arduous and hence, often, its execution more brutal.
- The fourth zone shared the 'normal' trajectory with Zone Three until 1918 or the early 1920s. But then, two of the three defeated empires the Habsburgh and Ottoman empires, collapsed, the third one Russian Empire was dramatically revived, under entirely new management and in the name of a new ideology. The new regime imposed its own nationalism ignoring minor ones. Hence after 1989, it was dismembered. [209]

Although Gellner believes that his categorization of the four zones is historical, it is primarily geographical (or geo-political), but in general, his reading of nationalism as a political principle seems quite acceptable. However, in the post-Ottoman Middle East, new states were created according to not only their ethnic origins but also their religious beliefs.

2.3 Anthony D. Smith and Nationalism as an Ideological Movement

Whereas for Gellner nationalism is a 'political doctrine', his former supervisee Anthony D. Smith (1939 -), now Professor Emeritus at the London School of Economics, describes it as an 'ideological movement',[210] because it attains and maintains 'autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation.'[211]

Smith identifies four key aspects of nationhood, including three which are vital for the maintenance of peace, justice, political and social coherence, freedom and self-fulfilment:

---

[209] Ibid., pp. 127-132. Ernest Gellner, *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), pp. 29-31.
[210] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 73.
[211] Ibid.

- The world is divided in to nations, each with its own individuality, history and destiny.
- The nation is the source of all political and social power, and loyalty to the nation overrides all other allegiances.
- Human beings must identify with a nation if they want to be free and realize themselves.
- Nations must be free and secure if peace and justice are to prevail in the world.[212]

As is more fully explained below, despite its protean nature he suggests two broad models for nationalism: ethnic – genealogical and civic – and territorial. Seeing in the modernist approach a 'failure to pay attention to the cultural and symbolic elements that play so important a part in the formation and shape of nations and nationalisms',[213] he looks for the roots of modern nations in pre-existing ethnic components (according to the first genealogical and civic model) and names this perspective ethno-symbolism.

Ethno-symbolists' aim is to 'trace the role of myths, symbols, values and memories in generating ethnic and national attachments and forging cultural and social networks'.[214] Consequently, for Smith, as he proceeds to combine the two models, a nation is 'a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.'[215]

To repeat, Anthony Smith proposes two models of nationhood. One is generally western and civic-territorial; the other one is generally eastern and ethnic-genealogical.[216] While the first model tends to 'produce certain kinds of nationalist movement',[217] the second one has a tendency to 'give rise to secessionist or diaspora movements':[218]

- Territorial nationalisms
a) Pre-independence movements whose concept of the nation is mainly civic and territorial will seek first to eject foreign rulers and substitute a new state-nation for the old colonial territory; these are anti-colonial nationalisms.[219]
b) Post-independence movements whose concept of the nation remains basically civic and territorial will seek to bring together and integrate into a

---

[212] Ibid., p. 74.
[213] Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 135.
[214] Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 224.
[215] Smith, *National Identity*, p. 14.
[216] Though Smith gives geopolitical labels, he warns that it is possible to see examples of both models on each side of the east-west divide.
[217] Smith, *National Identity*, p.82.
[218] Ibid.
[219] The independence referendums in Quebec and Scotland are cases in point.

new political community often disparate ethnic populations and to create a new territorial nation out of the old colonial state; these are integration nationalisms.

- Ethnic nationalisms
a) Pre-independence movements whose concept of the nation is basically ethnic and genealogical will seek to secede from a larger political unit (or secede and gather together in a designated ethnic homeland) and set up a new political ethno-nation in its place; these are secession and diaspora nationalisms.
b) Post-independence movements whose concept of the nation is basically ethnic and genealogical will seek to expand by including ethnic kinsmen outside the present boundaries of the ethno-nation and the lands they inhabit or by forming a much larger ethno-national state through the union of culturally and ethnically similar ethno-national states; these are irredentist and pan-nationalisms.[220]

Two main antithetical patterns are vital in the formation of any *ethnie*:[221] coalescence, which means 'the coming together of separate units [that] in turn can be broken down into processes of amalgamation of separate units, such as city-states, and of absorption of one unit by another, as in the assimilation or regions',[222] and division, meaning subdivision 'through fission, as with sectarian schism, or through […] proliferation, when a part of the ethnic community leaves it to form a new group'.[223]

Smith believes that '*ethnies*, once formed, tend to be exceptionally durable under "normal" vicissitudes and to persist over many generations, even centuries, forming "moulds" within which all kinds of social and cultural processes can unfold'.[224] He distinguishes mechanisms of ethnic-renewal which together create this durability:

- Religious reform: Intertwined with ethnic self-renewal; the community's mode of renewal was religiously inspired.
- Cultural borrowing: Ethnic survival finds sustenance not from isolation but from selective borrowing and controlled culture contact.
- Popular participation: Ethnic self-renewal in the movements of social strata and classes. Of these, the most relevant are popular movements for greater participation in the cultural or political hierarchy.
- Myths of ethnic election: *Ethnies* that, for all their ethnocentrism towards others, lacked such myths (or failed to instil them in the general population) tended to be absorbed by other communities after losing their independence.[225]

---

[220] Ibid., pp. 83-85.
[221] Smith prefers the French word *ethnie* to ethnic community.
[222] Smith, *National Identity*, p. 24.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005 [1986]), p. 16.
[225] Smith, *National Identity*, pp. 35-36.

For Smith, there are two types of ethnic community: lateral and vertical. A lateral *ethnie* is generally 'composed of aristocrats and higher clergy, though it might from time to time include bureaucrats, high military officials and the richer merchants',[226] whereas the vertical type of *ethnie* covers 'other social strata and classes [which] were not underpinned by cultural differences: rather, a distinctive historical culture helped to unite different classes around a common heritage and traditions, especially when the latter were under threat from outside'.[227]

Smith is aware that it is impossible to suggest a single general model for nationalism. He believes that 'chameleon-like, nationalism takes its colour from its context'.[228] For him, nationalism can be defined in several ways:

- The whole process of forming and maintaining nations or nation-states.
- A consciousness of belonging to the nation, together with sentiments and aspirations for its security and prosperity.
- A language and symbolism of the nation and its role.
- An ideology, including a cultural doctrine of nations and the national will and prescriptions for the realization of national aspirations and the national will.
- A social and political movement to achieve the goals of the nation and realize its national will.[229]

According to the naturalized American Jew Hans Kohn (1891-1971), who in some ways foreshadows Anthony D. Smith, there are two geographical varieties of nationalism: western and non-western.[230] The main reason for this distinction lies in the staggered timing of the growth of nationalism in different parts of the world, because in the West, 'the rise of nationalism was a predominantly political occurrence; it was preceded by the formation of the future national state',[231] whereas in the non-western world 'nationalism arose not only later, but also generally at a more backward stage of social and political development'.[232] In non-western countries the first explicit manifestations of nationalism were cultural:

> It was at the beginning the dream and hope of scholars and poets, unsupported by public opinion – which did not exist, and which the scholars and poets tried

---

[226] Ibid., p. 53.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Ibid., p.79.
[229] Ibid., p. 72.
[230] Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in its Origins and Background* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1945), p. 6. By the western world Kohn means England, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, the United States and British Dominions; and by the non-western world Central and Eastern Europe and all of Asia.
[231] Ibid., p. 329.
[232] Ibid.

to create – a venture in education and propaganda rather than in policy-shaping and government.[233]

In the non-western world, which for Kohn includes the Middle East, nationalism arose later than in the western world. Modern historians of the Middle East generally agree that nationalism in the region began to emerge after the decline of the Ottoman Empire.

Both Smith and Kohn discuss nationalism in two groups: western and non-western. In the wider Middle East, nationalism, as an idea, seized the popular imagination in the late nineteenth century, nearly a hundred years later than in the western world. Nationalism as a movement nevertheless came to parts of the Ottoman Empire from the western world just after the French Revolution (1789-1799), and the first territories which became independent states are in today's western world such as Greece (1821), Romania (1877) and Bulgaria (1878).

2.4 Eric Hobsbawm and the Invention of Tradition

In contrast to the above-mentioned scholars, the Marxist Judeo-British historian Eric Hobsbawm (1917-2012) describes both nation and nationalism as 'invented traditions'.[234] For Hobsbawm, invented tradition is 'a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past'.[235] By inventing traditions, rulers could persist in their hegemony.

Hobsbawm observes three relevant innovations 'in terms of the invention of tradition': [236] 'the development of a secular equivalent of the church – primary education',[237] 'the invention of public ceremonies',[238] and 'the mass production of public monuments'.[239] For him, the modern nation incorporates all of these three innovations.

Like Gellner, he defines nationalism as 'a principle'.[240] He does not see a point to 'discussing nation and nationality […] before the rise of modern territorial state.' [241]

---

[233] Ibid., pp. 329-30.
[234] Eric Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14 (p. 1)
[235] Ibid.
[236] Eric Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914', in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 263-307 (p. 271)
[237] Ibid.
[238] Ibid.
[239] Ibid.
[240] Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 9.
[241] Ibid.

Quoting from Gellner, he adds that 'nations do not make states and nationalisms but the other way round'.[242]

Hobsbawm examines the historical evolution of nationalism in three stages: The first one is from 1780 – the French Revolution – to 1918 – the end of World War I – the period in which modern nationalism was born and gained traction. The second stage according to Hobsbawm occurred between 1918 and 1950 when nationalism reached its peak whereas the last stage was reached in the late twentieth century when nationalism was no longer an important factor of historical development.

During the first stage, Hobsbawm sees tension between two kinds of dramatic changes in the map of Europe involving agglomeration and fragmentation: from 1830 to 1880 'the balance of power was transformed by the emergence of two great powers Germany and Italy',[243] and from 1867 onwards components of the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and Tsarist Empires started to claim their 'new status' as independent states.[244]

He calls the second stage the apogee of nationalism. In this period nationalism gained traction both on the left – the communist front – and on the right – the fascist front. Hobsbawm points out that in these years sports acquired a nationalistic colouring:

> Between the wars, however, international sport became […] an expression of national struggle, and sportsmen representing their nation or state, primary expressions of their imagined communities. This was the period when the Tour de France came to be dominated by national teams, when the Mitropa Cup set leading teams of the states of Central Europe against each other, when the World Cup was introduced into world football, and, as 1936 demonstrated, when the Olympic Games unmistakably became occasions for competitive national self-assertion. What has made sport so uniquely effective a medium for inculcating national feelings, at all events for males, is the ease with which even the least political or public individuals can identify with the nation as symbolized by young persons excelling at what practically every man wants, or at one time in life has wanted, to be good at. The imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named people. The individual, even the one who only cheers, becomes a symbol of his nation himself.[245]

The late twentieth century is Hobsbawm's third stage. In this period all of the states are 'officially "nations"'.[246] His 1990 prediction about the future of nationalism is worth quoting:

> It is not impossible that nationalism will decline with the decline of the nation-state, without which being English or Irish or Jewish, or a combination of all

---

[242] Ibid.
[243] Ibid., p. 23.
[244] Ibid.
[245] Ibid., p. 143.
[246] Ibid., p. 163.

these, is only one way in which people describe their identity among the many others which they use for this purpose, as occasion demands.[247]

Hobsbawm's tentative prediction is apparently becoming realized in today's global village as many young people interact with each other regarding issues such as ecology regardless of their national origins thanks to technological devices and trips they make to new cultures.[248]

Hobsbawm's definition of nationalism as invented traditions is broadly acceptable in the Middle East context. Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, new states invented their new understanding of national identity by initially disconnecting their ties with the old empire.

2.5 Benedict Anderson and Imagined Communities

In 1983 the Irish American academic Benedict Anderson (1936-), who is currently Professor Emeritus at Cornell University, published one of the most influential books on nationalism, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, first inspired by his reaction to the Third Indochina War (1975-79) fought between Cambodia, Vietnam, and China.

His point of departure is that nationality and nationalism are 'cultural artefacts of a particular kind'.[249] A proper understanding of them needs to consider 'carefully how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meanings have changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy'.[250]Anderson believes that these artefacts were created at the end of the eighteenth century as a result of

> the spontaneous distillation of a complex "crossing" of discrete historical forces; but […] once created, they became "modular," capable of being transplanted, with varying degrees of self-consciousness, to a great variety of social terrains, to merge and be merged with a correspondingly wide variety of political and ideological constellations.[251]

Like other scholars, he firstly tries to define the term 'nation' seeing it as 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'.[252] 'It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of

---

[247] Ibid., p. 192.
[248] See Yaël Ossowski, 'The Fading Concept of Nationalism', *The Stateless Man*, 21 January, 2013 <http://thestatelessman.com/2013/01/21/nationalism/> [accessed 8 September 2014].
[249] Anderson, p. 4.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Ibid.
[252] Ibid. p. 6

their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'.[253]

A nation is imagined as a community because:

Regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings.[254]

Benedict Anderson argues that nationalism can be understood in the cultural roots of a community 'by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which – as well as against which – it came into being'.[255] He takes two historical examples of these cultural systems: the religious community and the dynastic realm which both 'in their heydays, were taken-for-granted frames of reference, very much as nationality is today'.[256]

This imagined religious community declined for two main reasons. The first one was 'the effect of the explorations of the non-European world, which (mainly, but by no means exclusively, in Europe) "abruptly widened the cultural and geographical horizon and hence also men's conception of possible forms of human life'.[257] The second was the 'gradual demotion of the sacred language itself'.[258] Latin was the only language taught until the sixteenth century when more and more books started to be written in other languages.

Another claim made by Benedict Anderson is that the development of printing fostered the spread of nationalist feelings. Whereas by 1500, nearly twenty million books had been printed, by 1600, this had become two hundred million. In order to reach monoglot people, publishers produced cheap editions (so that they could read in their mother tongue rather than Latin) and this caused three important contributory factors in 'the rise of national consciousness'.[259] First, Latin was 'removed from ecclesiastical and everyday life'[260] thanks to the Humanistic publication and propagation of pagan, pre-Christian literature translated into the vernacular. 'Second was the impact of the Reformation, which, at the same time, owed much of its success to print-capitalism'.[261] This phenomenon, together with Protestantism led by Martin Luther, created a large

---

[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid.
[255] Ibid., p. 12.
[256] Ibid.
[257] Ibid., p. 16.
[258] Ibid., p. 18.
[259] Ibid., p. 39.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Ibid.

number of printed books and 'new reading publics – not least among merchants and women, who typically knew little or no Latin – and simultaneously mobilized them for politico-religious purposes'.[262] The third factor contributing in Anderson's view to the rise of nationalism was the fact that some monarchs started to use vernacular languages for administrative purposes.

Codified and standardized through printing, these languages 'laid the bases for national consciousnesses in three distinct ways':[263]

> First and foremost, they created unified fields of exchange and communication below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars. […] Second, print-capitalism gave a new fixity to language, which in the long run helped to build that image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of the nation. […] Third, print capitalism created languages-of-power of a kind different from the older administrative vernaculars. […] High German, the King's English, and, later, Central Thai were correspondingly elevated to a new politico-cultural eminence. […] We can summarize the conclusions to be drawn from the arguments thus far by saying that the convergence of capitalism and print technology on the fatal diversity of human language created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation[264]

At the beginning of nineteenth century, the rise of nationalist movements 'created increasing cultural, and therefore political, difficulties for many dynasts […] which had nothing to do with nationalness'.[265] Hence, they had to choose vernacular languages as the language of their states. This created what Seton Watson calls official nationalisms:

> These "official nationalisms" can best be understood as a means for combining naturalization with retention of dynastic power, in particular over the huge polyglot domains accumulated since the Middle Ages, or, to put it another way, for stretching the short, tight, skin of the nation over the gigantic body of the empire.[266]

Although Anderson is one of the most popular theoreticians in nationalism studies, his definition of nations as 'imagined communities' is not a new term; nearly a hundred years ago Ernest Renan used 'a soul, a spiritual principle' to define a nation, as if anticipating Anderson's allusion to a shared communion cited in the introduction of this thesis.

---

[262] Ibid., p. 40.
[263] Ibid., p.44.
[264] Ibid., pp. 44- 46.
[265] Ibid., p. 83. 'Dynasts' are rulers, especially those who found a dynasty or exercise hereditary power.
[266] Ibid., p. 86. Anderson takes the term 'official nationalisms' from Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1977), p. 148.

2.6 Michael Billig and Banal Nationalism

The Judeo-British social psychologist Michael Billig provides a new approach to nationalism by criticizing its association 'with those who struggle to create new states or with extreme right-wing politics'.[267] The established nation-states of the West see nationalism as the business of others, the peripheral states, not theirs. In the world of these nation-states of the West, nationalism occurs only under some 'special occasions',[268] and it is temporary, not permanent:

> Crises, such as the Falklands or Gulf Wars, infect a sore spot, causing bodily fevers: the symptoms are an inflamed rhetoric and an outbreak of ensigns. But the irruption soon dies down; the temperature passes; the flags are rolled up; and, then, it is business as usual.[269]

For him, 'the crises do not create nation-states as nation states'[270] because there exist daily manifestations of nationalism through the production of 'a whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices […] in a banally mundane way'.[271] Therefore, he introduces the term banal nationalism to 'cover the ideological habits which enable the established nations of the West to be reproduced'.[272] Today the term has become widely accepted for use primarily in academic discussion of identity formation and geopolitics.

Billig supports Anderson's idea of the imagined community and says that unsurprisingly the daily production of this banal nationalism is due to the twin contribution of politicians and newspapers.

Thanks to technological developments, politicians are no longer inaccessible icons, they are now like celebrities. 'Their faces regularly appear in the papers and on the televisions screens'.[273] Today they also regularly feature on news websites, Twitter and Facebook. Since they mostly are good orators, they play the patriotic card to evoke nationalistic feelings among the public (and in particular, the electorate) by using keywords such as 'we', 'us', 'our', all of which mean the nation.

---

[267] Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage Publications, 1995), p. 5.
[268] Ibid.
[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid., p. 6.
[271] Ibid.
[272] Ibid.
[273] Ibid., p.96.

Like politicians, newspapers similarly use the first person plural integrating readers and writers of the newspaper in a nation. Most newspapers have a separate section for national 'home news' and 'daily, we, the regular readers, flick our eyes over the directing signs. Without conscious awareness, we find our way around the familiar territory of our newspaper',[274] and assimilate notions of nationhood in the process. The slow but steady decline of the printed press to the advantage of the broadcast, online and social media over the last decade or so scarcely invalidates Billig's observations, especially since many newspapers and news groups operate their own websites and TV news channels, which subject visitors or viewers to the same conditioning process as do the corresponding print versions.

Nevertheless, Billig argues, thanks to conditioning and technological advances in the postmodern era, it is becoming increasingly difficult for nation-states to preserve their sovereignty in the face of superpowers' supra-national cultural identity. For this reason, Billig claims that nationalism has changed its function:

> No longer is nationalism a force which creates and reproduces nation-states: it is one of the forces which is destroying nations. Thus, there is a paradox: the more that "hot" nationalists commit themselves to the ideal of nationhood in the struggles to establish their own particular homelands, the more they hasten the end of nationhood. [275]

Although it may seem to downplay the importance of religion, in our day Billig's understanding of nationalism is very reasonable in the Middle East. Crises are vital to keep the nationalistic temperature high. The last conflict between Israel and Palestine not only influenced their citizens but also most of the international community. Many people put the Palestinian flag on their Facebook or Twitter pages and shared videos and pictures in order to show their support for and to Palestinians.[276] But now that, for the time being at least, the tension has abated somewhat, people across the world no longer endeavour to show their support to the same extent.

3. Nationalism and the Middle East

The Quran declares that there is no superiority of one nation over another, and orders people to live together in harmony as stated in the thirteenth verse of the forty-ninth sura *Al Hujurat* (The Private Rooms):

---

[274] Ibid., p. 119.
[275] Ibid., pp. 139-40.
[276] Such expressions of support are, of course, counterbalanced by pro-Israeli equivalents.

People, We created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races [nations] and tribes so that you should recognize one another. In God's eyes, the most honoured of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is all knowing, all aware.[277]

However, Muhammadans have not always paid sufficient attention to this instruction and have consequently inflicted religious wars and sectarian violence upon others since the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632.

Although we owe the distinction drawn between East and West to the ancient Greeks and the etymon for 'the Orient' to the Romans, and while the terms 'Near East' and 'Far East' were together first recorded in English in 1856, it was only in 1902 that the American military historian Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840–1914) clearly defined the term 'Middle East', first recorded back in May 1876 in the Boston Methodist weekly, *Zion's Herald*.[278] He saw it as 'stretching from Arabia all the way across Persia and Afghanistan to the borders of today's Pakistan'.[279] In today's world, however, the Middle East refers more specifically to

Turkey, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories it occupies, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, the smaller Arab principalities along the Persian Gulf, and Egypt, though the vast majority of that country is actually located on the continent of Africa. Sometimes the predominantly Arab countries of North Africa west of Egypt, and even the Sudan to its south, are also loosely included in the Middle East.[280]

Despite this broad definition of the Middle East, this thesis will mostly use the term to refer to the countries on which it focuses, namely Turkey, Iraq, Palestine and Israel.

The Ottomans ruled the region for nearly four hundred years from the sixteenth century to World War I. From the nineteenth century onwards, colonial powers started to invade the Middle East, and they provoked local Arabs to revolt against the Empire, offering them the alluring possibility of self-determination. At the end of World War I, the Ottoman Empire collapsed, and a new phase began in terms of nationalism.

As Elie Kedourie stated, in societies which witness a breakdown in the transmission of 'political habits and religious beliefs from one generation to the next',[281] there appears a

---

[277] *The Qur'an*, A New Translation by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 339.
[278] Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of Orientalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2004), p. 96. The *OED* cites the earliest attestation in the Boston Methodist weekly *Zion's Herald* (founded 1823), n° 146/1 (11 May 1876) <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/118149#eid36764210> [accessed 6 September 2014].
[279] Ibid., p. 97.
[280] Ibid.
[281] Kedourie, p. 94.

conflict between fathers and sons in which sons reject their fathers, and with them their politics. Sons in the Middle East wanted radical changes and named themselves accordingly to show their newness and opposition to their fathers: Young Turks as opposed to the Ottomans, and the Young Egypt Party as opposed to the rulers of Egypt, especially the occupying power, Great Britain.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the ensuing Turkish War of Independence against Greece and Armenia (19th May, 1919 – 24th July, 1923), on the 29th October, 1923, Modern Turkey was founded under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, nowadays known by the title Atatürk, 'Father of the Turks', awarded to him uniquely on 24th November, 1934. One of the very first things Mustafa Kemal did was to create a new national identity for Turks which would distinguish them from the Ottomans; hence, he turned his face to the West and rejected an Islamic authority in the new republic because

> the notion of an Islamic state was anathema to Mustafa Kemal and his supporters [in the Grand National Assembly]. They viewed such a state as the way to maintain the status quo and perpetuate the backwardness of Turkey. For their part, the Kemalists wanted to see Turkey transformed into a modern nation state which, in the words of Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), would "live as an advanced and civilised nation in the midst of contemporary civilisation". Such a nation would have to be secular and rational, emphasising science and modern education in order to create a modern industrial economy. But before Turkey could be remade in the Kemalist image, political power had to be seized from the hands of reactionaries and conservatives.[282]

It is impossible to separate religion from nationalism in the Middle East. Although their problematic relationship can be traced back to just before the beginning of World War I, it completely came to light for the first time after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (1923) and the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate on Kemal's initiative by the Turkish National Assembly (3rd March, 1924), when despite protests by Muslim Indians religious functionaries were reduced to the level of ordinary citizens. After that, a growing number of nations and national identities emerged in an increasingly fragmented Islamic world.[283] Though religion is older than nationalism,

> both exist in a state of constant flux, carried forward by social actors and agents, undergoing either evolutionary developments or sudden mutation. Consequently, one could say that religion as it is practised today has itself joined the world of modernity, or has been modernised despite its ancient

---

[282] Feroz Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p. 53.
[283] For more information, please see *The Oxford History of Islam*, ed. by John L. Esposito (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Mehran Kamrava, *The Modern Middle East: A Political History since The First World War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Albert Hourani, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

origins. Moreover, it is a matter of great importance to realise that to belong to a particular religion or a defined nationality as a result of traditional ties of communal solidarity, is often the case in Middle Eastern culture.[284]

In Islam, especially in Arabia, it is possible to see Muslim communities in geographically specific or non-specific terms: *Sha'b* denotes those with a common ancestry or geography (e.g. living in a nation-state), while *Ummah* normally refers to the world-wide Muslim community (although in Sudan it is confusingly also the name of a nationalist political party founded in 1945). In today's Middle East, sometimes religion is used to support the idea of *Ummah* and rejects all kinds of nationalism, while at other times it is conversely used to reinforce nationalism and national identities. In both cases, religion is the most important factor. For example, when Saddam Hussein was invading Kuwait in 1990, he referred to *Sha'b* when urging Iraqis to fight against Kuwait while he was very soon calling for the wider *Ummah* to wage jihad against the western infidel invaders, in other words, non-believers of Islam. Similarly, in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, most of the militant groups were calling for the *Ummah* to wage jihad against non-believers of Islam, while some of them were killing Muslims after accusing them of helping the multinational (but predominantly American) forces.

Another type of Arab nationalism in the region is that which 'emerged and developed as a series of overlapping cultural, political and social movements'.[285] It first started as resistance against the Ottomans, and then tended towards introversion by turning against its own leaders. Gamal Abdel Nasser Hussein (1918-1970), who ruled Egypt for fourteen years from 1956 to his death, was one of the iconic names epitomizing this type of ideology. There is also Pan-Arabism which seeks to unite the whole Arab world and may perhaps be seen as appealing in a secular way to the *Ummah*.

3.1 Sectarian Identities in the Middle East

For Muslims, sectarianism is a more important issue than nationalism in the Middle East.[286] It has a long and bloody history.

After the death of the Prophet Muhammad in 632, a problem arose: who would succeed him as caliph (i.e. supreme religious and political leader)? One group of followers

---

[284] Youssef M. Choueiri, 'Nationalisms in the Middle East: The Case of Pan-Arabism', in *A Companion to the History of the Middle East*, ed. by. Youssef M. Choueiri (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 291-312 (p. 294).
[285] Ibid., p. 297.
[286] Robert D. Kaplan, 'The Lure of Nationalism', *Forbes*, 3 May 2014
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/stratfor/2014/03/05/the-lure-of-nationalism/> [accessed 17 September 2014].

(Sunnis)[287] wanted to see Abu Bakr, who was the father of Muhammad's wife Aisha, appointed successor; another group (the Shia)[288] believed that Ali, who was Muhammad's cousin and his daughter's husband (and the father of Muhammad's grandsons Hasan and Hussein), deserved the title of caliph. It was a question of power rather than religion as the next leader would rule a vast state. Following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr (632-634), Umar (634-644), Uthman (644-656) and Ali (656-661) respectively served as the caliph.

But while it might superficially appear that both sides in the argument over succession were thus ultimately satisfied, covert tensions were brewing. After the assassination of Uthman in 656, the Prophet Muhammad's wife Aisha and her supporters wanted Ali to punish Nayyar bin Ayyad Aslami and the other Egyptian rebels behind the assassination rather than fight Muawiyah I, leader of the rival Umayyad Dynasty and pretender to the caliphate. The conflict led to the first fitna (civil war) within the Caliphate: the Battle of the Camel (656), in which Ali defeated the rebels. Five years later in 661 Ali was attacked while praying in the Great Mosque of Kufa and died a few days later. In the aftermath, thanks to his economic and military power, Muawiyah I succeeded in establishing his caliphate.

The historic divergence of Shia and Sunni has resulted in numerous differences in Islamic religious practice. These two dominant sects have even produced sub-sects distinguished by their various traditions arising from the interpretation of hadiths (sayings of the Prophet and some clerics).[289] Edip Yüksel states the origins of Islamic sectarianism as follows:

- God +
- Muhammad +
- Muhammad's companions +
- The companions of Muhammad's companions +
- Early sect leaders +
- Late sect leaders +
- Early scholars of a particular sect +
- Late scholars of a particular sect, and so on.[290]

Today roughly 80% of the Muslim population in the world are Sunni whereas 10% of them are Shia. The great majority of people in Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria are Sunnis, whereas Iran, Iraq and Lebanon are dominated by Shia.

---

[287] Sunni was derived from Sunnah, which means the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad.
[288] Shia came from Shi'atu Ali meaning the followers / party of Ali.
[289] Such as the Wahhabi Movement (Saudi Arabia) and the Salafi Movement (which is the sect ISIS follows) within the Sunni tradition; Nusayris (Syrian's ruling elite follows) and Alawites (Turkey) are of the Shia sect.
[290] Edip Yüksel, *Manifesto for Islamic Reform* ([n.p]: Brainbow Press, 2007), pp. 6-7.

After 11 September 2001, the Middle East would not be the same. America invaded Iraq in 2003, and was planning to launch a new project in the region: the 'Greater Middle East' would 'include […] all Muslim nations, from countries of North Africa bordering the Mediterranean Sea to Pakistan, including Turkey and Israel'.[291] Then U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell announced the framework of the initiative:

> I am pleased to announce the initial results of our work -- an innovative set of programs and a framework for future cooperation that we call the U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative. The U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative is a bridge between the United States and the Middle East, between our governments and our peoples, an initiative that spans the hope gap with energy, ideas, and funding. Our Partnership Initiative is a continuation, and a deepening, of our longstanding commitment to working with all the peoples of the Middle East to improve their daily lives and to help them face the future with hope.[292]

These pious words and laudable aims notwithstanding, the daily lives of the people in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, and more countries in northern Africa have not yet been improved, unsurprisingly given the cost of the protracted subsequent U.S. campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Since the American-led Invasion of Iraq in 2003, particularly following the conflicts after the Arab Spring in late 2010 (especially in Syria from 2011 on) and the sudden appearance of the I.S. (the so-called Islamic State) in the summer of 2014, the Middle East map has been reshaped according to the geographic distribution of these Islamic sects.

3.2 The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Michael Billig defends the idea that crises support nationalistic feelings because

> Crises […] infect a sore spot, causing bodily fevers: the symptoms are an inflamed rhetoric and an outbreak of ensigns. But the irruption soon dies down; the temperature passes; the flags are rolled up; and, then, it is business as usual.[293]

This is a totally valid observation where the conflict between Palestine and Israel is concerned because every dead body reinvigorates each side's national feelings. Every martyr is a reminder of national identity.

---

[291] Safa Haeri, 'Concocting a 'Greater Middle East' brew', *Asia Times Online*, 4 March 2004 <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/FC04Ak06.html> [accessed 1 August 2013]

[292] Colin L. Powell, 'The U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative: Building Hope for the Years Ahead',in *U.S. Department of State Archive* <http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2002/15920.htm> [accessed 1 August 2013]

[293] Billig, p. 5.

The Israeli–Palestinian conflict has a long and deep history. The problem stems from the clash of religions rather than national identities. The territory of Israel and Palestine, especially Jerusalem (al-Quds in Arabic), is holy for Judaism, Christianity and Islam. For Jews, it is the central part of the Promised Land given by God which covers a territory from the Nile to the Euphrates. Also King Solomon built his Temple in Jerusalem and Zionists dream of building it again. For Christians, it is the birthplace of Jesus and cradle of Christianity. For Muslims, Al-Quds is the first Qibla (the direction they face during salat [prayer]) [294] and is the place where the blessed Prophet Muhammad physically and spiritually ascended to heaven on the back of a horse called al-Buraq.

Muslims, in general, has not had serious problems with Jewish people, they lived together in peace under the governance of the Ottoman Empire, but a problem arose with the birth of Zionism, the multifaceted nationalist movement generally considered to have been fathered by the Hungarian Jew Theodor Herzl (1860-1904) in 1897, although its roots can be detected several decades earlier. Jews, Christians and Muslims used to live in peace under the Ottoman rule. Herzl wanted to create a homeland for Jews in Palestine and in June 1896, having just outlined his vision in a controversial book (*Der Judenstaat*, Leipzig & Vienna: M. Breitenstein, February 1896), he indirectly informed the Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II of his idea via the Grand Vizier. He suggested a plan to 'pay off the debt the Ottoman Empire possessed so that they [the Zionists] would be given permission to buy a piece of land from the "promised land" region.'[295] The Ottoman Sultan did not meet him and refused his offer as he would again in 1901, when the two eventually did meet.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, however, Palestine was subject to a British mandate operated since 1920 and officially sanctioned by the League of Nations in 1922. This regime lasted until 1948, when the State of Israel was controversially declared. As early as 2nd November 1917, the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour sent to Baron Rothschild, who was one of the Zionist leaders of the time, a letter supporting the idea of creating a homeland in Palestine for Jewish people. Later called the Balfour Declaration, the letter was one of the milestones on the way to the creation of the state of Israel. In the thirty years from the date of the Balfour Declaration to the declaration of the

---

[294] The Noble Sanctuary (The Temple Mount) in Jerusalem, where Al-Aqsa Mosque stands now, served as the Quibla from 610 to 623 when it was changed to Kaaba in Mecca upon the Prophet Muhammad having received instruction from God: "Many a time We have seen you [Prophet] turn your face towards Heaven, so We are turning you towards a prayer direction that pleases you. Turn your face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque: wherever you [believers] may be, turn your faces to it. Those who were given the Scripture know with certainty that this is the Truth from their Lord: God is not unaware of what they do" (2:144).

[295] Mahmut Aytekin, 'Lifting the veil of obscurity: Abdulhamid II, the issue of Palestine', in *Worldbulletin.net* <http://www.worldbulletin.net/historical-events/113589/lifting-the-veil-of-obscurity-abdulhamid-ii-the-issue-of-palestine> [accessed 4 September 2014].

State of Israel (14th May, 1948), the Jewish population of Palestine rose almost eightfold from 84,000 to 630,000.[296]

In 1947, the United Nations offered a partition plan for Palestine which recommended giving 56.47% to the Jewish State and 43.53% to an Arab State and an international enclave for Jerusalem, but Palestinians rejected this plan.

One year later in 1948, the state of Israel was declared and was immediately engaged in war by Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, but they were repulsed. During the Six Day War in 1967, Israel seized most of the territory that it holds today.

For nearly a hundred years, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has stayed unsolved despite many efforts to reach an agreement at peace talks. The conflict has deepened so significantly that it has become one of the top problems in the world today. It is possible to see its reflection everywhere including the media, literature and even in visual narratives.

4. Nationalism and Comics

Before the elections for the first Scottish Parliament in 1999, the Scottish writer William McIlvanney wrote in *The Herald* that

> Having a national identity is like having an old insurance policy. You know you've got one somewhere but you're not sure where it is. And if you're honest, you would have to admit you're pretty vague about what the small print means.[297]

As Benedict Anderson points out, a nation is an imagined community where 'the members […] will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion'.[298] In such an imagined community, an individual is supposed to reveal his/her national identity when s/he is asked, in other words, 'identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty'.[299]

---

[296] Sergio Della Pergola, 'Demography in Israel/Palestine: Trends, Prospects, Policy Implications', *IUSSP XXIV General Population Conference*, August 2001, Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, 1-34 (p. 5) <http://www.archive-iussp.org/Brazil2001/s60/S64_02_dellapergola.pdf > [accessed 1 August 2013].

[297] William McIlvanney, 'Freeing Ourselves from inner Exile', *The Herald*, 6 March, 1999 <http://www.heraldscotland.com/sport/spl/aberdeen/freeing-ourselves-from-inner-exile-1.302772> [accessed 1 August 2013].

[298] Anderson, p. 6.

[299] Kobena Mercer, 'Welcome to the Jungle: Identity and Diversity in Postmodern Politics', in *Identity: Community, Culture Difference*, ed. by. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrance & Wishart, 1990), pp. 43-71 (p. 43).

National identity is the sum of the connotations we receive daily. These connotations can be flags, newspapers, politicians, national football matches, heroes / heroines — all things or examples which prevent us from forgetting our 'national identity'. As the English cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1932-) observes, national identity is all about representation:

> We only know what it is to be "English" because of the way "Englishness" has come to be represented, as a set of meanings, by English national culture. It follows that a nation is not only a political entity but something which produces meanings – a system of cultural representation.[300]

Being a nation involves sharing a 'national culture', which is, according to Hall,

> a *discourse* – a way of constructing meanings which influences and organises both our actions and our conception of ourselves. […] National cultures construct identities by producing meanings about 'the nation' with which we can *identify*; these are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and imagines which are constructed of it.[301]

Essential to the narration of a national culture are, by Stuart Hall's reckoning, five fundamental elements:

- *narrative of the nation*: it is told and retold in national histories, literatures, the media, and popular culture. These provide a set of stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols, and rituals which stand for, or represent, the shared experiences, sorrows, and triumphs and disasters which give meaning to the nation.
- *emphasis on origins, continuity, tradition, and timelessness*: the essentials of the national character remain unchanged through all the vicissitudes of history. It is there from birth, unified and continuous, "changeless" throughout all the changes, eternal.
- *invention of tradition*: [borrowed from Hobsbawm] traditions which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented. [. . .] 'Invented tradition' [means] a set of practices […] of a ritual or symbolic nature which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviours by repetition which automatically implies continuity with a suitable historical past.
- *foundational myth*: a story which locates the origin of the nation, the people, and their national character so early that they are lost in the mists of, not "real", but "mythic" time.
- *pure, original people or "folk"*: national identity is also often symbolically grounded on this idea.[302]

---

[300] Hall, p. 612.
[301] Ibid., p. 613.
[302] Ibid., pp. 614-15.

In a similar way, Ernst Gombrich, one of the prominent names in Art History, argued that 'Every culture and every language contains innumerable references to a common stock of knowledge which are not felt to be allusions because they are immediately accessible to anyone'.[303] As products of a shared national culture, comics themselves consequently accommodate representations of nationalism and/or national identity.[304] As they combine text and image, expressions of national identity or identities are found both in their drawings and in the text itself.

4.1 Art Spiegelman and Drawing National Identities

Art Spiegelman's *Maus* is possibly the best example to illustrate representations of national identities in graphic novel format. As is famously well known, Spiegelman draws Jews as mice, and Nazis as cats. Additionally, he depicts Poles as pigs, Americans as dogs, British as fish, Gypsies as moths, and Swedes as reindeer.

Beneath the bestiary depiction of nationalities, there lie cultural stereotypes and metaphors. Basically, cats chase mice, and dogs hunt cats. In this cycle, Spiegelman's depiction of Jews as mice goes back to a 1940 anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda film *The Eternal Jew*, in a scene of which an authoritative voiceover declares: 'Just like Jews among mankind, rats represent the very essence of malice and subterranean destruction'.[305]

Obviously Spiegelman chooses cats for German Nazis to create a Tom and Jerry narrative situation as he states that 'the cats and mice just came as a set, part of all the Tom and Jerry comics and cartoons that I grew up with',[306] but his portraiture of Poles as pigs seems somewhat problematic. (Fig. 34) In Judaism as well as in Islam, eating pork is forbidden and pigs are seen as dirty animals. Recalling the frequent Polish hatred of Jews, Spiegelman says that the 'Poles suffered terribly under the Nazis, but they were also often victimizers of Jews'.[307] In the late 80s, when Spiegelman wanted to get a visa to visit Poland, he says that he was told by a Polish ambassador that 'It's a really big insult to call Poles pigs and […] Hitler called the Poles *schwein*'.[308] So indeed, in 2001 when Piotr Bikont published a Polish edition of *Maus*, protesters in Poland burned the book in front of

---

[303] Ernst Gombrich, 'The Cartoonist's Armoury', in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and Other Essays on the Theory of Art* (London: Phaidon Press, 1963) pp. 127-42 (p. 133).
[304] Before beginning my analyses, I would like to remind the reader that I will mainly focus on those graphic novels of my chosen authors which deal with the Middle East.
[305] Cited in Art Spiegelman, *MetaMaus: A Look inside A Modern Classic*: *Maus* (London: Viking, 2011), p. 114.
[306] Ibid., p. 118.
[307] Ibid., p. 121.
[308] Ibid., p. 125.

Bikont's newspaper office, and Bikont 'came to the window wearing a pig mask and waved down at the protesters'.[309]

His portrayal of the British as fish is intended to evoke Britain's traditional fondness for fish and chips and its island culture, although the symbolism is open to misinterpretation given cats' predilection for fish as a meal. He chooses reindeer for Swedes because he thinks of 'the Swedes as somehow far outside the loop of [his] Eastern European narrative and finding an animal so totally out of scale with mice, cats, and mutts – those large galumphing and gentle reindeer'.[310]

4.2 Stereotypes and Comics

In its original sense 'stereotype' is a nineteenth-century printing term denoting the 'method or process of printing in which a solid plate of type-metal, cast from a papier-mâché or plaster mould taken from the surface of a form of type, is used for printing from instead of the forme itself'.[311] In 1922, having already been extended in meaning to indicate something endlessly repeated without change (e.g. a hackneyed expression or cliché), it was borrowed by the American political journalist Walter Lippmann (1889-1974), who in his famous work *Public Opinion* gave it today's meaning of 'the pictures in our heads' which we simplistically conceive when confronted with the outer world.[312]

For Lippmann, Man lives in a vast world, most of which it is impossible to reach, and, so as to grasp something of it, he (and, today one should add, she) has invented

> ways of seeing what no naked eye could see, of hearing what no ear could hear, of weighing immense masses and infinitesimal ones, of counting and separating more items that he can individually remember. He is learning to see with his mind vast portions of the world that he could never see, touch, smell, hear, or remember. Gradually he makes for himself a trustworthy picture inside his head of the world beyond his reach.[313]

National identities are created by people's mostly positive stereotypes about themselves. As for labelling other nations or national identities, at the risk of making a stereotypical generalisation himself, Lippmann believes that in their arrogant way humans

---

[309] Ibid., p. 123.
[310] Ibid. p., 131.
[311] *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. stereotype
<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/189956?rskey=1LN7wm&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid> [accessed 20 September 2013]
[312] Lippmann, p. 28.
[313] Ibid., p. 29.

essentially prefer negative stereotypes. Needless to say, stereotypes take scant account of Gustave Flaubert's constant warnings against lazy thinking and received ideas.[314]

Ernst Gombrich mentions mental stereotypes when he discusses the origins of stereotypes in sixteenth-century news-sheets and stereotypes and sees two different artists narrating the same scenery differently:

> There is no question here of the artist's having deviated from the motif in order to express his mood or his aesthetic preferences. It is doubtful, in fact, whether the designer of the woodcut ever saw Rome. He probably adapted a view of the city in order to illustrate the sensational news. He knew the Castel Sant' Angelo to be a castle, and so *he selected from the drawer of his mental stereotypes the appropriate cliché* for a castle – a German Burg with its timber structure and high-pitched roof. But he did not simply repeat his stereotype – he adapted it to its particular function by embodying certain distinctive features which he knew belonged to that particular building in Rome. He supplies some information over and above the fact that there is a castle by a bridge.[315]

Like woodcut artists, comics need stereotypes for three functions: '(a) stereotypes are aids to explanation, (b) stereotypes are energy-saving devices, and (c) stereotypes are shared group beliefs.'[316] For instant recognition of what the author depicts, stereotypes are vital for graphic novels. According to Will Eisner, the graphic book or periodical

> deals with recognizable reproductions of human conduct. Its drawings are a mirror reflection, and depend on the reader's stored memory of experience to visualize an idea or process quickly. This makes necessary the simplification of images into repeatable symbols. Ergo, stereotypes. […] In film, there is plenty of time to develop a character within an occupation. In comics, there is little time or space. The image or caricature must settle the matter instantly.[317]

Also, faces are important for stereotyping. Race plays a highly significant role in drawing a face. According to Gillian Rhodes,

> Faces from an unfamiliar race are harder to recognise than own-race faces […] The absolute coding model accounts for this effect by supposing that other-race faces are more densely clustered than own race faces in face space. But given that people know very few faces from an unfamiliar race, it seems unlikely that those faces would be more densely clustered than own-race faces. Moreover, if other-race faces are more densely clustered, then they should be easier to classify as faces than own-race faces, because classification depends on local

---

[314] Gustave Flaubert, *Dictionary of Received Ideas*, trans. by Gregory Norminton (London: Oneworld Classics, 2010 [1913])

[315] Ernst Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, 4th ed (London: Phaidon Press, 1972 [1960]), p. 61.

[316] Craig McGarty, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt and Russell Spears, 'Social, Cultural and Cognitive Factors in Stereotype Formation', in *Stereotypes as Explanations: The Formation of Meaningful Beliefs about Social Groups*, ed. by Craig McGarty, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt and Russell Spears (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 2.

[317] Will Eisner, *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008), pp. 11-12.

density on the absolute coding view. There is, however, no empirical support for this prediction. Valentine (1991) found that white subjects took longer to classify black faces than white faces, and Valentine and Endo (1992) found no difference in the speed with which British (white) and Japanese subjects classified own- and other-race faces. The absolute coding model therefore has some difficulty accounting for race effects in face processing. In contrast norm-based coding can readily account for these effects. Faces from an unfamiliar race are difficult to recognise because they all differ from the (own race) norm in the same way, and are slower to classify as faces because they are further from the norm than own-race faces.[318]

Similarly, one easily understands how a person's sense of national identity intensifies when s/he becomes an outsider in a foreign country. Native reaction within that host country to an outsider's perceived conformity to a foreign stereotype contributes to the process. As a member of a sizeable minority community in his homeland, and having observed other people throughout his life, when abroad Delisle does not have difficulty in portraying other nationalities in his graphic novels. When asked how he uses visual and verbal irony to reflect national differences, he says:

> In Burma, it was easy to draw Burmese people because if you draw a guy, you have the Asian face and you can really portray that easily, same with all the Asian countries, it is easy to draw them because they have a distinct face. Especially in Burma, the guys were wearing all these long skirts; it was easy to show it was a Burmese person. The context helped a lot because if I go outside on the street in Burma, the people know that I am gonna meet someone from outside the country, it is gonna be a foreigner. So the context helped a lot to explain that, and in Jerusalem, it was different because in Jerusalem, I could be involved. People would talk to me in Hebrew, I remember. Because they have so many different roots, I mean they have been in Europe; they all have very different faces. So in this context I only needed to specify their facial characteristics to render their meaning. I didn't really have to explain.[319] (Fig. 35)

Although mental stereotypes change from one culture to another, within a given community they tend to remain immutable so as to confirm people's prejudices.[320]

Stereotypes are indispensible for creating comics. One can easily understand a man/woman with a long white coat to be a medical doctor. However, when stereotypes are used to distinguish national identities or races, one must be careful. It may arguably be acceptable to draw Arabs with thick lips as Joe Sacco and Kemal Gökhan Gürses do

[318] Gillian Rhodes, *Superportraits: Caricatures and Recognition* (Hove: Psychology Press, 1996), p. 103.
[319] Guy Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak, 23 April 2014.
[320] For physiognomy please see David Kunzle, *Father of the Comic Strip: Rodolphe Töpffer* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2007).

(despite their disturbing echoes of Nazi caricature), but to guess a terrorist's name as Mohammed would be tantamount to racism.[321]

5. Comics Journalism and Middle East Identities

According to Zachary Lockman, professor of modern Middle East history at New York University, Islam was a screen that allowed Europeans to see their own identities:

> For centuries, though never in a simple or unconflicted way, Islam was a screen onto which Europeans could and did project their anxieties and conflicts about who and what they were or were not, a mirror in which Europeans could discern the traits that seemed to make them unique by highlighting how different, defective and inferior Islam was. […] It was in part by differentiating themselves from Islam (and the various characteristics they saw as part of Islam's essential and unchanging nature) that European Christians, and later their nominally secular descendants, defined their own identity. These representations persisted for centuries in popular and high culture and in scholarship, and some of them continue to circulate today. In movies, in television programs, in newspaper and magazine articles and in books, in children's comic books, indeed across the popular imagination of western Europe and the United States, images of the Muslim as other, as profoundly different from ourselves, as fanatical, violent, lusty and threatening – images that as we have seen have very old roots – still have emotional resonance for many people and can be drawn on and deployed for political purposes.[322]

In the western mindset the Orientalist mentality has never ended. (Fig. 36) In his celebrated book *Orientalism* Edward Said called Orientalism a discourse which is

> by no means indirect, corresponding with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to a degree by the exchange with power political (as with a colonial or imperial establishment), power intellectual (as with reigning sciences like comparative linguistics or anatomy, or any of the modern policy sciences), power cultural (as with orthodoxies and canons of taste, texts, values), power moral (as with ideas about what "we" do and what "they" cannot do or understand as "we" do).[323]

The Orientalist standpoint with regard to the Middle East, especially to Arabs, has been seen in comics for a long time and has several causes. One of the biggest contributory factors is that people, including the creators and readers of comics, are ignorant about Muslims, but this state of affairs is arguably less true today than in the past as a result of

---

[321] 'So Mohammed, pardon me for guessing your name, but you've got to admit the odds are pretty good. It's Mohammed… What's the plan?' Frank Miller, *Holy Terror*, p. 83.
[322] Zachary Lockman, p. 37.
[323] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 12.

international travel, immigration and multiculturalism, especially in former colonial countries.[324] One of the biggest reasons why the reaction against the Muhammad cartoons published in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* on 30th September 2005 turned into hostility against the whole Western world was the Muslim perception of this same ignorance. Slavoj Žižek explains this episode as follows:

> The Muslim crowds did not react to the Muhammad caricatures as such. They reacted to the complex figure or image of the West that they perceived as the attitude behind the caricatures. Those who propose the term "Occidentalism" as the counterpart to Edward Said's "Orientalism" are right up to a point: what we get in Muslim countries is a certain ideological vision of the West which distorts Western reality no less, although in a different way, than the Orientalist vision distorts the Orient. What exploded in violence was a web of symbols, images, and attitudes, including Western imperialism, godless materialism, hedonism, and the suffering of Palestinians, and which became attached to the Danish cartoons. This is why the hatred expanded from the caricatures to Denmark as a country, to Scandinavia, to Europe, and to the West as a whole. A torrent of humiliations and frustrations were condensed into the caricatures. This condensation, it needs to be borne in mind, is a basic fact of language, of constructing and imposing a certain symbolic field.[325]

After September 11, the standard western Muslim stereotype dramatically changed into 'terrorist'. Not all western comics since then have used negative Muslim stereotypes, of course. Grant Morrison has put sympathetic Muslim protagonists in his three-volume epic mini-series comic book *Vimanarama*,[326] (Fig. 37) whereas Frank Miller created a superhero called the Fixer to do battle with Muslim terrorists in his graphic novel *Holy Terror*.

The stereotyping of Muslims in western culture can, of course, be traced back to the Middle Ages. According to a manuscript dating from 715 A.D., Muslims were named as Saracens,[327] a term which, it unreliably claims, was derived from the Greek word for tent.[328] More than a thousand years later, partly as a result of the Arab slave trade and the notional Islamic tolerance of polygyny in law, Muslims were humiliatingly portrayed as 'violent, lusty and sexually perverse'.[329] Echoes of that kind of ignorant Orientalist approach to the Ottomans appear in the work of Guy Delisle when he anachronistically draws the sixteenth-century Ottoman Sultan Selim I smoking a hookah and attended by a

---

[324] For a broad analysis of Arabs in American Comics: Jack G. Shaheen, 'Arab Images in American Comic Books', *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 28.1 (1994), 123-33.

[325] Slavoj Žižek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (New York: Picador, 2008), p.60.

[326] Grant Morrison, Philip Bond, *Vimanarama,*3 vol. (New York: Vertigo, 2005)

[327] Cited in Robert G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1997), p. 217.

[328] The real etymology is still uncertain.

[329] Lockman, p. 69.

fez-wearing servant long before the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II introduced the egalitarian fez as male headwear in 1829.[330] (Fig. 38)

Both Sacco and Gürses resort to using the same stereotype to draw their Arab characters' faces, which are identifiable by a big mouth, big eyes, thick lips, and mostly a sad expression. Asked about his source or sources for this stereotyped depiction, Gürses replies:

> From photographs, personal acquaintances, and travels. But the thing which transforms these into stereotype stems from the aim of your work. I mean, I find it inevitable to use common and general perceptions rather than rarefying while using comics narrative which aims at glibness.[331]

If we accept the work of Joe Sacco and Guy Delisle as autobiographies, and Kemal Gökhan Gürses's as biography, we can say that all three authors (or their protagonists) discover new identities throughout their journeys in the Middle East. As Lippmann states, 'all strangers of another race proverbially look alike to the visiting stranger',[332] so it is unsurprising that the things that Sacco and Delisle see in their travels seem strange to them since they are foreigners to the region and its culture, while what Gürses observes (or claims to observe) appears more familiar to him because of his Turkish origin. Here, it would be appropriate to recall Otto Bauer's remark on the uniqueness of national identity cited in our Introduction.[333]

Bauer's observation about national 'natural character' exactly matches the position of Sacco and Delisle. On the very first page of *Palestine*, Sacco depicts his first day in Cairo before he crosses the northern border. While it is an ordinary day for local Arabs, it is a completely extraordinary situation for Sacco, who is stunned by the traffic and noise. On the psychedelic opening page where, under the capitalized chapter title 'CAIRO', he draws himself drinking in a pub, we read these lines:

> Traffic?
> I'm swallowing exhaust and my snot's gone black!
> And noise?
> Car horns are what Egyptians have instead of home entertainment centers!
> Whatta town!
> Crazeee!
> 15 million heads with their chickens cut off!
> And between pyramids and boy pharaohs, I'm zonked!
> I'm spinning!

---

[330] Guy Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, p. 224. Please also see: Hilda Amphlett, *Hats: A History of Fashion in Headwear* (Mineola, NY: Courier Dover, 2003).
[331] Kemal Gökhan Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak, 7 May 2013. [English translation is mine].
[332] Lippmann, p. 80.
[333] See p.

TAXI!
Get me outta here![334] (Fig. 39)

Delisle suffers from similar problems in Jerusalem. On his first night, he is awoken from his deep sleep by the sound of the adhan (call to prayer).[335] (Fig. 40)

Sacco's books depend almost entirely on Palestinians' historical memories that in Anthony Smith's view collectively form and define a nation.[336] Sacco's last book on Palestine, *Footnotes in Gaza*, in which he tells the story of Khan Younis in 1956, 'the greatest massacre of Palestinians on Palestinian soil',[337] is the best example of this nation-building memorial and narrative. Sacco's following paragraph clearly shows how Palestinian identity was shaped with a shared sad historical memory:

> Once in Khan Younis, we devoted about a day to gathering eyewitness testimony to what had happened in the town in November 1956 during the Suez Canal Crisis, when Israeli forces briefly occupied the Egyptian-ruled Gaza Strip. Old men and women had stark stories to tell about their fathers and husbands being shot in their houses or being lined up in the streets and killed by Israeli soldiers. One of those we interviewed was Abed El-Aziz El-Rantisi, a senior official of Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Party (who was later assassinated by an Israeli missile). El-Rantisi, who in 1956 was nine years old, told us his uncle had been killed that day. "I still remember the wailing and tears of my father over his brother," he said. "I couldn't sleep for many months after that… It left a wound in my heart that can never heal. I'm telling you a story and I'm almost crying. This sort of action can never be forgotten… [T]hey planted hatred in our hearts."[338]

As mentioned in the previous section, Islam in its various forms is an inseparable part of the numerous Middle East identities. So, graphic novels that depict this region inevitably indicate the symbols of Islam. To this end Kemal Gökhan Gürses uses verses from the Quran to separate the chapters in his book, *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini*. There are six chapters and for the first frame of each he uses a verse from the Quran which is consistent with the content of the chapter. (Fig. 41) Also Gürses embellishes these frames like a page from elegantly created pages of the Quran. For his part, Guy Delisle mentions Islamic symbols such as the adhan and disguises most of his Muslim characters as fundamentalists, but otherwise his recognition of Islamic culture is limited to occasional attempts to communicate with locals in Arabic. (Fig. 42) Possibly seeing it for the first

---

[334] Sacco, *Palestine*, p. 1.
[335] Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, p. 11.
[336] Smith, *National Identity*, p. 14, cited on p. [8] above.
[337] Joe Sacco, *Footnotes in Gaza*, p. xi.
[338] Ibid.

time in his life, Sacco allocates nine pages to showing the ritual sacrifice of a bull in *Footnotes in Gaza*.[339] (Fig. 43)

Although there are many examples of discriminating stereotypes and prejudices in comics, especially in the superhero genre, towards Muslims and Arabs (and Blacks as well), they are rarely depicted as the 'Other' in comics journalism.

6. Conclusion

Throughout the pages above, it is possible to see that there is not a one single unquestionable definition of nationalism. The notion is elusive like a bar of soap slipping through the hands of anyone who tries to hold it tight. Every scholar who has contributed to nationalism studies actually treats the same issues. For example, Ernest Renan defines a nation as a soul, a spiritual principle; nearly a century later Benedict Anderson defines it as an imagined community, implying a communion that is essentially spiritual.

Nevertheless, although it is hard to define what a nation or nationalism is, it can be reasonably argued that a nation's quintessence is to be found in its culture because everything that creates a person's national identity underlies the culture in which s/he lives.

In the Middle East, Islam is, to repeat, an inseparable part of national identity. For centuries, this Muslim identity has been ostracized by the Western world, and this alienation has been expressed in popular and high culture as well as in academia.

Since national identity is shaped in a culture of which comics are also a part, representations of national identities are seen both in the drawings and the text of the comics medium. Cultural stereotypes and metaphors are two important ways to depict national identities in comics. Stereotypes are essential tools for comics because they provide instant recognition. As comic strips generally first appear in ephemeral publications and consequently have a very limited time and space in which to make an impact on the reader by comparison with other narrative mediums, readers need to understand their intended message instantly. Islam has always been a controversial issue for comics, in which the depiction of Muslims has changed over time owing to political and social changes. For a long time, the Orientalist viewpoint was dominant, and Muslims were seen as the other in comics. Since 9/11, the approach to Muslim identities has dramatically changed with a somewhat disquieting tendency towards the polarization of attitudes.

---

[339] Ibid., pp. 137-45.

Joe Sacco, Guy Delisle and Kemal Gökhan Gürses espy new identities in their journeys to the Middle East. Although Gürses himself is from the region, he shares with Sacco the same tendency towards stereotypical depictions. But greater familiarity with local culture and Islamic practices relieves Gürses of the need to give his readers much detail about the daily lives of Middle Easterners or to show religious rituals as Sacco and Delisle often do.

While Sacco, Delisle and Gürses all use Islamic symbols in their graphic novels, Gürses unsurprisingly shows a deeper understanding of its message than the other two, when he embodies verses from the Quran which are appropriate for each chapter of his book. Sacco on the other hand simply tells how he is bewildered by seeing a ritual sacrifice, while Delisle recounts how on his first night in Jerusalem he is mildly annoyed to be awoken from his deep sleep by the sound of the adhan.

To sum up, in comics and graphic novels national identities can be portrayed differently depending on the culture in which the artist / author was born and raised and also, no doubt, on his/her intended readership.

CHAPTER III:

A GRAPHIC NOVEL RESPONSE TO THE IRAQ WAR

FROM TURKEY: *AYŞEGÜL SAVAŞTA: IRAK ŞAHİNİ*

1. Introduction

This chapter discusses Kemal Gökhan Gürses' *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* (Ayşegül at War: Iraqi Falcon) in four sections. Since there is as yet no in-depth study of the work of Kemal Gökhan Gürses in English, the first section begins by introducing the author to a non-Turkish readership and by briefly setting it in the context of the historical development of comics in Turkey. The second section focuses on the protagonist Ayşegül who is the first genuine female war journalist in comics journalism and talks about how the graphic novel response to the Iraq War. The third section examines the book within comics journalism aspects and the last chapter deals with the representation of the national identities.

1.1. A Brief History of Comics in Turkey

The origins of Turkish comics can be traced back to the Ottoman Empire, which first saw the appearance of caricatures in humorous magazines after the proclamation of the *Tanzimat Fermanı* (The Imperial Edict of Reorganization) by the Ottoman sultan Abdülmecid I at the very start of his twenty-two-year reign in 1839.[340] One of the main reasons for this proclamation was to check the slow decline of the Ottoman Empire by strengthening the tie between non-Muslims and the empire, in other words the Caliphate; and as a consequence, it guaranteed the rights of all Ottoman citizens regardless of religion or ethnic group.

In this free atmosphere, many humorous magazines eventually started to appear one by one, albeit several years after the early death of Abdülmecid I from tuberculosis in 1861, when he was succeeded by his brother Abdülaziz (1830-1876). The first free humorous magazine was created not by a Turk, but by an Istanbul- and Paris-trained Greek journalist and novelist called Theodor Kasap on 24 November 1870 and continued until its last issue

---

[340] William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 4th ed (Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2009), p. 83.

published on 10 January 1872.[341] The name of this magazine was *Diyojen*, derived from the name of the Ancient Greek cynical philosopher Diogenes of Sinope (modern-day Sinop in Turkey: 412 BC or 404 BC – 323 BC). The manifesto of this magazine was Diogenes' worldwide known response to Alexander the Great 'Stand a little less between me and the sun'.[342] It was a direct address to the Ottoman Government pleading for a censor-free press.[343] (Fig. 44)

The magazine aimed to talk about the problems of both the government and the people while criticizing and lampooning the forces opposed to popular culture. Between 1870 and 1872 183 issues were published on average three times a week, appearing variously in Turkish, Greek, Armenian and French editions. In these four years, the magazine was temporarily shut down three times; and each time, they continued to print new issues while making light of the reasons for their previous shutdowns. During the Ottoman period, the best way to criticise the sultan and his government was mostly through the medium of the debunking satirical magazine. This cultural tradition, which Kasap must have first encountered in Paris, was subsequently inherited by subsequent generations and preserved in Modern Turkey, where it is still very much alive and acceptable today.

After the First World War, the Ottoman Empire collapsed and a new Turkish state, the Republic of Turkey, was founded in 1923. This new regime, with its policy of Kemalism, derived from the founder of Modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal, who wanted to create a new ideology depending on the following six principles: republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, secularism, and reformism. This new-born nation-state started to cut its connections with the old regime in order to achieve its independent sovereignty. The Republican People's Party (CHP), the sole party that was legally permitted until 1945, westernized the country by adopting laws from the West for the new constitution ratified in 1924 after the abolition of the sultanate in 1922, and by changing the alphabet from a Turkish form of Perso-Arabic to Latin in 1928. It disestablished religion by abolishing the institution of the Caliphate in 1924 and turning worship into a

---

[341] Although there is a disagreement about the dates among sources, according to the list of The Periodicals of Tarık Hakkı Us Collection at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, which holds digitalized copies of hundreds of Ottoman and Turkish periodicals, the publication dates of *Diyojen* (no.538) are given as 12 Teşrînisâni 1286- 29 Kânunuevvel 1288 according to Rumi calendar. These dates are converted to Gregorian calendar. <http://www.tufs.ac.jp/common/fs/asw/tur/htu/list1.html#d> [accessed 15 September 2014].

[342] Diogenes Laërtius, 'Διογένης (Diogenes)' *Βίοι καὶ γνῶμαι τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ εὐδοκιμησάντων* [Lives of eminent philosophers], vol.2, trans. Robert Drew Hicks [Loeb Classical Library], (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), p. 32.

[343] In 1864, six years before the launch of *Diyojen*, the *Matbuat Nizamnamesi* [Press Code] was enacted which created strict censorship over the newspapers and magazines.

private affair. These reforms led to the loss of 'accumulated culture [inherited from the Ottomans] and left an immature generation of comic artists'.[344]

The new republic's founding elite tried to set an absolute control over the national culture, and they attached a particular importance to children's culture. Just four years after the foundation of Turkish Republic, *Küçükleri Muzır Neşriyattan Koruma Kanunu* (The Act of Protecting Youth from Harmful Publication) was enacted in 1927. Though it was subsequently changed a few times, it is still the most important legal provision of the restriction and censorship of the press in Turkey. Its main provision was to protect people under the age eighteen mainly against pornography.

Yet despite its initial embrace of westernization, especially after the rise of Communism in Russia and Fascism in Italy, the new regime became more suspicious of anything coming from abroad which it regarded as a threat against its authority and the national identity that it was trying to create. Any outside influences were now liable to be 'Turkified'. Under these conditions, comics were affected alongside other publications and artefacts. Foreign comics, mostly American, were tailored in order to fit into the newly created Turkish identity dependent upon the *Türk Tarih Tezi* (Turkish History Thesis) introduced in 1930, according to which Turkish civilization predates Hellenistic civilization, having been born in Central Asia bordering on China and including nomadic Huns among its ancestors. For this reason, foreign comics were given typical Turkish backgrounds by changing the names of the characters and places into Turkish, even sometimes turning blond, pale-skinned characters into dark-skinned ones.

Comics featuring sequential comic strips arrived in Turkey at the beginning of the 1930s, and firstly appeared in children's magazines, but they were not called 'comics' since the word sounded too American. The terms *Resimli Roman* (novel with pictures / graphic novel) and *Sinema Romanı* (cinema novel) were tried at the beginning, but later *Çizgi Roman* (novel with line-drawings) was coined to mean comics. The reassuring reference to 'novel' was added because it had been a familiar genre in Turkish literature and culture ever since François Fénelon's didactic prose romance *Les Aventures de Télémaque* had first been translated into Turkish in 1859.[345] Additionally, the novel was one of the new Republic's powerful propaganda tools. At the beginning, comics were presented without speech bubbles, with captions and commenting texts under the strips.

---

[344] Levent Cantek, 'Türkiye'de Çizgi Roman'ın Umumi Manzarası [The General View of Comics in Turkey]', in *Çizgili Hayat Kılavuzu: Kahramanlar, Dergiler ve Türler* [A Guide for a Striped Life: Heroes, Magazines and Genres], ed. by Levent Cantek (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), pp. 15-49 (p. 15).
[345] François Fénelon, Les Aventures de *Télémaque* [The Adventures of Telemachus] (1699).

They were artistically hand-copied by Turkish artists as there were not any other available technologies to do so. This tradition would continue nearly until the 1970s.

The first children's magazine of the new Turkish Republic, *Çocuk Sesi* (Child's Voice), began publication in 1928. It was full of stories with pictures. Swedish cartoonist Oscar Jacobsson's speechless comic strip *Adamson*, featuring an eponymous, usually silent little cigar-smoking man with a big hat who encountered frequent misadventures, was given a make-over as a pure Turkish character called *Bican Aktüre* with supporting story under the strip. (Fig. 45) *Miki Fare* (Mickey Mouse) appeared for the first time on a cover of this magazine in 1934. The first Turkish comic strip, *Zıpzıp Ali'nin Oyunları* (The Games of Ali the Hopper), was created by Orhan Halil Tolon in 1933 in the same children's magazine. (Fig. 46) It has both speech bubbles and supporting text under the strips. In 1935, the first American comic strips would be published in this magazine:

> In Turkey, *Flash Gordon* was first published in 1935 in a magazine called *Çocuk Sesi*, and the title of the comic would later be changed to *Baytekin*. The title character's name was not the only one to be tinkered with. The original American character going by the name of Dane Arden was changed into Yıldız, and Zarkov became Çetinel. *Baytekin* affected the youth of that period profoundly, both in comic book and movie form. The series was first published under the name of *Super Gordon* in 1971. Its main character was presented as "the pilot of the future." At the bottom of the comics pages, propaganda slogans could be found, such as: "Our future is in the sky," "Help strengthen the Turkish Air Forces," or "Let's strengthen our Air Forces".[346]

Towards the 1940s, Turkey had to overcome significant problems. In 1938, Mustafa Kemal (dubbed exclusively ATATÜRK, the 'father' of the Turks, in 1934) died, and the public was afraid of not having a strong leader to protect the country against the threats towards the state. During the Second World War, Turkey remained neutral, but remained ready for any sudden attacks. The press suffered from a paper shortage and even newspapers were obliged to limit their size to just four pages. This restriction also affected comic magazines. In this unpromising atmosphere, another milestone in Turkish comics history, *1001 Roman* (1001 Novels), was born. This title surely evokes the *One Thousand and One Nights* (Arabic كتاب ألف ليلة وليلة = *Kitāb alf laylah wa-laylah*; English *Arabian Nights*) of the Islamic Golden Age and suggests a marked awareness of Turkish cultural, historical and religious affiliations on the part of the author or authors. Initially, its editors maintained the tradition of supplying extra commentary text under the comic strips or

---

[346] Meral Özçınar, 'A Cornerstone of Turkish Fantastic Films: From Flash Gordon to Baytekin', in *Comics as a Nexus of Cultures: Essays on the Interplay of Media, Disciplines and International Perspectives*, ed. by Mark Berninger, Jochen Ecke and Gideon Haberkorn (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2010) 164-174 (p. 166).

panels. They continued production for more than three decades and published many fine examples of comics such as Tarzan, *Avcı Baytekin* (Jungle Jim, literally Hunter Baytekin), and *Gol Kralı Roy* (Roy of the Rovers, literally 'Top Goal-Scorer Roy'). (Fig. 47)

In the 1940s Turkish comics were published unsystematically since most depended on imported foreign originals that lacked copyright authorization in Turkey.[347] The 1940s also gave birth to another important children's magazine, *Doğan Kardeş* (Brother Doğan), which was published for the first time in 1945 thanks to support by the cultural service of the *Yapı ve Kredi Bank*. (Fig. 48) The first editor of this magazine was the politician, journalist and administrator Vedat Nedim Tör (1897-1985), who is thought of as the Turkish counterpart of Fredric Wertham, the German-born American psychiatrist and crusading author who protested against the supposedly harmful effects of violent imagery in mass media and comic books on the development of children.[348] According to Deniz Arzuk

> As a dedicated believer in beauty and good taste, Vedat Nedim Tör strongly opposed what he called "zararlı yayınlar" (malign publications). In this sense, comic magazines which published comics from different genres other than the "clean" ones like those published in Doğan Kardeş were not the only obstacles to be avoided. Tör's definition of this category also included some examples of adventure novels and science fiction that could make the children dreamers; ghost stories, thrillers and religious motifs of any kind which could stultify them; or anything that may be thought as brutal and therefore "damage good taste" for that matter. Tör and the other writers used every opportunity to warn the readers about such books and magazines, which the children seemed to love.[349]

Until its last issue published in 1993, the magazine renewed its editorial strategy a couple of times according to the political atmosphere of the day. Also the first, albeit pirated appearance of *Tintin* in Turkey was in 1949, when a children's magazine called *Çocuk Alemi* (Child's World) published the first unofficial adaptations into Turkish. (Fig. 49)

The 1950s marked the golden age of comics in Turkey. During this time, comic strips extended their range of outlets from children's magazines to newspapers, starting in 1950 with the mainstream daily *Hürriyet* (Liberty), founded by Sedat Simavi in 1948. Around 1953-1954, the competition among newspapers became so intense that they started to steal artists from each other by vying in offering higher amounts of salary. Italian *fumetti*

---

[347] Levent Cantek, *Türkiye'de Çizgi Roman* [Comics in Turkey] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012), p. 69.
[348] Levent Cantek, 'Türkiye'de Çizgi Roman'ın Umumi Manzarası [The General View of Comics in Turkey]', p. 20.
[349] Deniz Arzuk 'Vanishing Memoirs: Doğan Kardeş Children's Periodical Between 1945 and 1993' (unpublished master dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 2007), p. 86.

arrived in Turkey in the 1950s. The first and longest lasting hero-comics album *Pekos Bill* (a Turkish version of the Italian western *Pecos Bill* created by Guido Martina in 1949) started in 1951. As Kaya Özkaracalar notes:

> According to comics historian Levent Cantek, its first issue was reportedly published directly by the Turkish representative of the Italian rights owners Mondadiri in 1951, but the magazine was soon taken over by Alaeddin Kıral's Kıral Neşriyat Yurdu. Interestingly, it was banned in 1953, but continued under the title *Koca Teks* until the ban was lifted in 1954 upon appeal.[350]

Two other very important Turkish versions of Italian *fumetti* from the *EsseGesse* team of cartoonists appeared in this period: in 1955 *Tommiks* (based on *Captain Miki*, first published in Italy in 1951) and in 1956 *Teksas* (based on *Il Grande Blek*, first published in Italy in 1954). They became so popular that even today *tommiks-teksas* is used to mean comics in Turkey. They also illustrate how by the 1950s Americanism was and still is welcomed in Turkey, not directly from American comics, but via Italian comics which are pure American Westerns. It is as if, initially at least, an Italian veneer helped to make American culture more acceptable for a Turkish readership which might have forgotten or not recognised that America is a relatively new country composed mainly of immigrant families, many of whom came from Italy. Another cornerstone for Turkish comics is *Abdülcanbaz*, a Turkish hero whose adventures take place in Turkey, Egypt or even in space. It was created by Turhan Selçuk in 1957. 'Abdülcanbaz is a man possessing physical prowess, and even superpowers at times, though he generally prefers to use his wits and the famous Ottoman slap across the face with the speech balloon of "Şraaak!" covering the panel to dramatic effect.'[351] (Fig. 50)

Turkey welcomed the 1960s with a *coup d'état*. On 27 May 1960, a group of thirty-seven young Turkish military officers headed by General Cemal Gürsel staged a coup against the democratically elected government which had been ruling the country since 1950 but whose initial popularity had waned after 1955 owing to a failing, debt-ridden economy with high inflation and the reintroduction of censorship laws.[352] The Turkish Prime minister Adnan Menderes was executed together with two of his former ministers. Within a year of the coup, administrative authority was given back to civilians. The politically tense atmosphere of the 1950s disappeared and a relatively free climate

---

[350] Kaya Özkaracalar, 'Kıral's Pekos Bill', in *Geocities.ws*. <http://www.geocities.ws/rick40s2005/pekosbill.html> [accessed 9 September 2014].

[351] Emrah Güler, 'The return of Abdülcanbaz, the Formidable Turk', *Hurriyet Daily News*, 11 March 2013 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/the-return-of-abdulcanbaz-the-formidable-turk.aspx?pageID=238&nID=42679&NewsCatID=386> [accessed 9 September 2014].

[352] Özgür Mutlu Ulus, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), p. 12.

appeared for a short time even though the country was soon subjected to a series of unstable government coalitions in parliament alternating between the Justice Party of Suat Hayri Ürgüplü and Süleyman Demirel on the centre-right and the Republican People's Party of İsmet İnönü and Bülent Ecevit on the left. This relative freedom from restriction mostly affected comic strips published in newspapers as they worked to oppose the government. Left-wing nationalism started to rise and this enabled the appearance of new historical comics such as *Kaan* and *Karaoğlan* (both 1963) and *Tarkan* (1970), which in featuring their eponymous heroes took Turkish origins back to Central Asia whereas the historical comics of the 1950s mostly focused on Ottoman history. (Fig. 51)

As the 1960s wore on, Turkish society became increasingly polarized owing to an economic recession, made all the more painful by memories of an earlier superficial boom due largely to foreign borrowing, increased exports, and remittances from Turkish workers in Western Europe. Social unrest led to street demonstrations, labour strikes, political assassinations, and schisms within the ruling Justice Party. On 12th March, 1971, after two months of chaos, Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel was effectively forced to resign when handed an ultimatum (euphemistically known as 'the military memorandum') by General Memduh Tağmaç, Chief of the General Staff of Turkey.[353]

This intervention merely produced a total suspension of effective government and on 27th April, 1971, martial law needed to be declared in eleven of Turkey's sixty-seven provinces following a further wave of terrorism perpetrated by the Turkish People's Liberation Army. Over the next two years repression extended to the prohibition of youth organizations and union meetings and the proscription of some leftist (but not military neo-fascist) publications as martial law was renewed every two months.[354] Unsurprisingly, far from recovering, Turkey suffered from a further economic crisis throughout the 1970s with inflation hitting triple digits by 1979 owing to a failure to take sufficient account of the hike in world oil prices back in 1973-74 and subsequent reliance on short-term foreign borrowing. Consequently, most Turks, especially the young, remained politically divided into two groups as left- and right-wing factions fought and killed each other. Right-wing and left-wing newspapers reflected these divisions in their historical comic strips and continued to use them to disseminate propaganda.

---

[353] The ultimatum demanding 'the formation, within the context of democratic principles, of a strong and credible government, which will neutralise the current anarchical situation and which, inspired by Atatürk's views, will implement the reformist laws envisaged by the constitution', putting an end to the 'anarchy, fratricidal strife, and social and economic unrest', and adding that, if the demands were not met, the army would 'exercise its constitutional duty' and take over power itself.
Ahmad, p. 147-48.

[354] Ibid., pp. 150-51.

Possibly slipping under the censorship radar because of the levity of its content, the first weekly humorous magazine also appeared in the 1970s. With its gently rib-tickling motto *Geçim derdini, can sıkıntısını, aşk yarasını, karı-koca kavgasını şipşak keser. Her derde devadır, gırgır da gırgır* (It instantly stops life's hassle, boredom, heartache, fighting between spouses. A panacea for all troubles), *Gırgır* (Wisecrack) was first founded by brothers Oğuz and Tekin Aral in 1972 as a daily supplement of the newspaper *Gün* (Day). (Fig. 52) It then ran as an independent weekly magazine. During the 1980s it started to sell a million copies a week as the mouthpiece of the oppressed. It was published until 1993, providing a training school for artists and achieving the status of a cult item in the world of Turkish comics. On 20 July, 1974, the Turkish army invaded Cyprus in response to the Greek Cypriots' *coup d'état* a week before. This event raised patriotic feeling in Turkey and created a big movement of support which was also visible in war comics like *Yüzbaşı Volkan* (Captain Volkan), created by Ali Recan in 1972 in the daily newspaper *Son Havadis* (Latest News) and later published as separate albums with their own individual names. It tells the adventures of Captain Volkan, a pilot in the Turkish Air Force. It is worth noting that there is a strong similarity between *Yüzbaşı Volkan* and Franco-Belgian comic series *Les Aventures de Tanguy et Laverdure*, created in 1959 by Jean-Michel Charlier and Albert Uderzo. (Fig. 53)

On the 12th of September 1980, there occurred the second overt *coup d'état* in Turkish history, which was headed by the Chief of the General Staff General Kenan Evren in order to 'restore democracy', and which came about as a result of the bloody conflict between the left and right wings. The military regime ruled the country for three years until the 1983 general elections. They tried to impose *Atatürkçülük* (Ataturkism), an updated version of *Kemalism*, on citizens in order to calm the politicized public. As a result of this, in 1981, the state paid cartoonist Ayhan Başoglu to create a comic telling in strip form the life of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk starting from his childhood. It was entitled *Altın Saçlı Kahraman* (The Hero with Golden Hair) and published in Arabic and English in addition to Turkish. The 1980s would not produce any important titles except for weekly humorous magazines that followed the *Gırgır* tradition such as *Limon* (Lemon) in 1985, *Hıbır* (1989-1995),[355] and *Dıgıl* (Baby's Babble) in 1989.

With the introduction of private television channels in the 1990s, sales of print media slumped by comparison with figures for the previous decade:

---

[355] The title *Hıbır* is meaningless, but the magazine logo was a nondescript animal and its motto was 'intercontinentally annoying magazine'.

Confronted with the advance of private TV channels, magazines turned against mainstream taste and put an emphasis on stories that could not be aired on TV. This inevitable change marginalised the comics as much as they did the magazines and gave them a grotesque and carnivalesque characteristic.[356]

New cartoonists and titles nevertheless appeared within weekly humorous magazines, and a new narrative tradition started to revive thanks to *Pişmiş Kelle* (Smirk) in 1990, *Leman*[357] in 1991, *L-Manyak* (L-Maniac) in 1996.

At the beginning of the 2000s, comic books started to be seen in bookshops as well as in newsagents. This upgrade in distribution improved the quality of the printing. Further new weekly magazines started publishing, such as *Penguen* (Penguin) in 2002, *Kemik* (Bone) and *Kirpi* (Hedgehog) in 2003, *Fermuar* (Zip) in 2006 and *Uykusuz* (Sleepless) in 2007. In 2009, the *NTV Yayınları* (NTV Publishing House) began to publish comics, featuring mostly classic stories such as Hamlet, Don Quixote and Sherlock Holmes, and promoted them through a massive commercial campaign. This initiative brought comics to public attention again.

Today *Leman*, *Penguen* and *Uykusuz* continue to maintain their established narrative tradition, and together they form an unofficial opposition to the governing party *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party), which has been ruling Turkey since 2002. (Fig. 54) In 2009, Cem Özüduru created the first zombie comics in Turkish *Zombistan* (The Land of Zombies). The following year saw the first publication of a collective work, *Deli Gücük*,[358] created under the editorship of Levent Cantek and relating horror stories from the Ottoman Era. Since 2013, Devrim Kunter has published two volumes of his series *Seyfettin Efendi ve Olağanüstü Maceraları* (The Exceptional Adventures of Seyfettin Efendi) which tells the stories of an Ottoman detective, the Turkish Sherlock Holmes. (Fig. 55)

---

[356] Levent Cantek, 'On Comics in Turkey' in *Seruven.org* <http://www.seruven.org/> [accessed 9 September 2014].

[357] The owners of *Leman* opened café restaurants called Leman Kültür (Leman Culture) in several cities in Turkey where people socialize in places decorated with cartoon characters and objects, even the foods on the menu are named after cartoon characters, places or objects from the history of the magazine. Please see their website: <http://www.lmk.com.tr/?lang=en> [accessed 16 September 2014].

[358] 'Gücük' is a local term used, especially, in the Black Sea Region of Turkey, to mean the period between 14 February and 13 March. *Deli* (unbalanced) *Gücük* describes the unpredictability of this month. See 'Dedelerimizin Hava Tahminleri [Our Ancestor's Weather Forecast]', in *Kabataş Haber* <http://www.kabatashaber.com/dedelerimizin-hava-tahminleri-arastirma/> [accessed 17 September 2014]. The character Deli Gücük in the graphic novel is an unkempt man who travels from one place to another and defends justice.

1.2. Who is Kemal Gökhan Gürses?

Kemal Gökhan Gürses was born in Istanbul in 1964. At a very young age (around twelve), he started to publish his first cartoon strips in the humorous weekly magazine *Gırgır* (Wisecrack); by fourteen he had begun his professional career in *Mikrop* (Microbe).[359] He worked for several humorous magazines such as *Fırt* (Pull), *Gençlik* (Young Bloom), and *Toplum* (Community).[360] His first daily comic strip, *Ağaç Yaşken Eğilir* (a Turkish proverb equivalent to 'you cannot teach an old dog new tricks'),[361] was published for nine years between 1984 and 1993 in one of the oldest and most highly popular daily newspapers *Cumhuriyet* (Republic). Later Gürses drew another daily series called *Zontellektüel Abdullah* (meaning approximately 'clever clogs')[362] for the daily newspaper *Hürriyet* (Liberty). For *Radikal İki* (Radical 2), he drew two series *Şu Benim Otuz Beş Yaşım* (Oh, I am forty!: 1997-1999)[363] followed, with deliberately anachronistic illogicality, by *Şu Benim 35 Küsür Yaşım* (Oh, I am almost forty!: 1999-2001).[364] Again for the daily newspaper *Radikal* (Radical), for a while he unfailingly drew *Obezler* (Obese people), criticizing the alienation of the overweight in society. Lastly, for a very short time until he resigned in December 2012, he produced another daily comic strip called *Endişeli Modernler* (Anxious Moderns)[365] for the newspaper *Taraf* (Party).

1.3. *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini*

Prior to publication in book form in January 2006 *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* (Aysegul at War: the Iraqi Falcon) was serialized as a daily comic strip between March and July 2005 in *Radikal* ('Radical') after an advance TV publicity campaign, which at the time was

---

[359] This weekly magazine was published in 60 issues between 1978 and 1979 with the subtitle *Hunharca Güldüren Hain Mizah Dergisi* (The wickedly funny magazine that makes you die of laughter).
[360] They can all be seen as followers of the *Gırgır* tradition.
[361] Later Gürses compiled these comic strips in three albums: *12 Eylül Öncesine Dönmek İstiyorum* (I want to go back to pre-September 12: 1989), referring to the Turkish *coup d'état* in 1980, *Aslında Bunların Hepsi Hikaye* (Indeed they are all lies: 1991) and *Booşver... Nasılsa Halk Anlamaz!..* (Don't care... They don't understand: 1991).
[362] Gürses created the portmanteau name *Zontellektüel* by combining the two words *zonta*, 'hick', and *entellektüel*, 'intellectual'. He highly criticized Turkish neoliberals of the 1980s who tried to appear intellectual despite being nothing but country bumpkins. Later he compiled his contributions to the series in the album *Aydınlarla Zontaların Savaşı* (The Fight between Hicks and Intellectuals: 1990) and later in a follow-up album with the title *Zontellektüel Abdullah* (1993).
[363] Here Gürses criticised the elements in Turkish society who wasted or idled away their youth before the September 12 coup and turned into a consumer society afterwards.
[364] Here Gürses dramatized the generation gap and the war of the sexes by creating a woman character called Aslı and her middle-aged and elderly lovers. He again subsequently published the series in the identically titled album *Kırkından Sonra* (Forty Something: 2003).
[365] In this series he examined the problems of modern society by creating several characters varying in age and from a range of political backgrounds.

extremely rare in Turkey.[366] (Fig. 56) Gürses initially set out to collect all of his Ayşegül series in four volumes according to his statement in the book's inner cover.[367] Also as far as his overall conception of the project is concerned, at the end of his book, he makes Ayşegül intimate that her next adventure will be set in Palestine and preceded by an unexpected story in which she will meet meet two characters called Ahmet and Şeyhmus.[368]

For his story, Gürses uses a very complex, far from linear plotline, which can sometimes be quite hard to follow and involves very sudden scene changes and flashbacks. He explains his preference for such a complex plotline thus:

> Firstly, I want to be close to cinematic narration. Secondly, the story itself has highly complicated dynamics and narrative flow: Whereas people in Iraq struggle for their lives and their homeland, some businessmen chase money in this chaotic atmosphere. In my opinion, it is one of the general characteristics of wars that people whose aims are completely different from each other want to catch fish in the same blood bath. I wanted to re-fictionalize this multifaceted mechanism.[369]

The story begins in Baghdad and takes place and jumps between Istanbul, Baghdad and Najaf. The book opens with a frame in which Ayşegül and other journalists make speeches before the coffin of a deceased Italian freelance journalist called Enzo in front of the Palestine Hotel of Baghdad in 2004.[370] Chronologically, the frame is set exactly in the middle of the narrative when Ayşegül learns of the death of Enzo. The story ends at Ayşegül's mother's home, and Gürses finishes his book by telling what his characters go on to do after the story is completed.

The author cleverly weaves the plot, creating stories and characters whom the protagonist Ayşegül encounters. Her being a journalist makes this easier because someone in her profession is always in search of news and does not shy away from becoming

---

[366] The television advertisement can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkgW7euBaws> [accessed 1 May 2013]

[367] The other three volumes consist of his other daily published stories. The first one is *Kapkaç* (Purse Snatching). Drawing inspiration from two real reportages of purse snatchers in Istanbul published in the newspaper *Birgün*, Gürses creates two characters, Ahmet and Şeyhmus, close friends who have both migrated from Diyarbakir to Istanbul. He tells how circumstances have turned them from innocents into criminal purse snatchers. The second volume is *Erev ile Saheer* (Erev and Saheer), about a Jewish youth (Erev) and a Palestinian girl (Saheer) who meet in Paris. By creating an impossible love story, Gürses deals with the Palestinian issue in very human terms. The third volume is *Moskova Gözyaşlarına İnanmıyor* (Moscow doesn't believe your tears), in which Gürses tells how in the post-Soviet era the former Communist Dream became a cruel nightmare through the machinations of Russian mafia businessmen.

[368] *Erev ile Saheer* (Erev and Saheer) has not been included in this thesis as Gürses has not compiled these daily published comic strips in a graphic novel.

[369] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

[370] Although most of the main characters are fictitious, some are taken from real life. More on this topic will be given in further pages.

involved in trouble and meeting strangers. Basing his narrative on a newspaper article, Gürses creates a half-fictitious, half-real statuette called the Iraqi Falcon and builds his story around it. In his narrative Saddam Hussein orders a statuette to celebrate the birth of his first son Uday and names it the Iraqi Falcon. Valued at more than twenty million dollars, it is wonderfully designed and made of pure gold with a huge diamond hidden inside it.

After the invasion of Iraq, one of the soldiers, depicted as a black person, steals the statuette and is killed while trying to sell it through the militants of the Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad organization, whose leader is Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Since they need money to buy weapons, they in turn try to sell this statuette for just two million dollars but are trapped and killed. Zarqawi's men suspect that the killers are Saudis and want to leak this story via an interview with Zarqawi, which in those days would have constituted a great success as propaganda for their cause.

In the meantime, in Istanbul this statuette mysteriously falls into the hands of a Turkish jeweller of Arab origin called Nasır, who is killed by Mahmut el Ansar and his men to whom he does not give the statuette. Nasır wants to leave any money arising from the sale of the Iraqi Falcon to his errand boy Aladdin as he knows that Aladdin's family is very poor, and before he dies, he tells Aladdin to take the statuette from his home and sell it to his friend Muhlis, an international smuggler, and then to take a haversack full of money and start to work for the Turkish jeweller Kirkor, who is of Armenian origin. Aladdin does exactly what his master says and gives all of the money to his family who are shocked to see so much cash together for the first time in their lives.

When Ayşegül and her cameraman and close friend Ali, who is a middle aged man, land in Istanbul for a while, Ayşegül sees news about the murder of the jeweller Nasır in a newspaper, and thinks that it may have been motivated by the lust to acquire the Iraqi Falcon. She looks for a lead and finds Aladdin. Though Aladdin is reluctant to talk to her, later he confides in her. Then, Ayşegül goes to see the former errand boy's family and tells them to leave Istanbul because this Iraqi Falcon is very dangerous and they may be in danger, too. Her warning proves to have been given too late, however, for no sooner does she leave than Mahmut el Ansar and his men break into it and kill all of Aladdin's family members except for Aladdin himself. When he calls Ayşegül for help, she brings him to her mother's home and keeps there until she sends him to his uncle, who lives in a western European country.

In a flashback set in Iraq, Zarqawi's men want the Italian journalist Enzo to interview their leader, Zarqawi, and Enzo asks Ayşegül for help, suggesting that they hold the

interview jointly. Ayşegül gathers her crew and they drive to Najaf to meet Enzo. On their way, American soldiers stop them and take them into custody. After a couple of days, they are released and continue to Najaf to hear a speech by the highly influential Islamic religious and political leader Muqtada al-Sadr. After the speech on the same night at a hotel, Ayşegül learns that Enzo has been killed. When they try to turn back to Baghdad for Enzo's funeral, a US helicopter starts to fire into the crowd, resulting in Ayşegül's cameraman and closest friend Ali being wounded.

After the funeral they go back to Najaf because Ayşegül has a feeling that Zarqawi's men intend to find her to complete the interview. After she and her driver Ziya park their car, Ayşegül is kidnapped in the middle of the street in front of a hundred people. Ayşegül is right; the kidnappers are Zarqawi's men. After hours of travel, they abandon her in a house. And later the same men leave her blindfolded and with her hands tied in the middle of a desert during her transfer to Zarqawi's residence. While waiting, she is attacked by vultures and fired at by another helicopter. She opens her eyes at Zarqawi's home.

Following the interview, our indomitable heroine goes back to Istanbul for a while but does not stay long, returning to Baghdad in spite of her friends' insistence. On the very first day of her arrival back in the Palestine Hotel, she is welcomed by an American agent. Next day she is threatened with the possibility of holding another interview with Zarqawi for the Americans, because they, who by now have the Iraqi Falcon on their hands through some obscure transaction, want to find his place of residence to kill him. She rejects their self-interested offer of cooperation and, just when a gun is being held to her by a Turkish comprador called İlker Demir, a big explosion, possibly caused by a suicide attack, is heard. Having had yet another close brush with death, Ayşegül is taken into a hospital and stays there for a while until her closest friend Ali comes to take her back to Turkey.

At the end of the story, she is seen crying while embracing her mother in their summerhouse in the west of Turkey before she recovers and goes to the beach to see Aladdin, who by now seems to have returned from his uncle's bolthole in Western Europe.

As has been briefly mentioned above, this graphic novel is a mixture of reality and fiction, and even the fictional parts of it also draw on reality. Gürses loves using real elements to tell his story. Those relating to the protagonist will be discussed shortly; meantime we can examine others found elsewhere in the book. Before analysing people, it may be better to focus on real places, objects and events. Gürses accounts for his blend of reality and fiction as follows:

> The only genre that inspires me is adventure, which is a classical and
> traditional narration type. I created my story according to its themes and

motives. A story is always a story, an invention. My concern was to embed some words and images, showing this brutal and real invasion, into this fluent story. I gathered thousands of photographs. I read lots of books, too many articles to draw upon in this story. Most of the events and some of the characters are blended with reality. But I have a discourse that I also named in one of my strips: "Nothing is as deceptive as reality".[371]

To draw the real elements in his book Kemal Gökhan Gürses derives most of his inspiration from photographs as may be judged by the small album of snapshots that he created to use for his drawings in the last four pages of the book. While he uses soft and clear lines, more shadings and pastel tones to draw these photographs, in order to distinguish fiction from reality he chooses greater sharpness and a more obviously cartoonish style. (Fig. 57) On this subject he says that:

> I wanted to show these two completely different styles. The sharpness in my lines completely reflects my inner war. As for the photographs, they are for documentation, the bridge to reality. So, the connection and difference between these two become easily perceptible at first glance.[372]

Firstly, the Iraqi Falcon is real according to a newspaper article entitled *Saddam'ın altın şahini İstanbul'a kondu, yakalandı* (Saddam's golden falcon landed on Istanbul, and caught),[373] dating from 19 September, 2004, which authenticates the story. As in the book, it really was looted from Saddam Hussein's palace in Baghdad. Indeed, it was made of pure gold, ornamented with rubies and diamonds and weighed one and a half kilograms. No one was killed for this statuette in real life, however; the man who was trying to sell it was merely apprehended. In comparison with the picture of the statuette in the newspaper article, the author's drawing is different. There is an undeniable similarity between Gürses' drawing and the falcon in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941). (Fig. 58) The statuette functions as a devastating element in Gürses' story, where everyone who becomes involved with it is killed. For Gürses:

> The statuette symbolizes the vulgarity of the power which employs every trick to have everything they aspire to, their cruelty of this ambition. Maybe the Iraqi Falcon statuette symbolizes all the oil resources which America robbed for 130 years as compensation for their expenses in the war.[374]

Secondly, Gürses uses real cities as backdrops to the action. The story takes place in Istanbul, Baghdad, Najaf and lastly in Mugla, a province in the south-west of Turkey.

---

[371] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.
[372] Ibid.
[373] Salih Aydın, 'Saddam'ın altın şahini İstanbul'a kondu, yakalandı', *Sabah*, 19 September 2004, <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2004/09/19/gnd106.html> [accessed 15 May 2013].
[374] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

Since he has never visited Iraq, he depicts locations there mostly without detail, and depends highly on the photographs he uses. But his drawings of Istanbul and Turkey are praiseworthy for the accuracy of their detail and their capture of atmosphere.

He depicts real places in every city featured in the album. The first frame is the front of the Palestine Hotel in Baghdad, which has held a symbolic meaning for journalism history ever since the invasion of Iraq; it was mostly inhabited by journalists from all over the world. Possibly it was the safest place to shelter, although it was shelled by an American tank, resulting in the killing of three journalists.[375] On the first page, we also see a very detailed interior drawing of the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul, clearly showing its authentic character as one of the oldest bazaars in the world, with rugs hanging down on both sides and strident vendors hunting customers. Obviously, Gürses knows what to draw as he is not a stranger to the place. Apart from this, he pictures Istanbul's biggest airport, Yeşilköy, which has a crucial role in the story since it is a crossing point both between Iraq and Turkey and between the scene changes and flashbacks. Muqtada al-Sadr makes his speech from the Mosque of Kufa, which is one of the oldest mosques of the world. Gürses tries to give details of the mosque in his drawings as he is aware of its significance.

Thirdly, some of his characters are likewise taken from life. He draws them as faithfully as possible without adding anything to their original physical appearance. One of the most important characters in the book is real: Enzo, the freelance Italian journalist, whom Gürses draws as realistically as possible. In August 2004 Enzo Baldoni was kidnapped somewhere on the way to Najaf;[376] and some five days later he was executed on the trumped-up charge of being a spy by a group calling themselves the Islamic Army in Iraq.[377] (Fig. 59)

Zarqawi and his militant group Jama'at al-Tawhid wal-Jihad (Group of Monotheism and Jihad), founded in 2003 and accepted as the branch of Al Qaeda in Iraq in October 2004, are also real. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, thought to be 'No. 1 in Iraq',[378] was killed in an air raid on 7 June, 2006.[379] (Fig. 60)

---

[375] Jane Perlez, 'At Least 3 Journalists Die in Blast at Baghdad Hotel', *The New York Times*, 8 April 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/08/international/worldspecial/08CND-CAMERAMAN.html> [accessed 15 May 2013].

[376] Julia Day, 'Italian journalist killed in Iraq', *The Guardian*, 27 August 2004, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2004/aug/27/pressandpublishing.iraq> [accessed 16 May 2013].

[377] 'Enzo Baldoni, who's killing him one more time?' <http://pipistro.wordpress.com/2006/03/27/enzo-baldoni-why-are-they-killing-him-one-more-time/> [accessed 16 May 2013].

[378] Peter Grier, 'Iraq's bin Laden? Zarqawi's rise', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 14 May 2004, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0514/p03s01-usfp.html> [accessed 16 May 2013].

[379] Ellen Knickmeyer and Jonathan Finer, 'Insurgent Leader Al-Zarqawi Killed in Iraq', *The Washington Post*, 8 June 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/08/AR2006060800114.html> [accessed 16 May 2013].

Gürses' last real character is Muqtada al-Sadr, who is still today one of the most powerful and important religious and political leaders in Iraq. On 5 April, 2004, the top American official in Iraq Paul Bremer named him an outlaw and said that the USA would not tolerate any possible uprising caused by his men.[380] (Fig. 61)

Additionally, the author also depicts or alludes to real killings. According to Gürses' footnote, on 5 April 2004 in Kuffa, after a Friday preaching, 37 protestors were killed. This statement is somewhat problematic because the wrong dates are given, 5 April 2004 having been a Monday when no Friday preaching took place. Also the exact death toll was not clear.

When Ayşegül, Ali and Rıza argue about the on-going war in a room where they are in the custody of American soldiers, the beheading of a Turkish truck driver is broadcast on television. This episode is also based on a real-life incident. During the Iraq War, a great number of Turkish citizens were kidnapped and some of them were executed by militant jihadist organizations who blamed them as lackeys of America. Although Gürses does not name this beheaded man and just says he was a Turkish lorry driver, it is not hard to understand from Gürses' drawing that he was Durmuş Kumdereli, who was first kidnapped and then brutally executed on 17 August, 2004 according to footage later released.[381]

Even though Gürses invents fictitious characters, they are all inspired by real people. The main fictitious characters are Ayşegül's cameraman and closest friend Ali, the correspondent Rıza, the taxi driver Ziya and a little boy Aladdin, who receives the money from the Iraqi Falcon thanks to his boss, the murdered master jeweller Nasır.

Of all the fictitious characters, the most important one after Ayşegül is the little boy Aladdin. (Fig. 62) He is the innocent voice of the story. Indeed, he symbolizes fear, the fear of a whole society. He is the one for whom we hope to see a bright future without war, tears and grief because children are the ones who never give up hoping. He is the only one in the book who warns Ayşegül against the dangers of the war: 'Ayşegül, be careful in the war!'[382] For Gürses:

> Aladdin is our future, our hope. The hero of losers. Maybe, the long-awaited child, who was supposed to change the things we die for, thought 'I do not believe that that kind of thing can be achieved by a person…' All evil, all

---

[380] 'Bremer brands Moqtada Sadr an outlaw', *Middle East Online*, 5 April 2004, <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=9514> [accessed 18 May 2013].

[381] 'Iraqi militants say Turkish driver beheaded', *Nbcnews.com*, 13 September 2004, <http://www.nbcnews.com/id/5990226/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/iraqi-militants-say-turkish-driver-beheaded/#.UZexerWyDTo> [accessed 18 May 2013].

[382] Gürses, p. 29. This and further translations from Turkish into English are my own translation.

bitterness, all grief ends with a peaceful sleep that you get when lying in a white sheeted bed. Aladdin is also a touch of serenity that this peace has brought.[383]

Kemal Gökhan Gürses' *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* is a genuine graphic novel which mixes fiction and non-fiction and presents them cleverly with a complex plotline.[384]

2. Ayşegül: The first non-American female war journalist in comics journalism

Ayşegül is the first – and so far the only – war journalist depicted in Turkish comics.[385] Her uniqueness is not limited to Turkish comics alone. She is the first genuine female[386] war journalist in comics journalism to hail from outside the USA, the home of the Cleveland-based liberal social activist Joyce Brabner (1952-   ), who together with Lou Ann Merkle sometimes poses as war reporters in *Real War Stories*.[387]

Although Ayşegül was created by a man, she is portrayed in a thoroughly feminist way. She is brave, frank, outspoken, trustworthy, and believes in the equality of man and

---

[383] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

[384] There are also other war narratives created by the Middle Eastern artists. Amir and Khalil, *Zahra's Paradise* (London: First Second, 2011), which tells a mother's struggle to find her missing son – who at the end learns that he was killed – during the 2009 protests in Iran, may be accepted as a comics journalism work which tries to give an inner look at the protests. By using pseudonyms, the creators wanted to keep anonymous because of the possible dangers they can face in Iran. Although the following – albeit less known – ones can be mentioned, they fail to fit into comics journalism as they are mostly autobiographical: Parsua Bashi, *Nylon Road: A Graphic Memoir of Coming of Age in Iran* (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 2006) [Growing up in Iran after the Revolution]; Lamia Ziade, *Bye Bye Babylon: Beirut 1975-1979* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2011) [A child's perception of the Lebanon Civil War]; Zeina Abirached, *A Game for Swallows: To Die, To Leave, To Return* (Minneapolis: Graphic Universe, 2012) [A look at the Lebanon Civil War through the eyes of a child]. As it is even possible to guess from the titles that they artistically and in terms of storytelling follow Marjane Satrapi's style in *Persepolis*.
For further discussion please see: Marni Stanlet, 'Where Do You Draw the (Front) Line: Women's War Comics from the Middle East', *International Journal of Comics Art*, 15. 2 (2013), pp. 77-93.

[385] The first and only title including 'journalist' in Turkish comics is *Hızlı Gazeteci* (Speedy Journalist), created by Necdet Şen in 1980 in a weekly music magazine called *Hey* and featuring Şaban, the best-known journalist character of any description. Later this series was compiled in thirty-five albums. Most of the adventures are highly political and have made a tremendous impression to the readers. The creator, Necdet Şen, has a website devoted completely to items in *Hızlı Gazeteci*. It can be seen here: <www.hizligazeteci.com> [accessed 5 May 2013]
The first and the most well-known female journalist of any nature in Turkish comics is Funda who is the girlfriend of Captain Volkan in *Yüzbaşı Volkan*, which was created by Ali Recan in 1972 in the daily newspaper *Son Havadis*, and was later published as a series of separate albums with its own name. It tells the adventures of Captain Volkan, who is a pilot in Turkish Air Force. It is worth noting that there is a strong similarity between *Yüzbaşı Volkan* and the Franco-Belgian comic *Tanguy et Laverdure*, which was created in 1959 by Jean-Michel Charlier and Albert Uderzo.

[386] It is possible to count many female journalists who do not go to war zones. Possibly, the most well-known is Lois Lane, future wife of Clark Kent, who morphs into Superman. She is a reporter for the Metropolis city newspaper the *Daily Planet*. She was created in 1938 together with Clark Kent and was seen in the first Superman adventure in the first issue of *Action Comics*. She was first depicted in a frame in which she was typing in her desk and proposed a date by Clark Kent.

[387] Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle are only seen sitting on their desk interviewing their source of information Felipe about growing up in El Salvador during the Civil War.
Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle, 'A Long Time Ago & Today', in *Real War Stories 1* (Forestville, CA: Eclipse Comics, 1987), pp. 38-51.

woman. She believes that a woman can do what a man can, and this conviction of hers is the most important reason why she is in Iraq. When her Italian journalist friend Enzo confesses that he fears impending death, she replies:

> Is there anyone who is not afraid of death, Enzo? Most of the time I am semi-conscious. I say to myself 'What are you doing here?'… But away from here, while I was thinking about here, I would feel that a side of myself would be incomplete.[388] (Fig. 63)

Pictorially, without making her 'butch', Gürses draws Ayşegül in a masculine, rather than a feminine way. She has short hair and wears only one earring, on her left ear. Almost throughout the book, she wears trousers in preference to a skirt and is shown without other feminine accessories, except in two or three frames where she is drawn in a skirt at her own home in Istanbul. Most of the time she appears unaware of being a female. When she wakes up at home in Istanbul, she sees herself at the mirror and exclaims 'Oh my God, who is this?,'[389] as if she has not previously been aware of her appearance; and immediately after she rediscovers herself, she goes to her hairdresser because she has let her hair grow longer than normal. (Fig. 64) As we see her with bobbed hair, she says to the hairdresser 'What a relief! Thank you Mevlut! I feel like I am stereotyped, though!'[390]

Additionally, in one frame she is caught unprepared for menstruation. And even when she is in her period, she still thinks not about herself but about Iraq and says 'All Iraq is bleeding Ayşegül, now this is your turn!'[391] She has no female friends other than her mother and is always accompanied by her male friends. She is truly foolhardy at times; she suggests to Enzo that they should go together to interview the militant leader Zarqawi. She is not scared of a gun pointed at her, defiantly declaring 'I have only one soul you can take it from me! Take it! Kill me!'[392] She does not pay attention to her office colleague Cenk, who is in love with her, because she is too busy to spare time to love a man. Over a drink Cenk tells Ali, Ayşegül's cameraman and best friend, what it feels like to be in love with Ayşegül:

> Cenk: Do you know what kind of a feeling it is to be in love with this girl?
> Ali : What kind of feeling is it?
> Cenk: It makes you feel like a wife to a sea captain! You wait for her to arrive as you sit in the harbour… You say 'There she is!' but then she disappears again on the first plane! Anyway… Cheers!

---

[388] Gürses, p. 12.
[389] Ibid., p. 18.
[390] Ibid.
[391] Ibid., p. 51.
[392] Ibid., p. 61.

Ali   : Cheers![393] (Fig. 65)

She never wants to get married.[394] When she goes to the goldsmith's where Aladdin works as an apprentice, she has a look at the rings and the shopkeeper asks her if she is getting married, and she replies: 'Noo! Heaven forbid!'[395]

In answer to my question:

Why is Ayşegül like a man? Why did you describe her feminine characteristics very little? She does not have any female friends. She does not have a boyfriend. In not more than two or three frames, we see her in a skirt, and those frames are when she is at her home.[396]

Kemal Gökhan Gürses replies:

Does Ayşegül have a boyfriend? Is she not feminine? Doesn't she have any girlfriends? We can definitely put these questions to Ayşegül as we do to many of her female colleagues in hot conflict zones. But we can ask the same question of her male colleagues, too. Do these people not have emotions? When they take pictures of dead bodies, when they are aghast at the dramatic effect of the moment of seeing people who have lost their hands or legs, how on earth can they still try to keep informing the world with their cameras and video recorders like heartless people? I remember clearly what a war correspondent friend told me. I visualised how he cried sobbingly in a corner after it was all over, and indeed I cried, too. If you are a war correspondent, you have a garment like a guerrilla uniform. Guerrillas' uniforms are not feminine or masculine; they are made for war with vague khaki colouring for camouflage. These uniforms are coloured so as to keep you from being noticed. Because of her profession, Ayşegül wears this uniform as well. It is obvious that she cannot move in the streets of Iraq wearing high-heeled shoes. She has to have short hair. She does not have any time to care for long hair in a place where water is a blessing. She should be active and speak directly without belabouring her point. Time is vital there; so she speaks fast and is clear in uttering her needs. Her questions and answers are short. These are all the necessities of her profession. She has a body and life shaped by this behaviour. Is this language masculine or, as I said, a jargon? You are free to choose. When she comes to her television channel in Istanbul, we see Ayşegül's platonic lover Cenk, whom Rıza and Ali mock. We can call Ayşegül's situation the sexlessness of battlefields. For instance, I remember a scene from the adventure of *Erev and Saheer* when Ayşegül wears a mini-skirt so as to allow the Christian Arab Ibrahim, who is hiding in the boot of the car, to pass through an Israeli checkpoint. [397]

---

[393] Ibid., p. 66.
[394] But in the adventure of *Moskova Gözyaşlarına İnanmıyor* (Moscow doesn't believe your tears), she is about to fall in love with a KGB agent.
[395] Gürses, p. 19.
[396] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.
[397] Ibid.

In other words, Ayşegül has to adapt to the atmosphere of the on-going conflict and the requirements of her profession, and she starts by disguising herself and sometimes her feelings accordingly.

Yet Ayşegül is often an openly emotional person. Throughout the story, she cries very often. She cannot control herself in some dramatic situations. For example, when she watches the beheading of a Turkish truck driver with her friends Ali and Rıza, they all start weeping and sobbing convulsively. She is also soft-hearted. She first accommodates the newly orphaned Aladdin in her mother's house and then helps him to live abroad with his uncle in a European country.

In short, Ayşegül rejects all gender stereotypes created by society and creates her own identity. This process is very much in keeping with that undergone by female war or foreign correspondents in real life. The journalist Ilene Prusher talks about woman war journalists as examples of a third gender: 'They are a third gender, not male, certainly not subservient female, and often regarded with exasperation and suspicion by male interviewees, particularly in the Arab world'.[398]

Similarly, the British female journalist Phoebe Greenwood who mostly covers news from the Middle East, talks about a third gender in war journalism:

> We sort of become a third gender and in some ways are safer because we are women. […] The Muslim men treat with us a kind of deference and actually talk to us about the war, their strategy and their weapons – which they wouldn't do with the women of their country. At the same time they would very rarely harm a female journalist as most Islamic militants don't want to behead a woman or kidnap them.[399]

Thus it is possible to argue that, in Gürses' creation, Ayşegül's quasi-masculine disguise helps her to get protection against possible dangers such as sexual harassment.[400] Throughout the book, no sexual harassment is seen except for that exhibited by one American soldier when they are at a U.S. check-point on the way to Najaf. It is only verbal harassment and no physical harassment is seen: 'Don't hold back baby! Step closer slowly!

---

[398] Ilene Prusher, *Baghdad Fixer* (London: Halban Publishers, 2012), quoted in Jenni Frazer, 'The foreign correspondent who survived war, sexism and hate in Iraq', in *The Jewish Chronicle Online*, 6 December 2012 <http://www.thejc.com/lifestyle/lifestyle-features/93483/the-foreign-correspondent-who-survived-war-sexism-and-hate-iraq> [accessed 17 September 2014].

[399] Quoted in Emma Barnett, 'The unique advantage of female war reporters in Muslim countries', *The Telegraph*, 21 November 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/9692810/The-unique-advantage-of-female-war-reporters-in-Muslim-countries.html> [accessed 11 May 2013].

[400] The best-known and most recent example of real-life sexual harassment of female journalists in conflict zones is that of Lara Logan, who was sexually assaulted in Cairo's Tahrir Square during a celebration, after Mubarak had been deposed on 11 February 2011. An interview with her can be seen here: <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7364550n> [accessed 11 May 2013].

Don't worry; I won't deliver you to these beasts! I will search your body! Come here!'[401]

When asked why nobody molests Ayşegül, Gürses says:

> Didn't anybody touch Ayşegül? I don't know. I don't think so. For sure she faces a lot of molestation and very difficult situations. Female correspondents also face that in city centres. In peaceful environments, I mean. Especially when they encounter police, soldiers and guerrillas. However, her international press card helps her as much as it helps others. I didn't let it become a fantasy or gain priority. I slightly meant it; for example with that American soldier. But I did recount the difficult situation when she is not ready for her period. Except for a couple of little details, Ayşegül's womanhood doesn't make her different from her other colleagues.[402]

In another interview, Kemal Gökhan Gürses explains why he chose a female instead of a male protagonist as the journalist. Though his explanation is long, it is worth quoting:

> We know or describe women as being emotional. I think this is a wrong assumption. It is better to say that they show their feelings more clearly. I was estimating how war situations were full of emotional moments, and my impression became stronger after my meetings with war correspondents. You do experience war with intensive feelings; you do make a correct analysis, but the most important thing, as a journalist, is to try as much as you can to have various views of point in order to see all the realities. I thought a woman could do it wonderfully.
> Moreover, after becoming involved with journalism, I understood that the problem did not lie with journalists' gender. The problem is that television companies' desire to send correspondents to war zones is decreasing gradually day by day thanks to their fabricated excuses that 'news is expensive'. But when a war is getting fierce, they temporarily send these correspondents to those areas with very limited opportunities as long as it is not too far. Because, as everybody knows, buying the news from for example Reuters, AP or other such agencies is cheaper, and it is the most guaranteed way of showing what the others show. In other words, it keeps you away from 'unreported news'. The claim that they do not have any correspondents to send to conflicts or wars such as the Iraqi War which has a lasting impact on neighbouring countries such as ours makes me think that social consciousness is tempered by social indifference. A chicken and egg situation… A female war correspondent, a female war journalist who wants to go to anywhere whenever she wants to; leastwise this is my wish…[403]

That women write with passion is self-evident. Tricia Davis and Niki Jepson performed an investigation into what male and female journalists wrote from Iraq between

---

[401] Gürses, p. 21.

[402] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

[403] Bülent Tellan, 'Kemal Gökhan Gürses: "Arzum Güncel Bir Hikayeyi Günü Gününe Çizebilmek…"' *Serüven: Çizgiroman Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 7 (2006), 56-60 (pp. 56-57).

Gürses seems to be unfamiliar with the British 'Unreported World' TV series, which has been broadcast since 2000. Please see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unreported_World and http://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/ [accessed 17 September 2014].

19 March and 1 May, 2003, at the time of 'major combat operations' as defined by George W. Bush,[404] by conducting a comparative analysis of 740 articles written by male journalists and 88 articles written by female journalists for three U.S. daily newspapers. In keeping with numerous other recent studies of gendered discourse by Jennifer Coates (since 1986), Birgitta Höijer (2004), Rosalind Gill (2007), and David Gauntlett (2008), the results revealed that male and female journalists use significantly different words from each other. Whereas female journalists employ a language of personal resolve, using more self-reference and more assured verb forms, male journalists use more numerical terms in order to support the facts in observations they make. The other important difference is that female journalists are more grounded in reporting what has already happened in the war, as well as in the moment, while being more personable and focusing on the people in the war-zone.[405]

Gürses chooses the name Ayşegül Aydın for his protagonist. This is highly significant because her surname Aydın means 'intellectual' in Turkish. However, we hear her surname only once when her television channel's anchor-man Mithat introduces her to the audience before her live-video coverage from Najaf: 'And now our correspondent Ayşegül Aydın, who has been in Iraq for a long time, is reporting a news flash for you from Najaf… Ayşegül?'[406] Her surname has no importance because she is everyone's Ayşegül, a friend, a daughter, a journalist.

Nevertheless, her first name ─ one of the common female names in Turkey ─ has a symbolic meaning, Ayşegül being composed of 'Ayşe' (the Turkish form of Arabic Āʾisha), 'living, alive, lively', and 'Gül', 'rose', hence 'rose in bloom'. Thus, for example, the Franco-Belgian children books series *Martine*, created by Marcel Marlier and Gilbert Delahaye in 1954, were translated into Turkish as *Ayşegül*. Since 1965 when it was first published in Turkey, the series has always been popular among not only children but also increasingly their nostalgic parents, who never fail to suppose that it will prepare their children for the future. Gürses even does not forget to make an allusion to one of this series' albums; in one frame when they are driving to Najaf, Ali ironically asks: 'Why on earth are we going to Najaf when everyone else is trying to go to Felucca? Americans are raining bombs over Felucca; we are on autumn holiday in Najaf! Ayşegül is on holiday!'[407]

---

[404] President Bush declared the end of major combat operations in Iraq on 1 May 2003. 'President Bush Announces Major Combat Operations in Iraq Have Ended (The White House: Operation Iraqi Freedom, 1 May 2003)' in *Whitehouse.archives.gov* <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030501-15.html > [accessed 10 May 2013]

[405] Tricia Davis and Niki Jepson, Operation Free Iraq: A Gendered Content Analysis of Newspapers (2005) <http://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/302/IRAQ.pdf?sequence=1> [accessed 10 May 2013]

[406] Gürses, p.37.

[407] Ibid., p. 17.

Asked whether he chose the name Ayşegül intentionally, Kemal Gökhan Gürses replies:

> Of course, my departure point is the Ayşegül series. This series, whose first issue was created by the Belgians Marcel Marlier and Gilbert Delehaye in 1954, tremendously affected me like other kids in my childhood. But I think that the ideological lines of this series which prepares us for life can entirely be described as a deep hunger, a longing and an "if only" in our poor and deprived third-world homes. And, for the same reason, I gave this name as title to my story in order to show the other side of life, the dark side of the moon which is full of violence, wars, poverty and cruelty. I do always like this kind of irony! Not set in a circus, on a trip, in a theatre or on a camping holiday; this time Ayşegül is at war.[408]

Additionally, as people love to gossip about those people who may inspire writers, the public often thinks that Ayşegül is Nevin Sungur in real life. Nevin Sungur is a former award-winning Turkish female journalist who for some years after 2003 reported news mostly from Iraq and Afghanistan. Similarities in their physical appearance have allowed some people to claim that Nevin is Ayşegül or vice versa. In order to add spice to our conversations, I also asked Gürses about these rumours and he answered with very political evasiveness:

> I am accepting this question as magazinish. I cannot say that I don't like it, of course! Yes, Nevin, that's right! Also Mete Çubukçu, also Coşkun Aral... [Ayşegül] is the most plausible conflation of a lot of nameless war correspondents. While in Turkey we still think that women are not yet ready for a lot of occupations, I know that there are many female war journalists who work with very deep sensitivity in this country with its non-sexist tradition and who deserve to do so. Of course, there is a real person who inspired me, but s/he is not one of the names mentioned … Let me keep it as my personal secret…[409]

In spite of the fact that Turkey has severe problems in terms of giving women equal opportunities, there have been very important women war correspondents in the history of Turkish journalism such as Semiha Es, who became the first Turkish woman war correspondent thanks to her coverage of the Korean War, and Şerif Turgut, who covered nearly the whole Bosnian War and whom Joe Sacco depicted as 'perhaps the most charming journalist in all of Bosnia'.[410]

---

[408] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.
[409] Ibid.
[410] Joe Sacco, *Safe Area Gorazde: Special Edition*, p.27.

3. A Response to the Iraq War

A preface to the book for any author is an arena in which aims and goals are introduced. From the outset Gürses declares his first aim as 'to be a part of the tragedy of the people I do not know'.[411] He obviously believes that he did a good job. Why and how he drew 121 strips is explained in this quotation with its allusion to the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003:

> I have been drawing for 29 years. And for the first time, I am a hundred per cent sure that I have achieved something useful: a graphic novel consisting of a prologue and 121 strips intended to be drawn for a world which has lost its memory (maybe has not developed such a facility) so as to remind people of the incident that happened a while ago and that they need to remember with shame.[412]

Right from the preface, it is possible to feel the strength of his political stance. Working in 2005 with no crystal ball to foretell the future ten years later, he believes that Iraq is and will be a bastion of resistance against American imperialism:

> Lastly, Iraq; the country of Iraqis who slapped with their sandals the statues of Saddam… Iraq, who to an extreme degree initially shows her traditional eastern hospitality towards the occupants … Beginning inside us with a great disappointment and transforming as we see the reality, and eventually becoming the bastion of a struggle which continues with the power of the unending resistance of the people who face death in order to survive. I congratulate them in their fight, which I believe, or want to believe, will continue until the Americans and their allies leave those lands… I congratulate them with these fictional words of Brecht, who makes Galileo say to them: "Pity the country that needs heroes…"[413]

Moreover in the preface Gürses tells how Ayşegül functions in relation to this goal. She is to be a spokesperson voicing the single wish of nations everywhere:

> In her all new adventures, Ayşegül will be a spokesperson voicing one wish. The voice of a hearth or a thought which wants to destroy the occupation of war journalism ; and an indescribable voice of conscience which will wander around the world urged on by the necessity of "being there at that time"…[414]
> Gürses' anti-Americanism is also seen when Ayşegül shares her diary with us: Danger, silently approaching snake… Ruined by war… What war! Completely ruined by American, British, Australian, Polish soldiers… Heavily bombed by sorties of planes, leaving hundreds of thousands of dead bodies or wounded…

---

[411] Gürses, p. 5.
[412] Ibid.
[413] Ibid., p. 6.
[414] Ibid.

Those little towns... Mesmerizing effect of pain... People staring at emptiness...[415]

Whereas Gürses explicitly states that he aims to provide a response to the Iraq War throughout the book, Sacco and Delisle seem less politicised in their coverage of a different, but no less intractable, Middle East trouble spot, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Believing that the American media misrepresents the situation in the Middle East, Sacco declares he wants to 'give the Palestinians a voice – a lens through which people could see their lives',[416] yet he does so by staying neutral. Guy Delisle, who says 'I was kind of a blank page, […] I had to learn everything,'[417] merely presents us with a myopic picture of what he learned day by day about the situation 'as a child-minding father whilst his partner, Nadege, worked there for *Médecins Sans Frontières*.'[418]

One of Gürses' main motivations for writing is the preservation of memory, particularly with regard to the losers whose lives he seeks to document:

I personally believe that all recordings have some quality of documentary. I attach importance to a cookery book as much as I care about a Russian classic before the revolution. The sum total of these kinds of things present and convey the history, culture, behaviour and traditions of mankind for posterity. Without classifying as good, bad, true or false, I ascribe high importance to the knowledge that has been gained from many naïve wars which we now see as barbaric (from the modern point of view). Documentation is the first stage in the writing process. Secondly, I believe it to be important that my works should take a side like all other kinds of art; they document the diary of the oppressed or record events in the name of the loser. For many people, history is the arena of winners. Nobody says "How magnificently I lost!" Never! Or let's say rarely! I wanted to keep the record of the losers. While the destruction of the Tower of Babel is a barbarism which no one cares about today, I do undertake the role of the anonymous chronicler of events.[419]

In his hostility to the American-led invasion of Iraq, Gürses as a Turkish outsider simplifies and romanticises Iraqi sectarianism, ethnic tensions and complexity, admittedly not as markedly as the Americans did, but nevertheless enough to mislead occasionally. He does neither give any information about how Iraq were divided according to sects nor mentions how Saddam used to rule the country.

---

[415] Ibid., p. 41.
[416] Joe Sacco, interviewed by Omar Khalifa.
[417] Guy Delisle, interviewed by Piya Chattopadhyay, 30 August 2012,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Uu20ZdLPx0> [accessed 10 July 2013]
[418] Laurence Grove, *Comics in French: The European Bande Dessinee in Context* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013), p. xiv.
[419] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

4. Comics Journalism

I see Gürses' work as a journalistic piece although it does not completely depend on reality. As I have already discussed in the previous sections, some of Gürses' characters are real and elements of the ones who are fictitious are also sometimes taken from real life. Many of the places, objects and incidents depicted are real, too. The important point here is the message that this realism carries via the medium of comics journalism.

In the preface of the book Gürses acknowledges that he is not a journalist and wants to be forgiven if he makes any mistakes:[420]

> I need to remind you of something. I am not a journalist. I am a cartoonist, I draw and write comics. I know that I can only get as close as a mere cartoonist can to the principles and moral standpoint of a very special kind of journalism like war correspondence, and I intend no offence by this. But I feel a bit embarrassed. If I have made any mistake in Ayşegül's adventure, I beg my war correspondent friends to forgive me and warn me to correct myself for the next adventures that I draw in the future.[421]

Gürses' biggest handicap is that he draws and writes about a country to which he has never been. It is also the biggest difference between him and the other comics journalists like Joe Sacco and Guy Delisle, who have spent long periods in the places they depict in their books. Again in the preface, Gürses confesses this fact:

> Iraq… The lost land… The protagonist of my drawings for which, because they are full of mistakes and emotionless, I will be highly criticised by Iraqis and those who know the place very well for drawing it without having been there. I really apologize the real residences for my depiction of those lands. They failed to defend their soil probably because of our ignorance… Hugo Pratt drew Anatolia although he did not see it. But those were the days when journeys were very hard and used to take longer… But he successfully achieved it.[422]

Probed more fully on the problem of depicting a territory where he has never been, he adds:

> I have been to Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem to do research for Ayşegül's next story. The news agency I work for paid my flight tickets, nothing more. I really would have liked to go to Iraq, but the war was so violent that I understood that I would not have been able to go beyond Erbil. I tried to overcome this by gathering as many documents as I could. I don't like

---

[420] Although Gürses says that he is not a journalist, his flight tickets enabling him to do the research for Ayşegül's other adventure in Palestine [*Erev and Sahaar*] were paid by his agency.
[421] Gürses, p. 6.
[422] Ibid., p. 5.

it. I feel like an orientalist artist who paints his own fantasies about the countries he has never seen. The natives of those countries of course sneer at these pictures.[423]

At this point, it would perhaps be appropriate to add that as an instinctive mainly self-taught cartoonist and graphic novelist from an early age Gürses does not acknowledge any specific authors that he is inspired by or has learned from, while Sacco on the other hand freely cites philosophers like Edward Said, Noam Chomsky and the new journalist Michael Herr as influences. Challenged on this point, Gürses ducks away:

> This question needs a long answer… I cannot make a clear classification such as Joe Sacco does of the authors that encourage me to write. Because, my aim isn't to tell people about Palestine. I have a war journalist protagonist. My cultural background gave the shape to the story. I had to read hundreds of articles and authors on the history and the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and on the Middle East itself. I even had to reread the Quran from which I take some quotations. It took me six months to prepare the textual structure.[424]

Kemal Gökhan Gürses does not include himself in the story, whereas most comics journalists like Guy Delisle and Joe Sacco do. He only depicts himself in the prologue which consists of eight frames. Here he says to Ayşegül that his graphic novel is about to be published. By comparison with the others he adds biographical, rather than autobiographical, features to the graphic novel. In other words, Gürses writes Ayşegül's biography.

As a Middle Easterner, Gürses reflects his Middle Eastern characters and their behaviour far better than do Sacco and Delisle, as we have noted elsewhere. He is more emotional than them. He is able to show us the shamefacedness of the fellow who brings a notepad to Ayşegül and in the captions she says:

> How did I tell them that I needed a sanitary pad? How did they manage to find it! And he said "We forgot to ask you!" by turning his eyes away from me! He fled blushing! That shamefacedness which is unique to us![425]

Additionally, since he knows the history and the culture of the region very well, Gürses does not make any historic mistake in his drawings of the kind that we have already seen Delisle commit.[426]

By comparison with the albums of Sacco and Delisle, Gürses' *Ayşegül Savaşta* is arguably more journalistic because, before being compiled as an album, it was serialized as

---

[423] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.
[424] Ibid.
[425] Gürses, p. 52. Ayşegül's use of 'us' here is potentially significant as it might suggest a transnational, Islamic solidarity on her part if the man who brings the sanitary pad is Iraqi rather than a Turkish aid.
[426] See pp. 95-96.

121 daily comic strips between March and July 2005 in the newspaper *Radikal*. This serialization lends it a tone of reportage which gives readers the impression of following each day's story.

However, the author is also at a disadvantage here because of the formal constraints of creating a comic strip for a daily newspaper. His ability to use more cinematic techniques like splash panels covering one or two pages, more close-ups or wide angles becomes restricted to the point of near impossibility. But we still see narrow horizontal panels covering a whole strip.[427] Gürses confirms that he would have used alternative techniques had he been drawing for an album rather than for a daily comic strip: 'Absolutely… Absolutely yes… I really like long shots. But for the newspaper readers, there is no patience and time for that…'[428]

Despite these disadvantages and limitations, in his coverage of the Iraq War Gürses has successfully produced one of the most prominent graphic novels to give an insider's view of the war-torn Middle East.

5. National Identities

Before examining the importance of nationalism and national identities in the graphic novel, it is advisable to know what Gürses thinks about this topic. When asked what he wants to add about nationalism and national identities to supplement what we see in his graphic novel, he replies intriguingly:

> In my general political point of view, nationalism is one of the most negative notions; and the other one is religion. By substituting and replacing each other, these two function as the biggest ingredients of all the cancerous systems built on the pains of people. In some periods, it is even possible to see them functioning in tandem. They are two main ideas that explain why people kill people without mercy. What kind of reasons did America put forward when it was invading Iraq? Though I do not like conspiracy theories, I see a facile and badly plotted intrigue which makes me believe that there is a connection between those who did the September 11 attacks and those who wanted to show Muslims as terrorists. And the lies about chemical weapons. All society, even the vast majority of the world, applauded those who years later said "Sorry, it was a false piece of intelligence". Nationalism and religion together created the most effective and common propaganda and methods of justification that we encountered in every area of this war. Ayşegül's critique of western rationalism may be found in the historical roots of her own ideology. I don't know.[429]

---

[427] On page 62, there are two of them one under the other.
[428] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.
[429] Ibid.

As has already been noted elsewhere, it is impossible to separate religion from nationalism in the Middle East, where after 1924 nations and national identities emerged involving the *Sha'b* and the *Ummah*. It is no doubt in recognition of his awareness of the political importance of Islam for the region that Gürses uses verses from the Quran to separate and introduce the chapters of his book.

The first quotation that he chooses to use reproduces the eleventh verse of the second surah, Al-Baqarah, which states: 'When it is said to them, "Do not cause corruption in the land", they say, "We are only putting things right"'.[430] By using this quotation at the start of this first chapter, Gürses wants to indicate that America, which wanted to free the Iraqi people, brought nothing but trouble to them. As can be inferred from the account in this chapter, the Iraqi Falcon statuette killed many people who were involved in selling or buying it, so that it serves as a symbol for the whole debacle.

For the second chapter Gürses chooses the eighty-fourth verse of the fifteenth surah, Al-Hijr: 'What they had gained was of no use to them',[431] where a direct reference to America's losses is intended. Indeed, with telling relevance in this chapter American soldiers who stop Ayşegül and her crew at their checkpoint talk about their lost friends.

The third chapter begins with the twenty-fourth verse of the thirteenth surah, Al-Ra'd, that declares: '"Peace be with you, because you have remained steadfast. What an excellent reward is this home of yours!"'.[432] In this chapter Ayşegül and her crew are released from the custody of American soldiers thanks to their patience, and as a reward by God, they go back to their home in Istanbul, where they bury the hatchet after their debate.

The author begins his fourth chapter with the twenty-fifth verse of the sixty-eighth surah, Al-Qalam: 'they left early, bent on their (unjust) purpose'.[433] Again this quotation is used to refer directly to the Americans and specifically in this chapter where the most brutal scenes of the book occur including a couple of American bombing scenes. Additionally, Ayşegül learns of the execution of Enzo.

Gürses' fifth chapter opens with the nineteenth verse of the thirty-fifth surah, Fatir, saying: 'The blind and the seeing are not alike'.[434] In this chapter, all the 'bad guys' who

---

[430] Al-Baqarah (The Cow) is the longest surah of the Quran. Its name refers to the Israelites' procrastination in sacrificing a cow after the order of Allah. See *The Qur'an*, A New Translation by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 5.

[431] This surah which praises God takes its name from a prehistoric site close to Medina.

[432] It means thunder and some of its verses tell of the creation of Heaven.

[433] This surah means 'the pen' and tells of Allah's justice and Judgement Day. It can be translates as 'And they opened the morning, strong in an (unjust) resolve'

[434] Fatir means 'the Originator (The Creator)', and this surah declares that believers and non-believers have different ends.

threaten Ayşegül with a gun are killed by an explosion which miraculously leaves her as the sole survivor.

For the first frame of the last chapter, Kemal Gökhan Gürses takes two verses, the third and the fourth verses of the 105th surah, Al-Fil, which states: '3. He sent ranks of birds against them, 4. pelting them with pellets of hard-baked clay'.[435] In his last chapter, without overtly explaining the relevance of the surah himself, Gürses uses a character called Baha, who is a literature lecturer at Baghdad University and a friend to Ayşegül in the hospital, as a mouthpiece to interpret its message. Also in one frame Baha and Ayşegül hear a bird cheeping outside as in the story of the surah. This chapter can be understood as the wish of the author that the invaders will be defeated.

As in the Quran itself, the verse quotations are not given in any objectively determined sequence. The verses of the Quran are grouped under the surahs according to their relationship with each other, not in chronological order. Here Gürses does the same thing: He groups his daily strips under chapter headings according to their context, not in chronological order. And he enables the correlation between surah and narrative to be made by labelling each of his groups with relevant verses from the Quran. By doing so, he creates a technique to accommodate flashbacks and sudden scene changes.

When questioned with regard to his use of these quotations for the purposes of the book, he replies:

> I tried to correlate all of the quotations with the chapters. As in the example of the surah Al-Fil. It is a surah consisting of five verses. It tells of Abraha who wants to demolish Kaaba. It recounts the lesson given to those who want to capture Kaaba by the attacks of the swifts carrying stones in their bills. It is called "the miracle of God". Mine was an allegorical chapter in which I narrated the resistance of Iraq. At the same time, I was trying to say that we were talking about a war in which there was no power balance i.e. an asymmetric war, and which was just as rational as the miracle in the Quran as it couldn't come true. They were all figments of my wishful imagination. I myself find it impossible to understand how much of this imagination I managed to incorporate into the graphic novel.[436]

As mentioned above, Gürses' political stance is also seen in the preface, and it is possible to gather his political views from the very first page of the book where, in her sobbing funeral oration for Enzo, Ayşegül blames and curses the war which killed her friend:

---

[435] Fil means 'elephant', and in this surah it refers to the attack of Abraha with his elephants on Kaaba and how they were defeated by a swarm of birds which pelted them with clay missiles.
[436] Gürses, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

I know! This is neither the first nor the last death. My dearest friend Enzo wasn't one of the ordinary adventurer freelancers. He was more journalist than any of us. He was a journalist who had more principles than all of us. His death is a dirty death! It is a planned murder, not the result of a stray bullet. A death which shows clearly that this war has not got any valid justification […] We can do no more than wish endurance to his wife whose life has become a nightmare as a result of waiting for this news. And we are sending his children this photograph which captures his laughter in a frame. Goodbye Enzo, my noisy friend![437]

This quotation is one of the clearest illustrations of Gürses' anti-war attitude which he shows both visually and verbally throughout his book. After the depressing opening picture of coffins and weeping mourners, there is no let-up in mood as the murder of the Turkish-Arab jeweller Nasır follows on page two. Since it is motivated by lust to acquire the statuette, the murder shows how big a conflagration the war has created; not only is Iraq itself in trouble but also its neighbouring countries.

The scene in which Ayşegül and Enzo talk about the sky may be seen as a good example of Hans Kohn's definition of nationalism as 'a product of the growth of social and intellectual factors at a certain stage of history', 'a state of mind, an act of consciousness'.[438] As has been noted elsewhere and for reasons already examined, Kohn studies nationalism in two groups: Western and Non-western. It is possible to see not only Kohn's definition of nationalism in this scene but also the critique of the western mindset from a non-westerner's point of view. The dialogue between Ayşegül and Enzo develops as follows:

Ayşegül: Enzo! How close the sky is here!
Enzo   : What does it mean?
Ayşegül: Isn't it crystal clear? The sky is very close! It is like about to collapse on …
Enzo   : There is no light when they don't bomb! And because we haven't had electricity in Baghdad for a long time! No lights, no light pollution… That's why the sky is too close…
Ayşegül: I really admire your western rationalism... How easy everything is for you, isn't it? Don't take me wrong… When I was very little, I was afraid of the sound of thunder! Whenever it comes to my occupation, my mother asks me "Are you the same girl who was afraid of the sound of thunder?"… I always want to ask her "Is this the same world as my thunderous one?"… Such pictures flow in front of my eyes, Enzo… I just only smile at my mother each time…[439] (Fig. 66)

---

[437] Gürses, p. 7.
[438] Kohn, pp. 6, 10-11.
[439] Gürses, p. 11.

As also seen above, possibly the best thing that Gürses does throughout the book is to show how different the Middle Easterners' perception of life and the war is from that of the western world.

6. Conclusion

Kemal Gökhan Gürses' graphic novel *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* deserves an important place among the graphic novels written on the Middle East.

Firstly, it was created by a Turkish artist who even now is not well known to an English-speaking readership. It is possible to say that this graphic novel is the first one written by a native Middle Easterner about the Iraq war. Though Gürses' first-hand experience of Iraq is limited, his Middle East identity provides us with an insider's view of issues in that part of the world. He is also the first comics journalist from the region to give voice to its problems. His political stance as an anti-American political activist raises his graphic novel above others in terms of political cutting edge. From the preface to the last page of the book, Gürses displays all of his faith in the Iraqis' resistance and believes that they will win. Ultimately, he wants the profession of war journalism to become extinct all around the world. While in his view the rest of the world is deaf to the cries of the Middle East, and most artists are afraid of taking sides and stay neutral (presumably because they feel impotent when faced with an international coalition led by a superpower), Gürses shouts out that war is senseless. His Ayşegül project, which consists of several adventures, makes him the first and foremost comics journalist in Turkey today.

Secondly, his protagonist Ayşegül is the first – and so far the only – war journalist in Turkish comics. She is also the first genuine female war journalist in comics journalism. Her character offers one of the best examples of the so-called 'third gender' in the sense of assuming a non-gendered role such as that adopted by disguised women journalists in war zones. Ayşegül nevertheless also represents the emotional reaction when faced with war as well. It would arguably not be possible to narrate the same point of view so tellingly via a male character.

Thirdly, this graphic novel has an exceptional style by comparison with others. Gürses blends fiction and reality in a distinctive manner and narrative form that lends a new dimension to the world of docudrama and what Lee Gutkind calls creative nonfiction. [440] With its use of flashbacks and complex plotline, *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak*

---

[440] Lee Gutkind, *The Art of Creative Nonfiction: Writing and Selling the Literature of Reality* (Wiley Books for Writers) (New York: John Wiley, 1997).

Şahini seems to blaze a potential trail for other graphic novelists to follow in their own individual ways.

Lastly, although he is not a journalist by training and the book itself does not draw solely on reality, Gürses' graphic novel is an example of comics journalism. When account is taken of its differences, limitations and virtues by comparison with the other graphic novels on the Middle East, *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* stands out and deserves wider international recognition.

CHAPTER IV

FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD: LEARNING MIDDLE AND FAR EAST ISSUES WITH GUY DELISLE

1. Introduction

Guy Delisle was born in Canada's Quebec City in 1966. He studied animation at Sheridan College in Oakville, near Toronto, and has worked for animation companies in Canada, France, Germany, China and North Korea. Even though 'he had done an occasional comic, he began his actual comics career at L'Association in 1995'.[441] He contributed to the French periodical *Lapin* and the French-Canadian magazine *Spoutnik*, launched in Montreal in December 1998. Delisle is also an active animator who worked 'on the cartoon versions of *Papyrus* and *Passiflore* for Dupuis-Animation and *Proté-Créa'*.[442] He has produced several graphic novels and they have been translated into many languages. His output currently amounts to some fourteen albums in French, of which six have also appeared in English.

The existing studies of his work fail to view Guy Delisle's graphic novels as journalistic pieces. Research on Delisle has to date tended to focus on the autobiographical and itinerant aspects of his work. As I analyse graphic novels depicting the Middle East in my thesis, the aim of this chapter is to provide a broad analysis of Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* (2011, French version; 2012, English translation) in terms of journalism and nationalism by setting it mainly within the context of three of his earlier graphic novels *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China* (2000, French version; 2006, English translation), *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea* (2003, French version; 2005, English translation) and *Burma Chronicles* (2007, French version; 2008, English translation), these being his other works concerning politics and culture. After covering his previous books in the first section, the second section examines Delisle as *tabula rasa* and how everyday life

---

[441] 'Guy Delisle', in *Lambiek Comiclopedia* <http://www.lambiek.net/artists/d/delisle_guy.htm> [accessed 18 March 2014]. The Paris-based publisher L'Association was founded by a graphic artists' collective in May 1999. Its periodical *Lapin*, currently in its fourth series, first appeared in January 1992, Delisle contributing to numbers 9, 11- 14, 16-25, and 32-34.

[442] Ibid. Additionally, Delisle worked as an assistant animator, animator or key animator for the following animations: *Ovide and the Gang* (1987), *The Little Flying Bears* (1990), *Werner - Beinhart!* (1990), *Sharky & George* (1990), *Santa and the Tooth Fairies* (1991), *Under Milk Wood* (1992), *The Magic Voyage* (1992), *Tales of the Tooth Fairies* (1993), *The Animals of Farthing Wood* (1993), *Le Moine et le Poisson* (1994), *The Bellflower Bunnies* (2001) and *L'île de Black Mór* (2004).

can be so meaningful. The next section studies Delisle in comics journalism context while the fourth section informs us about how he represents national identities in his comics.

1.1 A Brief Overview of Delisle's Works

Although Delisle decided to switch from doing film animation to producing comics in order to be able to use his own ideas, his training as a film animator has affected his production of graphic novels or comic albums as they include movements that are visually hard to depict. When asked in English how far he feels that his training as a film animator has affected his style, he says:

> Well, I have been thinking about that recently and I think when you do animation, especially as an animator, I was not doing storyboards. Of course, if I was working storyboards, it would be easy to think that, you know, once you do storyboard, then you switch to comic book is easy. But me, I was an animator, so I have spent my time trying to work on the movement. And one thing you do when you are an animator you have to observe. So, I think that is one thing I have learned a lot doing animation. You have to observe about movements, but I have observed movements more than that, I think. When I travel, I look at small details, I think this comes from animation and, when you are an animator, you have to learn to design the movement in different parts, like the anticipation, the movement the second part and then the rest, and you really have to work on that. I think I have applied the same system to a narration, to a story-telling narration, which you have to have different parts where you start the story. I think this system of observing and observing the movement, I have put that into my life as an observer. And I have put that into my story-telling as well.[443]

Delisle's works may be divided into two main categories in terms of artistic style – wordless comic albums or comic albums that are devoid of text, and graphic novels (comics) that include speech bubbles and other text – and additionally into two main categories according to their subject matter or genre: journalism (including travelogues or memoirs) and humorous cartoons. In order to visualise this categorization, the table below will be of help:[444]

---

[443] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.
[444] This table is in chronological order. I have used the English titles and kept the original French titles only for the works which have not been translated into English yet. In my discussion of Guy Delisle's works, I will use genre classification.

	Style		Genre	
Title of the Work	**Wordless Comic Albums**	**Graphic Novel (Comics)**	**Journalism Travelogues Memoirs**	**Cartoons**
Réflexion		✓		✓
Aline and the Others	✓			✓
Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China		✓	✓	
Inspecteur Moroni Series		✓		✓
Albert and the Others	✓			✓
Comment ne rien faire	✓	✓		✓
Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea		✓	✓	
Louis au ski	✓			✓
Burma Chronicles		✓	✓	
Louis à la plage	✓			✓
Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City		✓	✓	
A User's Guide to Neglectful Parenting		✓		✓

Chronologically, Delisle's first comic album *Réflexion* was published in L'Association's 'Patte de mouche' collection in 1996. In 1999, using the same French publishers, he produced *Aline et les autres*, which was translated into English as *Aline and the Others* in 2006.[445] He created *Shenzhen* for L'Association in 2000, which appeared in English six years later in 2006 as *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*.[446] Between 2001 and 2004, he published *Inspecteur Moroni* in three volumes for the Franco-Belgian Éditions Dargaud. Another graphic album *Albert et les autres* appeared in French, also in 2001 with L'Association, and in English as *Albert and the Others* in 2007.[447] In 2002 *Comment ne rien faire* hit the shelves thanks to Montreal publishers La Pastèque, followed one year later by *Pyongyang* (L'Association), which was translated into English as *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea* in 2005.[448] The sequence of further albums published in Paris by Delcourt – *Louis au ski* (2005), *Louis à la plage* (2008) and *Chroniques birmanes* (2007), translated as *Burma Chronicles* (2008)[449] – resulted in Delisle's well-known work *Chroniques de Jérusalem* published in 2011 and translated into

---

[445] Guy Delisle, *Aline and the Others* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2006). A Polish version, conflated with *Albert et les autres / Albert and the Others*, appeared in 2014.

[446] Guy Delisle, *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, trans. by Helge Dascher (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2006). The work has also been translated into seven other languages, viz. German (2006, 2010, 2011), Spanish (2006, 2011), Italian (2007, 2013, 2014), Portuguese (2009), Finnish (2010), Czech (2011) and Dutch (2011).

[447] Guy Delisle, *Albert and the Others* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2007). See note 5 above.

[448] Guy Delisle, *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea*, trans. by Helge Dascher (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2005). The work has also been translated into fourteen other languages, viz. Spanish (2005), Japanese (2006), Danish (2006), Polish (2006, 2013), Italian (2006, 2013), German (2007), Portuguese (2007), Norwegian (2008), Czech (2009), Dutch (2009), Finnish (2009), Swedish (2013), Croatian (2013) and Korean (2014).

[449] Guy Delisle, *Burma Chronicles*, trans. by Helge Dascher (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2008). There also exist translations into Dutch (2008), Polish (2008), Italian (2008, 2013), Finnish (2008), Spanish (2008), Portuguese (2009), German (2009), Korean (2010), Czech (2013), Taiwanese Mandarin (2013) and Burmese (undated). *Louis au ski* has since appeared in Italy (2010) and Germany (2007), while in 2009 versions of *Louis à la plage* appeared not only in Italian and German but also in Polish, followed a year later by Spanish and Galician.

English as *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* (2012). Most recently to date, Delisle has published *Le Guide du mauvais père tome 1* (Paris: Delcourt, 2013), which appeared the same year in English as *A User's Guide to Neglectful Parenting* and has been followed by a second French volume.[450]

With his original style employing clear and basic lines and a distinctive, truthful and humorous approach already evident in his earliest albums, Guy Delisle is one of the leading cartoonists and exponents of comic art in today's world. As an aid to evaluation and without wishing to labour the point, our broad analysis of his work *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* in this chapter will begin by setting it within the context of his other works.

As this thesis will use English translations of Guy Delisle's graphic novels rather than the original French text, here would be an appropriate point to draw attention to the difference between the French and English titles and covers of his graphic novels.

Whereas the original French edition is just entitled *Shenzhen*, its English translation, *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, bears a clarifying – or arguably superfluous – addition. This slight amplification probably does not mean that in French-speaking countries everybody knows where Shenzhen is whereas English-speaking people need an aid to the location of the city. To my mind, however, the expansion of the title in English is more probably motivated by the publisher's marketing strategy in the USA. By way of a further geographical signpost, before the start of the narrative, the location of Shenzhen is shown on a world map, first as a tiny point, then in a zoomed area covering Canton, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

In spite of the fact that *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea* was written later than *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, it was the former that, with its added subtitle, in 2005 was Guy Delisle's first book to be translated into English, one year before the published English translation of *Shenzhen*. If through the added subtitle Delisle and his publishers were seeking to imply that they intended to categorize the book as a travelogue, a problem arises: can we really call it a journey when Delisle is only allowed to be alone in his hotel room and in public toilets and is otherwise always accompanied by his guide wherever he wants to go?

Despite the fact that Delisle's first two graphic novels appeared with additional subtitles in English as previously discussed, in translation *Chroniques birmanes* appeared

---

[450] Guy Delisle, *A User's Guide to Neglectful Parenting*, trans. by Helge Dascher (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2013); Id., *Le Guide du mauvais père tome 2*, Paris: Delcourt, 2014.

unelaborated as *Burma Chronicles* and with no change of cover, Delisle being shown pushing his son's pram while passing two armed guards.

Delisle's latest graphic novel of journalistic and travel interest appeared in French as *Chroniques de Jérusalem* (with Delcourt) in 2011, while it was published in English by Drawn and Quarterly as well as by the London firm Jonathan Cape with another additional subtitle: *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* in 2012. Why was 'holy city' added? Whose 'holy city' is Jerusalem? Christians'? Jews'? Muslims'?

In my interview with Guy Delisle, I asked the reason why his graphic novels have been published with additional subtitles in English, he stated that he had no say regarding the translations and that the important point for him is the book itself:

> Well, it is something that I do not really have control on. It is the publisher, the English publisher, I remember, he told me about Pyongyang, he said 'we have to put a subtitle because in [the] United States, nobody knows what is Pyongyang, and if we do not put a subtitle people are not gonna know that it is [in] North Korea.' So they really wanted to underline, to make a statement that it was someone in North Korea. So I thought long, you know, I said 'if you think it is the best, I do not really mind actually', because for me, I do not see the translation, I see one book and then they are gone and so I leave, I trust the publisher and if they do not want to put a pink colour on the cover, usually I go with them and that is it for the rest as well. So, for *Shenzhen*, they did *Shenzhen* after they added the subtitle on *Pyongyang*. And they said 'we gonna put [a] subtitle on *Shenzhen*, which says: *Travelogue in China* or something like that'. So they did the same on *Jerusalem: The Holy City*. Well, the city is holy for the three religions. They do not make a lot of change by putting that. Because it is actually three times holy. It is holy for the Muslims, it is holy for the Christians and it is holy for the Jewish. So, I think that the holy city can fit to the three major religions that are there. So, for me, I do not really control that and it is a bit up to them if they wanna put that on the title. I have put all the translations [of my book] on my blog. I have one in Czech and there is a subtitle on it. I just have no idea what is on the subtitle, really.[451]

As for the album covers of Delisle's other graphic novels, another difference between the French and English editions is apparent. Whereas the French edition of *Shenzhen* reproduces the panel in which Delisle is seen passing through the animation studio where local artists concentrate on their works, exceptionally among the eight translations listed on the author's website the English version shows Guy Delisle walking in a very crowded street where his face is instantly recognisable as Western among the masses of relatively almost identical Orientals. Thus the cover of the English version highlights the author's sense of alienation from Chinese society more conspicuously than does the original French one.

---

[451] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

As in *Shenzhen*, the English edition of *Pyongyang* changed the cover. While the French edition shows Delisle walking past a huge Monument to the Founding of the North Korean Workers' Party featuring the classic trio of hammer, sickle and paintbrush, the English edition along with the Swedish and Croatian versions has regimented rows of quasi-identical school girls with broad, fixed smiles, all playing accordions. Although both covers imply brain-washing, it may be said that the English, Swedish and Croatian editions refrain from direct implication of communism.

The covers of *Burma Chronicles* and *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* were not changed when they were translated into English. Regarding the changing of the covers of his graphic novels, Guy Delisle said once more that it was very hard to control the translations:

> Yes, they keep changing. Not so much for the *Jerusalem* because I did try to control the one in *Jerusalem* and try to say: 'Well, enough for all these changing, I would like to keep the cover I have done.' But it is really hard to do that because sometimes like in Asia there is one cover very strange in Taiwan, I think. We do not have a lot of control. They just send the book and we say we do not like it and then you do not hear from them. Well, I do not think about that so much. So, after that, I guess they just really fit them, that's it! But, for some reason, publishers sometimes have a collection. So they have to fit the graphic to put into the collection, which is not such a good idea. And sometimes they just want to change the drawing for, I do not know for what reason, they do not like the cover. It is a bit like the movie and the posters - the posters they make for the movies. They keep changing in every country, I do not know why.[452]

Additionally, in the French editions, the reason why locations that Delisle is visiting are not shown on a map is simply, as he confesses in my interview, that he forgot to include them in the original French editions.

1.1.1 Summary Introduction to Delisle's Works

1.1.1.1. Cartoons

In his first printed publication *Réflexion* (1996), which has not yet been translated into English and does not feature on his website, Guy Delisle depicts a man sitting alone at first inside a room, and his interaction with a woman who later suddenly appears within the same confines. In his wordless comic albums, Delisle pushes the limits of comic art by creating visual transmogrification ('transmographication') of the human body thanks to his

---

[452] Ibid.

gift for animation. The album *Aline and the Others* narrates the surreal and perverse stories of twenty-six women whose names appear in alphabetical order. Likewise, its counterpart *Albert and the Others* exposes the pleasures, pitfalls, and perversities of masculinity represented by twenty-six men also presented alphabetically. (Fig. 67) Asked what he thinks about the effect of his animation training in his wordless comic albums, especially the last two cited, Guy Delisle answers as follows:

> Yes, it is really a link between the movement and comic books. And it came right after I was doing animation. And it is for me, when I was doing animation I was thinking, maybe we could use like movement [in] some stories to try to describe just a moment in one page or so, I was thinking, you know, it would be nice to shrink the time or compress the time on just one page or have the time, a year passed from one image to another one very quickly or very slowly. So I played with that in my short stories. I have it in one of my first short stories, I remember, I have whole life passing in two pages and the character is saying one letter and the whole letter makes sentence of life passed so quickly. You have like that sentence to show two pages of a life. And so I was playing with time, and I was thinking when I was an animator that I think we could do that in the comic book, and when I had the chance to do short stories I was thinking 'Oh, I am gonna try to do like a short film', because all these short stories could be short animation films, basically.[453]

In his other wordless albums *Louis au ski* (2005) and *Louis à la plage* (2008), Delisle makes his son the protagonist of the stories, which also include his own childhood memories. The *Inspecteur Moroni* series (2001-2004) tell the adventures of an insomniac, hypochondriac, half-autistic, awkward and intellectually limited inspector called Moroni who lives with his mother and shares his bed with his dog. *Comment ne rien faire* (2002; hardback, 2007) is a collection of his short works culled from various previous publications. After having been to hard-to-reach areas of the world, in 2013 on his return back home Delisle pictures his daily life with his children Louis and Alice in *Le Guide du mauvais père, tome 1* (simultaneously published in English as *A User's Guide to Neglectful Parenting* as well as in Spanish, German, Dutch and Italian), followed by a second volume in 2014. The book comprises jokes and examples of funny situations illustrating the responsibilities of fatherhood.

1.1.1.2. Graphic Novels

In comic art, Delisle deserves a top ranking through his talent for turning the mundane into sources of humour. The disorientation of a foreigner in another country and a lack of

---

[453] Ibid.

communication leading to sense being lost in translation are just two topics he has covered in his graphic novels. He shows slices of his life, without imposing his own interpretation of them, but instead leaving readers to draw their own conclusions.[454] When asked what producing comics means to him, he says:

> Well, that's a big question. Because I like to draw and I like to tell stories, and I was working in animation, after a certain point I felt frustrated because it was not my drawing, it was not my idea, it was not my design. And at the same time, I was doing my own short stories for magazines and I really enjoyed doing my own stories, my own design. I always thought about that when I was young. I always read comics and I found the opportunities to do short stories and I was thinking I would do that as long as I can, and then it became bigger stories and it became books. And it all moved gradually. I didn't start doing drawings. One day at my table thinking 'Oh, I am gonna do books and publish them', I just started with an idea for short stories and I had seen a magazine that was doing some independent stuff, and I thought maybe that magazine gonna like what I do. So, yeah, it goes down to because I like it.[455]

As this statement indicates, Delisle's development as an independent cartoonist and subsequently as a graphic novelist has been slow and steady rather than meteoric, and it is interesting to note that as late as 2004 he was still involved in the collaborative production of the full-length animated cartoon pirate film *L'Ile de Black Mór*.

1.1.1.2.1 *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*

Having previously visited the eastern Chinese provincial capital Nanjing in December 1998, in 2000 Guy Delisle went to the southern city of Shenzhen in Guangdong Province to supervise an animation studio and lived there for three months.[456] During this second visit, he stayed in just one hotel room, habitually ate at the same restaurants, where he admittedly tasted different foods, and greeted the doorman of the hotel every time he passed.

However, the depiction of this relatively monotonous routine serves to highlight interesting aspects of the life and culture of Shenzhen. Delisle shows cripples who beat their foreheads on the ground as they beg in the streets and reveals that they are faking. (Fig. 68) He informs us that Chinese people do not have a stand-in-line culture. He does not refrain from sharing his misfortunes such as how he urinated onto his trousers because of the broken urinal or what he felt when he tried drinking snake blood mixed with a bit of

---

[454] More will be discussed later.
[455] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.
[456] Guy Delisle, interviewed by Koldo Gutiérrez, *Cactus*, 10 November 2013
<http://revistacactus.com/entrevista-guy-delisle/> [accessed 2 April 2014].

alcohol with a piece of snake entrails floating in the glass. From time to time he passes comments on the Chinese government. The Chinese rural exodus is likened to an unmitigated Dantean *Inferno*, in comparison with which the USA is seen as *Paradiso*, while the big Chinese cities, Shenzhen and Hong Kong, occupy intermediate rings.[457] According to Ling Chuan-Yao and David Shook

> Delisle's cynicism drives the book's humor but also focuses primarily on what he perceives to be the negative aspects of China. Instead of actively engaging Chinese culture, he focuses on his status as a cultural outsider. *Shenzhen*'s humor largely relies on the intercultural awkwardness Delisle conjures by his unwillingness to accommodate the everyday happenings of Chinese life. The cleanness of *Shenzhen*'s illustration evokes a whimsical feel that downplays the book's cynicism. Though his drawing style is simple, Delisle's work vividly conveys the nuanced cityscape of Shenzhen.[458]

Delisle starts his book by drawing the tops of interesting towers and buildings; then he descends to the streets like a curious stranger. (Fig. 69) Then he goes to his hotel, where three months later his story finishes in the same room. Black and white illustrations feature throughout the book's one hundred and fifty pages, divided into nine small chapters of sixteen pages each. The reason why Delisle divides his book into small chapters with equal pages is that he had already started to serialize *Shenzhen* in *Lapin* magazine which used a sixteen-page printing format, when he decided to make a book after submitting the third sixteen-page section.[459]

Guy Delisle uses Chinese letters for some conversations, possibly the ones where he cannot understand what is being said, whereas in some other parts he translates Chinese discourse. (Fig. 70) He has not used the same technique for his other works because he wants to show the sense of alienation resulting from his Chinese experience which was a situation where he felt lost in translation:

> The situation was different in China because I was in a translation situation so I had to explain that, something you can do in comics. Someone is talking to you and you do not understand at all what he is saying but it is like a cloudy image. So you can do that, you can have someone shouting and you can do just rubbish stuff. But I was not confronted to that in the other countries, because there was no translator and I was in an English-speaking country like in Burma, in Jerusalem, that never really happened, but in China, yeah, and I do not think

---

[457] To quote an anonymous contributor to the *Kirkus Review*: 'As he attempts to place his experience amid the industrial, impersonal Shenzhen within Dante's circles of hell, he underscores the value of the freedom he ultimately enjoys against the contrast of a city sealed by an electric fence, with armed guards in watchtowers'. *Kirkus Review*, 15th July, 2006 (posted online 20th May, 2010) <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/guy-delisle/shenzhen/> [accessed 29th March, 2014].
[458] Ling Chuan-Yao and David Shook, 'Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China by Guy Delisle; Helge Dascher', *World Literature Today*, 81.2 (2007), 65 (p.65).
[459] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

I would use that technique now. And I have had a few Arab words in *Jerusalem* and I do not know, at that time I thought that is the way to transpose the experience I had in China. And today maybe I would do differently.[460]

Delisle's depiction of the 'lost in translation' situation and the hardness of getting accustomed to a totally new culture is very similar to Shaun Tan's later wordless graphic fiction *The Arrival*,[461] in which the author tells the story of an immigrant man who leaves his wife and daughter behind in order to create a better life for them all, and goes to a utopic country where he is faced with bizarre animals, indescribable floating objects, and totally new customs and language. (Fig. 71)

Interestingly, Delisle does not use titles for his nine chapters; instead he inserts single, full-page wordless panels to divide them. The first of these shows an ugly tower at the top of building. It might be the strange cube Delisle saw once on his way downtown to the bank and could not find again to photograph, and in the following sixteen pages he tries to get accustomed to the city and reveals aspects of Chinese culture which he finds so strange. To introduce the eighth chapter, where he tries the snake alcohol mix and goes to Guangzhou to spend his last weekend in China, he puts three panels one under the other, corresponding to the first page of an art book he finds in a bookshop in the previous chapter, and creates a sequence depicting an elegant Chinese woman entering a traditional building. Although this introductory panel is not directly relevant to the chapter, it was an important inspiration for Delisle as he says on the very last panel of the seventh chapter: 'This use of clean line was a big inspiration on my first trip to China. I even drew the first pages of a book I wanted to do.'[462] When asked about the intended function of the interrelationship between his own panel and the artwork in the Chinese book, Delisle acknowledges the influence but avoids a full explanation:

> That one is I think I was mentioning the work of the Chinese that I discovered when I was there, like the Chinese artist, and I think I have been collecting a lot of these small books that you can find in the streets of China. And I mention at one point, maybe it is not in that chapter, but to a certain point, I was influenced by the way the Chinese are drawing, and I have tried to do some work like even the beginning of a comic book and that one page of the comic book I was working on after being influenced by the Chinese graphic artist. So, that is the reason why it is there. But I do not know if it is in the right chapter because I guess I like that page and I thought 'Wow, I am gonna use it.'[463]

---

[460] Ibid.
[461] Shaun Tan, *The Arrival* (New York: Scholastic, 2007).
[462] Delisle, *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, p. 116.
[463] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

Delisle helps us to understand Chinese issues in *Shenzhen* by presenting small but detailed aspects of daily life which it might not be possible to find elsewhere.

1.1.1.2.2. *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea*

In his celebrated graphic memoir *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea* Guy Delisle records his two-month stay in Pyongyang, the capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, where he was sent to supervise staff working for a French animation firm. He stayed there for two months in 2001, and years later he created one of the few books giving an insight into the capital of the world's most secretive and closed country. He keeps the same artistic and narrative style he used in *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*:

> An animator and graphic novelist with a few other books behind him […], Delisle's drawings [*sic*] have a lively cartoonish quality and an elegant, easy-to-read design. The black and white artwork has been done mostly in pencil, with soft shading, capturing a grayed out world devoid of color. His simplified characters inhabit more detailed environments, in the classic European *bandes dessinee* [*sic*] style, but with Delisle's own spin. Visual jokes also lighten up the grim totalitarian atmosphere.[464]

In such an isolated country he stays on an island in a secluded hotel which is as cold and impersonal as the one in Shenzhen. He narrates and draws what he is allowed to see. Since it is forbidden for foreigners to contact locals, he only knows two North Koreans: a guide and a translator. Nevertheless once again Delisle keeps his wryly amused attitude in this graphic novel. The story opens with the airport customs officer's question 'And what's this?' asked upon finding George Orwell's dystopian novel *1984* in Delisle's luggage.[465] (Fig. 72) When asked why he only took *1984* with him, Delisle says:

> [North Korea] was always mentioned as an Orwellian country. So I brought it with me. I figured it would be the best place to read it. And it really was. It was so amazing how [Orwell] foresaw everything. Everything he describes in *1984*, it's North Korea exactly.[466]

Although Delisle had very limited access in Pyongyang in comparison with Shenzhen, he manages to give glimpses into one of the most mysterious capitals in the

---

[464] Andrew B. Arnold, 'From Ming to Kim', *Time*, 23 September 2005
<http://content.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,1108801,00.html> [accessed 23 March 2014], (para. 5 of 9).
[465] Delisle, *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea*, p. 2.
[466] Guy Delisle, interviewed by Mike Miliard, *The Phoenix*, 11 October 2006
<http://thephoenix.com/boston/news/24766-comic-possibilities-of-north-korea/?page=2#TOPCONTENT>
[accessed 23 March 2014].

world or, as he calls it, a 'phantom city in a hermit nation'.[467] (Fig. 73) Throughout the book, as in *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, we see tall buildings and huge monuments and statues. Delisle does not forget to inform potential visitors to North Korea about what can and cannot be brought into the country, local hygiene, travel restrictions and how one is supposed to behave. He is bewildered to see so many different vehicles in the streets as western media have led him to expect a dearth of transport. He also critiques the North Korean communist dynasty by giving astonishing insights such as Kim Jong-Il's belief in 1996 that only thirty percent of the population needed to survive in order to 'reconstruct a victorious society'.[468]

After locating North Korea on the world map, Delisle starts his story in the airport and finishes it in his workplace. He divides the book into ten small, and easily digestible chapters, carefully arranged over one hundred and seventy-six pages. As in *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, he uses full-page splashes to divide his eleven chapters. The sixth splash shows the turtle in the hotel aquarium. Although Delisle does not tell us what the tortoise means for Koreans, to them normally it 'is a symbol of a long life because it lives such long time. It is also considered to have the ability to tell the future and fortune-tellers use the cracks on its shell to forecast the future'.[469] (Fig. 74) When asked why he uses the tortoise as a repeated motif, Delisle, however, replies

> I know it is long life but it did not work as a symbol for me. No. For me the symbol was to be trapped. Like a big animal trapped in a small aquarium. For me that was the feeling I had when I was there myself being trapped there. And to some extent of course the whole country where you have the citizen trapped in that small country just like the tortoise.[470]

The last of the full-page panels features three murals depicting heroism and North Korean nationalism and prepares the reader for a visit by our protagonist and his unavoidable translator to the Museum of Imperialist Occupation. After 'two months of loyal service'[471] (the ironic phrase echoing that at the end of *Shenzhen*) he prepares his suitcase to fly back to France leaving us with lots of information on the world's most closed country.

---

[467] Delisle, *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea*, p. 25.
[468] Ibid., p. 47. See also Fiona Terry, 'Feeding the Dictator', *Guardian*, 6 August, 2001 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/aug/06/famine.comment> [accessed 31 March 2014].
[469] *Korean Myths and Folktales* <http://blog.asianart.org/pdf/education/previsit/Korean-Myths.pdf> [accessed 31 March 2014].
[470] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.
[471] Ibid., p. 175.

1.1.1.2.3. *Burma Chronicles*

After publishing his first graphic novel devoted to travel writing *Shenzhen* in 2000 and developing an acclaimed artistic and narrative style with *Pyongyang* in 2003, four years later Guy Delisle created his third graphic novel featuring himself as a roving reporter, *Chroniques Birmanes*, translated as *Burma Chronicles* in 2008. While he had made relatively short solo trips to Shenzhen and Pyongyang, in 2005 he went to Burma for a year with his wife Nadège and their baby boy Louis. Nadège would work as an administrator for Médecins sans Frontières and Delisle would narrate their year-long story while babysitting. Joe Sacco comments:

> Because of these new domestic arrangements, Burma Chronicles feels from the start like a different sort of book than *Shenhzen* and *Pyongyang*, where Delisle immediately threw himself and his readers into the deep end of strange lands. This time, he is more or less along for his wife's ride, and essentially relegated to the role of house husband. Readers might be forgiven for wishing they were following the wife on her visits to remote missions instead of staying home with the author as he tends to their infant. This is particularly true early on in the book, where Delisle insists on relating what can only be termed "cute-baby" stories. He spends a few precious panels documenting how the baby likes to drop objects in places where they can't easily be retrieved. This might be a jolly family anecdote under ordinary circumstances, but Delisle has taken his readers to Burma, a repressive dictatorship few foreigners will ever visit, and they might begin to wonder when he's going to start showing them around.[472]

This judgement notwithstanding, throughout the book Delisle does not confine himself to pushing Louis' pram; he reflects on Burmese culture and talks about the military junta and its censorship. And even if and when he does focus on life's minutiae, it is the 'everyday studies' form of documenting the world around us. As Lorenzo Thompson says:

> As he did in his previous books, Delisle doesn't try to tackle politics or history unless they relate to his direct experiences. In fact, much of the account is centered on his day-to-day attempts to make himself comfortable in a country that is plagued by frequent power outages, a steamy climate and a heavily censured media. "Wow, another great day in Burma," the narrator jokes while perusing a local newspaper. What helps carry this account's lack of suspense is that Delisle is a damned good observer of the cultural oddities that surround him. Whether he's describing a monk shopping for cookies at the grocery store, the trademark betel-nut juice stains found in all the apartment building hallways he visits, or the porn-ridden Internet café's search history, his account always manages to evoke the Burmese landscape.[473]

---

[472] Joe Sacco, 'Burmese days', *The National*, 7 November 2008 <http://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/books/burmese-days#full> [accessed 27 March 2014], (para. 6 of 14).

[473] Lorenzo Thompson, 'Guy Delisle's Burma Chronicles shows life in military controlled Myanmar through cartoons', *Comments Enabled*, 13 January 2008 <http://commentsenabled.ca/arts-culture/books/item/9-guy-

Yet again Delisle starts his book by locating the country on the map before zooming in on it in a second panel. Furthermore, at the outset he clarifies the terminological difference between Myanmar and Burma as follows: 'Myanmar: Official name since 1989, adopted by the UN. Burma: Former name, still used by countries that do not accept the legitimacy of the government that took power in 1989. Such as France, Australia and US.'[474] In contrast to *Shenzhen* and *Pyongyang*, in its 263 pages of black and white illustrations *Burma Chronicles* does not make much use of shades, a limitation which creates a very dark and gloomy atmosphere as Delisle instead prefers clear lines with uniformly grey shading.

Unlike *Shenzhen* and *Pyongyang*, which are divided into sixteen-page chapters by wordless full-page splashes, *Burma Chronicles* is separated into seventy-nine very small chapters ranging from one to fifteen pages. The first panel of each chapter accommodates its title together with a little drawing. The chapters are in chronological order and deal with various topics such as strolling, the Nobel Prize or tourism in Bagan. As Rory Mclean explains:

> Each chapter revolves around a single experience, for example Delisle's discovery that *Time* magazine has "offending" articles snipped out by government censors ("Oh, right! I almost forgot! We're under dictatorship here.") or his being prevented by armed soldiers from walking past Suu Kyi's house ("I can't imagine they'd keep an innocent dad and his kid from going through."). He finds that "Golden Valley", the VIP Rangoon neighbourhood for officers, businessmen with close ties to the regime and NGOs, is the only part of the whole country with a (reasonably) steady supply of electricity and water. When he begins to teach an animation workshop for Burmese graphic artists, he discovers that the friendship could cost them their jobs and livelihoods.[475]

In *Burma Chronicles*, Guy Delisle show us the inner world of Myanmar by giving small but important details from the daily life and culture. (Fig. 75)

1.1.1.2.4. *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*

Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City is Guy Delisle's most successful book to date and the first ever colour album to win *Le Fauve d'or: Prix du meilleur album* (The Best

---

delisle-s-burma-chronicles-shows-life-in-military-controlled-myanmar-through-cartoons/9-guy-delisle-s-burma-chronicles-shows-life-in-military-controlled-myanmar-through-cartoons> [accessed 27 March 2014].
[474] Delisle, *Burma Chronicles*, p. i.
[475] Rory Mclean, 'Burma through the artist's eye', *The Guardian*, 19 May 2009
<http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2009/may/19/burma-chronicles-books-review> [accessed 27 March 2014]

Comic Album Prize) given at *Le Festival international de la bande dessinée d'Angoulême* (Angoulême International Comics Festival) in 2012, making him the first Canadian to win this prize.

As in *Burma Chronicles*, in this graphic novel Delisle recounts his one-year stay in Jerusalem with his two children Louis and Alice and his wife Nadège, who again works for Médecins sans Frontières. Although the main reason why he accompanies his wife is to act as baby-sitter, in his free time he produces creative work as an itinerant cartoonist.

Although *Jerusalem* is Delisle's first graphic novel that uses colour, it does so sparingly since its pages are mostly in black and white and Delisle keeps the artistic style which he employed in his previous graphic novels. He prefers a brown hue to show the chaotic and muddy streets, whereas he deploys vibrant colours (green, red, yellow) for maps and flags or action scenes such as gunfire or shouting:

> Delisle's drawing style fits nicely with his narration. His lines are plain and clean and casual without being sloppy. Most of his frames are in black and white, with color used from time to time to bring attention to a map, a memory, or an obnoxious noise. He's also a pro at compressing his scenes down to just a few beats, phrases, and gestures. In *Jerusalem*, there are no longwinded monologues, dialogues, or explanatory introductions — just one curious, quiet moment after another through the months of the year, from Ramadan, when Delisle gets self-conscious walking down the street eating an apple, to Yom Kippur, when the roads are blocked and everyone's out riding bikes, to Christmastime, when bombs start dropping in Gaza, to Purim, when the ultra-orthodox Jews are so drunk they're puking in the streets, to Passover, when all the food in the grocery stores that has yeast in it is covered in plastic.[476]

Delisle wants to make the monochromatic city Jerusalem a bit more variegated by adding these little touches of colour where he finds the opportunity. When asked how he chose the above-mentioned colours, he says:

> Well, it is a bit something you do in comics. In children's comics like there is some violent scene, there is some action or gunshot, and they put the whole image in red, so I just used to do sound. That is frustration. In comic books you do not have sound; you just write them but never really, really worried. So with a little splash [of] colour, especially when it is a gun red, it is like a violent colour. So I thought, you know, I did not invent that I just used what I have seen, and throughout the book you have just a few spots when it was like a shocking sound or something like that, yelling and I just look at it and then on the page it looks nice, I just want a spot of colour.[477]

---

[476] Tim Peters, 'Far from Home: Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*', *Slant Magazine*, 25 April 2012 < http://www.slantmagazine.com/house/2012/04/far-from-home-guy-delisles-jerusalem-chronicles-from-the-holy-city/> [accessed 18 April 2014]

[477] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

After locating Israel and Palestine on the world map, Delisle starts his story in a plane which has just taken off for Israel, and finishes it in a plane again flying back to France. He narrates his story in chronological order by dividing his graphic novel into twelve main chapters, and titles each of them with the name of months from August to July. He again divides the chapters into small episodes which include major events or things that Delisle finds interesting. In order to separate chapters he uses small drawings with the months appearing above them that faintly recall miniatures in the calendar of a medieval illuminated book of Hours.

Delisle starts his first chapter 'August' with a drawing of a terrace mostly occupied by solar arrays which are popular in Palestine and Israel to supply people with water. Joe Sacco also depicts these solar arrays in his books on the region. In this chapter Delisle tells of their first days in the region and his first hearing of the adhan inviting Muslims to evening prayer. On the very last page Delisle draws a plane bound for France flying in the dark.

Delisle successfully shows us that Jerusalem has many strictly protected borders within the city not only for Israelis and Palestinians but also for other minor religious sects, and that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has become a part of everyday life. By wearing neither ideological spectacles nor overtly professing a political viewpoint like Joe Sacco or Kemal Gökhan Gürses, he cleverly invites us to wander all around the holy city, Jerusalem. (Fig. 76)

2. Guy Delisle as Tabula Rasa Picturing Everyday Life

Although tabula rasa means blank slate (literally 'scraped tablet') in Latin, it is also used in epistemology to mean the human mind devoid of innate ideas, especially at birth when we lack any built-in mental content and before we start to shape our knowledge by experiencing and perceiving. According to Sajjad H. Rizvi, Research Associate in Islamic Philosophy at the University of Bristol, for Ibn Sina, widely known as Avicenna in Western philosophy,

> The human intellect at birth is rather like a tabula rasa, a pure potentiality that is actualized through education and comes to know. Knowledge is attained through empirical familiarity with objects in this world from which one abstracts universal concepts. It is developed through a syllogistic method of reasoning; observations lead to prepositional statements, which when compounded lead to further abstract concepts. The intellect itself possesses levels of development from the material intellect (al-'aql al-hayulani), that potentiality that can acquire knowledge to the active intellect (al-'aql al-fa'il),

the state of the human intellect at conjunction with the perfect source of knowledge.[478]

When in my interview I asked Guy Delisle why he prefers to learn from his daily experience and whether he does any preliminary research about the countries where he is going to live for a while, he said:

It is different for every country. Before going to China, I was a much younger person twenty years ago. And I did not read about the country. I just wanted to see China. I was very excited to go there. When I came back, I read a lot of books about China, the history of China, the revolution and all that stuff. I thought it was fascinating. And then, for Pyongyang, I read before, I read as many books as I can, because I knew that before going there, once I would be there, if I asked a question, they would give me the answer that pleased them. And I thought 'Well, I am going to read as much as I can.' So, I will know about the country and I would be able to ask them questions, and know like the answer that we have here, to see what they say to compare. For Burma, it is different. We were going there for a year and I thought: 'Well, once I am there, I am gonna be surrounded by the people that work in MSF and they have been there for years; they know the whole country very well and that is what happened. I was there for a year. I have met journalists, I have met people from the UN, from the Red Cross, and they knew the country very well and some of them really well. And some of them have actually met Aung San Suu Kyi and some of them were there for eight years. And they knew very well the country. And the same thing happened in Jerusalem. I did not know much about the country. We only knew one month before we left that we were going to Jerusalem. So, there was not much I could do in one month. And I looked at a few pictures and I thought it looked nice and we would see how it goes there. And the same again, once I was there, I was there for a year. I could not spend the year reading books about the country. I did [read] a few while I was there. I read the books people advised me to read. I was with lots of friends; some of them were journalists, from [the] UN and from [the] Red Cross. And they knew the country very well as well.

I see Guy Delisle's depiction of himself in his graphic novels as a tabula rasa character because he does not show himself as a sophisticated person. He wanders around the cities he has been to, is surprised whenever he discovers an interesting point, and tries to solve problems on his own. He does not have a translator with him like Joe Sacco or Kemal Gökhan Gürses' Ayşegül. He enjoys the risk of being lost in translation and prefers to gather information from local people or from his friends. As ever in his graphic novels, each panel reveals something new that Delisle has learned about local life, so that by the end one senses that he is to some extent becoming assimilated into local society and is no longer an outsider. The extent to which one unquestioningly accepts the veracity of this educational process is a matter for each individual reader to decide in the light of our

---

[478] 'Avicenna (Ibn Sina) (c.980—1037)', in *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/avicenna/> [accessed 18 May 2014]

growing familiarity with first-person narrative unreliability in the novel, comic and cinema in the last century or so.[479]

Basically, Guy Delisle does not do more than show us his everyday life, his daily routine, which is defined by Henry Lefebvre as follows:

> Everyday life, in a sense residual, defined by 'what is left over' after all distinct, superior, specialized, structured activities have been singled out by analysis, must be defined as a totality. […] Everyday life is profoundly related to *all* activities, and encompasses them with all their differences and their conflicts; it is their meeting place, their bond, their common ground. And it is in everyday life that the sum total of relations which make the human - and every human being - a whole takes its shape and its form.[480]

Delisle applies this 'left over' into his narration and creates his own style which hides many small but important details behind his everyday actions. As Greice Schneider suggests, in comics 'every day is shown not only as a subject, identifiable by the presence of actions and habits of everyday life, but also as a narrative strategy, capable of awakening in the reader a corresponding mood'.[481] Delisle's two-page subsection 'The Logistics of Everyday Life' in *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*[482] shows us how he creates his narrative strategy. In order to show that he works continuously throughout the day, he puts two meshing gears under the title of the subsection. In the first frame, Delisle shows his son Louis running to a huge playground saying 'Oh Man! I wanna go here!' and says in the caption that 'Louis is going to an Anglican School'. This cleverly shows that it is possible to find beautiful playgrounds and good education especially in Christian schools. In the second frame he mentions that they send their daughter Alice to a local Christian kindergarten. Four frames later Delisle draws the morning traffic to Louis' school in West Jerusalem, never mentioning that traffic is one of the important problems in the city except for the conflict. On the next page Delisle tells us how he takes his children back home: 'I pick her up on foot. We take a minibus. We drive downtown. We pick up

---

[479] See the general studies by, among others, Elke D'hoker and Gunther Martens (ed.), *Narrative Unreliability in the Twentieth-Century First-Person Novel* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008); M. W. Smith, *Understanding Unreliable Narrators* (Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1991); and Den Shan, 'Unreliability', in *The Living Handbook of Narratology*, ed. by Peter Hühn (Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2011: https://web.archive.org/web/20130116110219/http://hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php/Unreliability). For two examples of unreliable narrators in the world of comics, see Alan Moore and Brian Bolland, *Batman: The Killing Joke* (New York: DC Comics, 1988), and Jeph Loeb and Ed McGuiness, *Red Hulk* (New York: Marvel Comics, 2008- (see esp. *World War Hulks*, 2010).

[480] Henry Lefebvre, *The Critique of Everyday Life*, trans. by John Moore (London: Verso, 1991), vol. 1, p. 97.

[481] Greice Schneider, 'Comics and Everyday Life: from Ennui to Contemplation', *European Comic Art*, 3.1 (2010), 37-63 (p. 50).

[482] Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, pp. 50-51.

Louis. We return by minibus. And we walk home.'[483] (Fig. 77) In the previous pages of the book we have already learned the reason why he changes two vehicles to take them home, namely because Arab buses only operate within the Arab quarters whereas Jewish buses go everywhere except for the Arab quarters. Delisle finishes this subsection by self-mockingly declaring himself to be a housewife who nevertheless leads a glamorous life.

3. Delisle as Cultural Reporter

With his graphic novels that combine autobiography and travelogue Guy Delisle has a very unique place in comics journalism. Although his works have mostly been analysed in terms of travel writing and autobiography, in this section I will read them as comics journalism.

Admittedly, Delisle never calls himself a journalist or considers his works as journalism, curiously enough. He prefers to think of his graphic novels as long postcards to send to his family and friends:

> I do not know. I do not feel like a journalist. Joe Sacco is a journalist. He goes in Gaza; he knows what he is going to do, he knows he is gonna work on 1956 somewhere in Gaza. He works with archives and all that. But me, I do not even know if I am gonna do a book or I go to Jerusalem because I was travelling with my wife, but I thought I am gonna take notes. If anything interesting comes up for the year, if I can work on a book, I do not know how far I could go. If something happened which is very exciting in the country, I do not think I am gonna go there. I had the chance to see some of the fighting over Gaza during the war when we were there. And of course a journalist would go there; my friend asked me if I wanted to go and I said 'I do not feel like watching these poor guys dying with bombs of F16', so I did not go. That was not a very journalistic aspect. But it is true that I put some information part, some of them are just information like I explain what it is that the Dome of the Rock represents, and I explained some religious stuff, so that part is more […] [of a] pedagogic. It is like teaching, so I have a bit of that. Then I like to mix that with the everyday life, my life, so the people know what kind of guy you are, what kind of life you have when you are in Jerusalem, and what kind of stuff you get from the people you meet and from the people that are not very pleasant with you, and all the religion I have met. So, this is not so much journalism. This is more like daily life. It is a diary. And for me, when I do that, I do not feel like I am doing journalism. I really feel that I am doing like a long postcard that I would send to my family to explain them because there is some explanation to do here and there, what is the situation, what I saw while I was there, everything which is strange for me or interesting. I am gonna put them in the book according to my notes, of course, it is not everything I have just seen there. So that's why for me it's much more someone was saying one day it is more like anthropologists would do, which I can never agree because I go outside and I take very small details and with these small details after a year

---

[483] Ibid., p. 51.

you have pictures of the whole thing. But I can look at the garbage and think 'Wow, we do not do that the same way here and why they put bread on the outside of the garbage can', and just with these small observations I like to explain the bigger thing somehow. And I think this is more of an observation. You try to do on your own. But I do not try to do all these analyses. I leave the analysis to the reader. I just present the stuff I have seen and from that, you can make your own mind. That is the good thing about comics. I can just show and I do not have to say 'they do not look at the poor Palestinians, they are going to shoot', terrible, which is true, everybody can agree with that. But if you write it, it does not have the same way and, if you just show what it is to go to a checkpoint, you say nothing you just show the days and everybody will go 'wow'. This is a little bit crazy. And you do not have to say it and I think it is better.[484]

Although journalism has existed for centuries, what has made it especially influential in forming public opinion is the integration of photography into journalism, in other words, journalism has become more powerful thanks to photojournalism. The golden age of photojournalism was between the 1930s and 1950s. What made this golden age possible was the introduction of the very practical and easily portable 35mm Leica camera, which was created in 1925. Later in 1929, a twin-lens reflex camera Rolleiflex helped photojournalism to boom. The basic difference between these two cameras lies in the way they were used: with a Rolleiflex, it is possible to shoot from the hip without holding the camera up to eye level, in other words without being noticed. In comparison to eye-level cameras, waist-level ones are better able to capture spontaneous reality as they give no time for a formal pose or the creation of an artificial environment.

In comics journalism, if Joe Sacco was a Leica, Guy Delisle would be a Rolleiflex. Having studied journalism at university, Sacco calls his work journalism, whereas Delisle never says so. Sacco takes a picture from eye-level, everybody knows that he is a journalist and is going to prepare a story from his observations. He is often seen with a pen taking notes or pictures while presenting his reportages. He already knows what he is going to look for before he travels to a given location. For example, for *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009), produced years after his *Palestine* (1993-95, 1996, 2001), he went back to Palestine to collect more information about the massacre that happened in 1956, although it was very hard for him to find people who were still alive to talk about it. Sometimes his journalist's identity even frightens interviewees as happened in *Footnotes in Gaza*:

Sacco: Then again, sometimes my presence elicits discomfort, suspicion, perhaps tinged with humiliation.
An old woman: They're using us for laughs.
Sacco: Who am I, after all, snooping around, taking photos, wanting names?

---

[484] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

Another old woman: 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? "If they demolish your house," I say, "I promise I will buy a new one!"[485] (Fig. 78)

Guy Delisle on the other hand is something of a Rolleiflex in comics journalism as he shoots pictures from the hip in non-interventionist fashion without ever being noticed as a frightening journalist. He just reflects his daily experiences in his graphic novels; he has neither a specific topic of research nor does he use pen and notepads to record details while listening to people. As he once said in an interview, he does not explain things in detail but merely shows them:

The challenge is not to explain too much. I didn't want to write about the Yom Kippur war or whatever. I love comics because they are so efficient. If I need to draw a little arrow, or a map, then I do. If you did those things in a documentary, it would look like a PowerPoint presentation. But in a comic, it's fine. I can explain the entire history of the Temple Mount in three pages![486]

He only sketches on his pad, which sometimes makes for difficult situations as happened in Jerusalem where he was trying to draw the separation wall from a distant vantage point and was approached by a patrol squad:

Delisle: I did a northern section last time, Today, I think I'll try going west. I take a road that runs alongside the wall and stop by an interesting corner. Five minutes later, an army vehicle pulls up next to me. I go over to the car.
Soldier: Civilians aren't allowed near the wall. What are you doing here?
Delisle: Drawing.
Soldier: Drawing what?
Delisle: The Wall… He checks my papers and orders me to leave. Damn, I'm not done…[487] (Fig. 79)

Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* is one of numerous books to treat the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the same field featuring in, for example, Joe Sacco's *Palestine*, *Footnotes in Gaza*, and *Journalism*, Rutu Modan's *Exit Wounds*, Sarah Glidden's *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less*, and Harvey Pekar and J. T. Waldman's *Not the Israel My Parents Promised Me*. In *Exit Wounds*, Modan tells the story of cab driver Franco and a young woman who approaches him to tell information about his father's death. In *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* Sarah Glidden writes about her first journey to Israel as a young Jewish American on a free Birthright trip. Pekar and

---

[485] Sacco, *Footnotes in Gaza*, p.13.
[486] Rachel Cooke, 'Guy Delisle: 'The challenge is not to explain too much'', *The Guardian*, 31 May 2012 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/may/31/guy-delisle-jerusalem-review-interview> [accessed 11 June 2014]
[487] Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, p, 179.

Waldman show how a man faces his disillusionment with the state of Israel. I see none of these works as journalism since they fail to produce any kind of report or reportage on the Palestinian issue. They are no more than a very personal account of a section of their lives. As for Joe Sacco, he can be seen as the pioneer of comics journalism. What makes Guy Delisle different from Sacco and the others is hidden in the way he approaches the conflict. He does not take any side, does not have a particular topic to focus on in his mind, and does not bother himself with a quest to find people to bombard with questions; he just draws and writes about what he observes during his stay there. By providing very small details, not only does he show the conflict but he also informs his readership about more mundane problems inside Palestine and Israel such as the stench of rubbish on roadsides with its implications for public hygiene.

Although he does not explicitly use the terms, Tzvetan Todorov clearly defines the difference between a travelogue and a city guide in his essay 'The Journey and Its Narratives':

> As I prepare for my trip, or upon arriving in a foreign country, I purchase, in addition to a practical guide, a slightly older travel narrative. Why? Because it offers me the prism I need in order to really take advantage of my trip: a slightly caricatural image of others that allows me to note with satisfaction the entire path that has been travelled; an image that separates me from the narrator, but that is sufficiently accurate on several counts to reassure me of my own superiority; an image of the traveller with which I identify while at the same time distancing myself from it, and which absolves me of all guilt.[488]

Delisle complains about how different Jerusalem is in reality by comparison with that shown in city guides, saying 'I thought Jerusalem would be much more modern. It sure didn't look anything like this in the travel guides'.[489] A similar disillusionment happens albeit in a positive sense when he sees Ramallah for the first time: 'I'm quite surprised. I thought Ramallah would be a dead city, crippled by the conflict.'[490] (Fig. 80)

Although Joe Sacco often filters narrative information through his characters or interviewees, Guy Delisle employs this technique on only a few occasions. In other words, whereas Delisle mostly prefers to maintain his first-person point of view, Sacco frequently uses his characters' viewpoint, resorting to pathetic fallacy. For example, in *Footnotes in Gaza*, the narrator instantly changes from Sacco to an external character in the book:

Sacco (caption): When Hani returns, he has already calmed down.

---

[488] Tzvetan Todorov, 'The Journey and Its Narratives' in *The Morals of History*, trans. by Alyson Waters (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), pp. 60-70 (p.70).
[489] Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, p. 14.
[490] Ibid., p. 101.

Hani: It's not just a matter of you being here. They were climbing up to the window, and this is my private space.

Sacco (caption): During the first intifada, when Hani was in his mid-teens, he was jumped by an Israeli undercover unit while he was spray-painting slogans and shot seven times at close range. He's shown me the scars.

Hani: They took me by helicopter to an Israeli hospital. Not because they wanted to save me, but because they wanted information.

Sacco (caption): After he recovered, he was put in prison.

Hani: I was in a tiny room for days. They threw urine on me. And the interrogator would bang my head on the wall.

Sacco (caption): His story goes on and on… In the end, Hani tells me, he confessed to nothing.[491] (Fig. 81)

The narration here not only changes verbally, it changes visually as well. At the beginning of the conversation, they are in a room in the year when Sacco holds this interview, but when Hani starts to recount what happened to him in the past, Sacco graphically relates the incident in a gloomy atmosphere by using dark shading.

We see no such sudden change in graphics in *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the City*, even when Delisle changes the narrator who is talking about something that happened in the past. When Delisle comes back with Sebastien by car from Ramallah, Palestine, Sebastien tells his companion what happened to him on a previous occasion:

Sebastien: They pull you over. Once, I had to wait one and a half hours, the time it took to tell my superior to put the squeeze on the regional HQ for the soldier to let me through. Another time a female soldier, reeking of booze, aimed her rifle at me.

Delisle   : How come? What had you done?

Sebastien: Same thing. I didn't want to open the trunk.

Delisle   : And she was drunk?

Sebastien: Yup. That was close, though. Luckily, a guy from one of those private security services that watch over the checkpoints calmed her down.[492] (Fig. 82)

In *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, we see Guy Delisle in two different places or guises: one inside the story as a character, one in the captions as a narrator. In other words, there are two different focalizations in Delisle's graphic novel. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan defines focalization as follows:

The story is presented in the text through the mediation of some 'prism', 'perspective', 'angle of vision', verbalized by the narrator though not necessarily his. Following Genette (1972), I call this mediation 'focalization'.[493]

---

[491] Sacco, *Footnotes in Gaza*, pp.147-148.

[492] Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, pp. 232-233.

[493] Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 73.

According to Rimmon-Kenan, there are two different types of focalization: external and internal. An external focalizer is emotionally neutral and ideologically superior, benefiting from unrestricted knowledge, whereas an internal focalizer is emotionally engaged and ideologically inferior, having only limited knowledge. Here in this graphic novel, external focalization happens in the captions whereas the internal focalizer is Delisle himself as a character in the story. Delisle as an inner focalizer is caricatural and limited to the present in the story, while Delisle as an external focalizer is 'panchronic' and omniscient. We can also say that external focalization happens after Delisle has completed his journey, when with the benefit of hindsight he has become an erudite person. As he says in *Shenzhen*: 'If I draw all these anecdotes one day, it will probably look like I had a great time here.'[494]

Similarly Joe Sacco uses both external and internal focalization, but by comparison with Delisle, these focalizations are to be read as journalism. We never see Delisle holding interviews with people, taking notes and asking questions, whereas Sacco, as a true journalist and a protagonist in his graphic novels, is predominantly an internal focalizer.

Nevertheless I suggest reading Delisle's external focalization in *Jerusalem* as journalism. First, he does not miss an opportunity to learn, something he does unstintingly. His news sources are mostly experienced people who for years have worked for humanitarian aid organizations such as Médecins Sans Frontières, the United Nations, and the Red Cross. For this reason, it may also be said that Delisle's news sources are more credible than Joe Sacco's, which are generally just ordinary people. Secondly, Delisle cleverly tells his readers that even where there is an ongoing conflict, life still goes on, and people fight with other not-so-petty problems such as garbage collection, dirty and muddy roads, and traffic jams. Beyond this, he deftly shows that the conflict between two nation states affects youngsters' education and cultural level. For instance, when he asks the students at the Palestinian Al-Quds University about what comics they know, there are only two who know *Mad Magazine* and Garfield. However, when he puts the same question to Israeli students, their knowledge extends to Miller, Crumb, Schulz, Spiegelman, Moebius and even Delisle himself. Thirdly, throughout the book Delisle keeps us informed about the current news from the region, observing the chronology of events and mostly using indirect means. For instance, at the very beginning of the book, he watches the news on television which announces 'A series of rockets were launched from Gaza today. No causalities have been reported',[495] or passes on his wife's telephone call saying 'The Israeli

---

[494] Delisle, *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, p. 145.
[495] Delisle, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, p. 29.

Army is bombing Gaza this very instant. There's been nothing like it since 1948. More than eight planes flew out this morning'.[496]

In their recently updated version of the news value system originally conceived in 1965 by Galtung and Ruge, Paul Brighton and Dennis Foy suggest seven determining criteria of 'newsworthiness' instead of twelve.[497] If we compare the work of Kemal Gökhan Gürses, Joe Sacco and Guy Delisle with these criteria, we see that they all share the same characteristics, which are also the general characteristics of comics journalism:

- Relevance (The significance of an item to the viewer, listener or reader): All three authors are significant to the reader since they tell stories from the Middle East which has been a topic of front-line interest for years.
- Topicality (Is it new, current, immediately relevant?): None of the three authors produces work that is new, current or immediately relevant because it is impossible to be instantaneous with comics journalism.
- Composition (How a news item fits with the other items that surround it): Comics medium and journalism work very well together but it stays slower as it needs longer time to be artistically produced. Not that the delay greatly diminishes the interest of an item that focuses on a long-standing and complex trouble-spot like the Middle East.
- Expectation (Does the consumer expect to be told about this?): Despite the relatively unusual subject matter, readers' expectations regarding the content of these graphic novels are prepared by their cover illustration and title.
- Unusualness (What sets it apart from other events which are not reported?): The work of all three authors is unusual for telling what can be seen as an inside view in the region.
- Worth (Does it justify its appearance in the news?): Since all three authors present an alternative to the mainstream news media, their work of justifies itself as news journalism.
- External Influences (Is the content of a news item pure, or has it been corrupted by pressure from outside, such as a proprietor, an advertiser or politician?): Since all three authors produce books independently of the mainstream news media, they are relatively free of external influences, although they sometimes lack control over translations for foreign markets and are inevitably subject to the usual control of publishing houses.[498]

The essence of the matter is that Guy Delisle is a cultural reporter who gives considerable details about the lifestyle and culture of people of a city or country where he lives for a temporary period. Additionally, he claims that because of the location of the city, he does not have any option other than to produce journalism despite his denial noted above:

---

[496] Ibid., p. 158.

[497] Paul Brighton and Dennis Foy, *News Values* (London: Sage Publications, 2007). See also J. Galtung and M. Holmboe Ruge, 'The Structure of Foreign News. The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers', in *Journal of Peace Research*, 2 (1965), 64-91.

[498] Ibid., pp. 25-29.

Well, I have to agree, but that was not of my choice. It's because of the place. It was easier in Burma to say a few things about the place, and my friends and most people would learn something. For me that was good enough. I didn't want to go into detail, because then it gets very abstract. But for Israel it's different because most of the basic details are known, so I had to go further than that and explain more than anyone could know by reading the paper or just going there for a week. So I had to explain more, and more completely. I wanted to explain enough to give a good basis, but not so much that it would be just too tedious and too boring to my readers. It was quite a challenge, because when I came back home from Jerusalem, I thought, "Wow, there's no way I can do a book about that because it's too complicated." I spent my year talking with journalists who live there all the time, especially in East Jerusalem, and UN people and humanitarians, so I had a lot of stuff in my head about the conflict, but I couldn't fit them all in one book because it would be too big. I thought, "It's too complicated for me." And then I started the book with the first page with the first thing that happened to me when I was there and it went OK. I put everything I wanted to put in, knowing that I didn't want to do a thesis. I just wanted to do a pleasant comic book.[499]

Within comics journalism Joe Sacco represents the mainstream by focusing on a very specific, mostly historical topic and using traditional journalistic tools such as note taking, interviewing and recording. As for Kemal Gökhan Gürses, he occupies a place between fiction, reality and journalism with his fictitious character Ayşegül, who is arguably inspired by a real person.

4. National Identities

Asked for his thoughts on his (national) identity, defined by Zygmunt Bauman as 'the loudest talk in town, the burning issue on everybody's mind and tongue',[500] Delisle replies:

I am from Quebec, and when you are from Quebec, you are from the French part and you are part of Canada of course, but you don't really feel that you are part of Canada when you are in Quebec, but you feel it when you go outside the country actually. But you feel that you are from the French part of Canada and you have the English, you have the French, so we do not have deep roots for patriotism at least for the whole country. A lot of French Canadians have very strong patriotism roots for Quebec, but I do not really have that, either. And now that, I moved when I was twenty, I moved to France, and then you still have, and I have roots in France now, and I feel that I'm half French and half Canadian. So it is hard to feel patriotic when you have parts from different countries, because which one are you gonna choose? But I think if there would be like a basketball game, and there would be France against Canada, I would

[499] Guy Delisle, interviewed by Mike Rhode, *Washington City Paper*, 25 April 2012 <http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/blogs/artsdesk/visual-arts/2012/04/25/meet-a-visiting-cartoonist-a-chat-with-guy-delisle/> [accessed 11 June 2014]

[500] Zygmunt Bauman, *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), p. 17.

go for Canada. I would vote to them. So I guess, I am more patriotic in the Canadian worth. But I think that, if France were playing Canada in a basketball game, I would support Canada. So I guess, deep down I am more patriotic where the land of my birth is concerned.[501]

As George Herbert Mead says, humans understand who they are through interaction with others:

> The individual experiences himself as such, not directly, but only indirectly, from the particular standpoints of other individual members of the same social group, or from the generalized standpoint of the social group as a whole to which he belongs. For he enters his own experience as a self or individual, not directly or immediately, not by becoming a subject to himself, but only in so far as he first becomes an object to himself just as other individuals are objects to him or in his experience; and he becomes an object to himself only by taking the attitudes of other individuals toward himself within a social environment or context of experience and behaviour in which both he and they are involved.[502]

For this reason, in all of his graphic novels, in order to show his own identity, Delisle distinguishes himself from other people both graphically and textually by drawing himself in a very caricatural manner while depicting others more stereotypically. In *Pyongyang* he cannot make a close analysis of Korean culture as he is under constant surveillance by officers of the oppressive regime, which is the main reason why he fills his book with drawings of buildings and monuments instead. The situation in *Shenzhen* and *Burma* is not very different from that in *Pyongyang*, so that in none of these albums can Delisle give a good portrait of people's cultural identities.

While in his Asian trilogy Delisle uses stereotypical Asian faces, stereotyping would not work in *Jerusalem* as there are many Jews from different national backgrounds. As discussed in previous chapters, religion is an inseparable part of people's identity, which also shapes people's dressing styles. It is so important that just wearing a kippa (skullcap) is enough to make someone a Jew. When Delisle tries to see The Tomb of the Patriarchs and is asked by an Israeli soldier whether he is a Christian or Jewish, he shows his kippa and continues his way without any problem. (Fig. 83)

In the region, Muslim women may wear a scarf, a hijāb, niqāb or even a burqa, while Muslim men may don a thobe (long robe) or ghutra (square or rectangular head scarf). In addition to a kippa Hasidic Jewish men can wear a bekishe (long, black silk or polyester coat). As for the appropriate stereotypical garb worn by Christians, it varies depending on their churches and sects: Ethiopian Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic, Roman Catholic,

---

[501] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

[502] George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self and Society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*, ed. by Charles William Morris, 18th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972 [1934]), p. 138.

Greek Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox and Syriac Orthodox are drawn by Delisle in detail. (Fig. 84) Since, given the worldwide nature of their diaspora, Jews come from various parts of the globe including Russia, America and Europe, it is hard, at least at first, to guess their identities if they do not wear religious garments.

Having observed Israelis for a while, however, Delisle easily understands that people who carry assault rifles even to go jogging or visit the zoo are also Jews. There are nevertheless some rare situations in the book where Delisle cannot find out someone's identity. For instance, when Delisle walks around the Old City with the French comics artist Charles Berberian, they see a young woman whose identity is unknown since she bears 'no obvious sign of religious affiliation'. (Fig. 85)

As a Westerner influenced by the Judeo-Christian heritage, Delisle's vision of the Palestinian conflict is almost inevitably coloured by what Said calls Orientalism with its 'subtle and persistent Eurocentric prejudice against Arabo-Islamic peoples and their culture',[503] not that Delisle portrays Muslims as 'bad guys'. Possibly, he just does not want to touch Muslim sensibilities and taboos mostly because of bad examples such as the Danish cartoon crisis. When asked why he does not draw the face of Prophet Muhammad when he depicts him on the back of the horse with wings while ascending to the heaven, (Fig. 86) he said:

> I was worried because I know that it can be big trouble. Look at the movie about Noah. They are showing it right now, it has been banned in lots of Muslim countries because it portrays God somehow, and they do not like that over there. Yeah, I have managed to put the wing over his face, so I did not face any problems.[504]

However, in spite of the fact that he rejects prejudices, he follows orientalist stereotypes in *Jerusalem* because of the region's cosmopolitan and hybrid structure, as may be seen in his unvarying depiction of Muslim and Orthodox dress. Basically, he does not make an effort to understand and show his readers Islamic culture as much as he does for Judaism and Jews, even for Christians. As Edward Said says in his refutation of Samuel Huntington's notorious 'clash of civilizations' thesis,

> The basic paradigm of West versus the rest (the cold war opposition reformulated) remained untouched, and this is what has persisted, often insidiously and implicitly, in discussion since the terrible events of September 11. The carefully planned and horrendous, pathologically motivated suicide attack and mass slaughter by a small group of deranged militants has been turned into proof of Huntington's thesis. Instead of seeing it for what it is – the

---

[503] Said, *Orientalism,* p. 19.
[504] Delisle, interviewed by Kenan Kocak.

capture of big ideas (I use the word loosely) by a tiny band of crazed fanatics for criminal purposes – international luminaries from former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi have pontificated about Islam's troubles, and in the latter's case have used Huntington's ideas to rant on about the West's superiority, how "we" have Mozart and Michelangelo and they don't.[505]

First of all, Delisle's view of the region is prejudiced before he visits it. Jerusalem meets his expectation while Ramallah exceeds it. Secondly, he has preconceived mental stereotypes. For instance, when he finds traditional Scottish sweets, he guesses that a Scot lived in the flat before them and becomes totally convinced of it after finding a volume of Robert Burns. (Fig. 87) Throughout the book he maintains this stereotyping tendency. When he sees a middle-aged Muslim couple holding hands, he says 'Amazing! An Arab couple holding hands. That's a rare sight. They're so cute'. (Fig. 88) It is probable that he does not know that Islam allows husbands and wives to hold hands in public and knows only that Islam is a male-dominant religion. Thirdly, he does not give enough of a voice to Muslims. He tells every detail of Judaism from its rituals to its holy days; similarly, he portrays every kind of Christian priest from Armenian Apostolic to Coptic Orthodox; he visits churches and synagogues, he even tells the difference between the Samaritans and Jews, but he never goes to a mosque except for the Dome of the Rock, which he is admittedly not allowed to enter as a non-Muslim, he does not talk about all-important Muslim prayer and rituals. He cannot get accustomed to the adhan even in his second week in the Arab quarter and he feels disturbed by the motion-activated device over the front door of the apartment which plays a recorded surah (extract from the Koran) to greet visitors, (Fig. 89) although he is admittedly likewise critical of the traditional Jewish warrior's clarion or war-trumpet, which he dismisses as just an instrument that makes a ridiculous shrill sound. (Fig. 90) He portrays Ramadan as if it leaves Muslims tired and weak, and does not say a word about why Muslims fast. (Fig. 42) Yet he gives as many details as possible about the Jewish festival of Purim, which is also a time of fasting. (Fig. 91) He objects to a Muslim boy who tries to kiss his hand, which is a very typical way of showing respect to elders. (Fig. 92) He wants to see how Jewish men have fun in their Yeshiva parties where no women are allowed, (Fig. 93) but he finds a Muslim wedding very strange as there is no girl in sight. (Fig. 94) He does not attempt to seek, let alone succeed in finding, a Muslim friend to learn more about Islam, he is surrounded by non-governmental organization professionals most of whom are not Muslim. As Jimmy Johnson says,

---

[505] Said, 'The Clash of Ignorance'.

Delisle is first and foremost informed about Palestine and Palestinians by the European expatriates – NGO employees, journalists and diplomats – and Israelis he encounters rather than by Palestinians (15, 17, 32-33, 38-41, 73, et al.). He takes this to an (unintentionally) absurdist level in his four tours of the southern West Bank city of Hebron. The first is with a European guide and Palestinian driver from MSF (116-121), the second with a French woman living in Hebron (189-90), the third with the left-wing Israeli group Shovrim Shtika ("Breaking the Silence," 281-286) and the last with right-wing Israeli settlers (305-312). Four tours of a Palestinian city and only in the first are Palestinians allowed to even participate somewhat in telling their own story. Gayatri Spivak famously asked, "Can the subaltern speak?" Delisle mostly answers this "No". This is both an ethical failure and an insightful look at how people - especially though not exclusively from the Global North - learn about Palestine and the Palestinian liberation struggle without hearing from Palestinians.[506]

He pushes any questions he may have about Islam to the back of his mind instead of finding the answers. For instance, he remarks about a Muslim woman he sees often:

I often see a neighbour who goes out covered head to foot. She even wears gloves. I don't know how she puts up with it in this heat. And whenever I see her, I always wonder: Why not go all the way and wear dark glasses too? (Fig. 95)

Additionally, his apparent lack of interest in Islam leads to misconceptions. He is surprised to see a Muslim who has a dog because he thinks that 'Muslims aren't too fond of dogs. Traditionally, they're considered impure'.[507] But, by impure, it is meant that it is not hygienic to have a dog inside the house but quite permissible for Muslims to have dogs as long as they keep them outdoors. To cite another example, throughout the book he constantly confuses the veil with the scarf, as many European French do.[508] Whereas a veil covers at least some part of the face, usually leaving only the eyes visible, a scarf does leave the face open. So, Delisle should have used the correct term scarf instead of the veil.

The problems in Delisle's portrayal of national identities discussed in this section are epitomized in a frame which shows that *Jerusalem* is a North-American reading of Palestine, as Johnson again notes

He [Delisle] starts his first trip to West Jerusalem with a panel titled "Going West" illustrated with a horse-drawn covered wagon (23). The horse-drawn

---

[506] Jimmy Johnson, 'Guy Delisle's "Jerusalem": Peering Through the Veil of Orientalism', *Truth-Out*, 8 September 2012 <http://truth-out.org/opinion/item/11231-guy-delisles-jerusalem-peering-through-the-veil-of-orientalism?tmpl=component> [accessed 14 June 2014]

[507] Delisle, Jerusalem : Chronicles from the Holy City, p. 150.

[508] Ibid., pp. 48, 62, 136, 218. See Véronique Maurus, 'Voile ou foulard?', *Le Monde*, 19 February 2010 ('Idées' section) <http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2010/02/19/voile-ou-foulard-par-veronique-maurus_1308488_3232.html> [accessed 20 September 2014]

covered wagon is an archetypical image from the European settler colonization of Turtle Island and its eventual transformation into North America. It's hard to think of a better image to show leaving the indigenous Palestinian area and heading to the Israeli settler society in West Jerusalem. Delisle arrives in West Jerusalem and notices immediately the infrastructural disparity between Palestinians and Israelis. "Ah! Real sidewalks," he drawls, "Ah! An outdoor café!" (25). The public parks and "garbage cans that aren't overflowing" starkly contrast with East Jerusalem's "nonexistent sidewalks, cratered roads" and other infrastructural poverty that "didn't look anything like [the Jerusalem of] the travel guides," (14). He bonds with Nikolai, a Danish expat, over contempt for the East Jerusalem infrastructure while walking with his children one evening. "It isn't much of a neighbourhood, is it?" says Nikolai as he looks around. "There's trash everywhere!" As Nikolai, Delisle and the children walk together, Delisle notes, "We hit it off instantly." (34).[509]

In all of his above-mentioned graphic novels, Delisle both graphically and textually differentiates himself from others. Whereas he draws himself more in the manner of a cartoon, the character he disguised in the narrative maintains a neglectful and unconcerned attitude. For this reason arguably Delisle's incuriousness with regard to Muslim identities is a part of the naïf character he creates for himself. As Wayne Booth states in his noteworthy book *The Rhetoric of Fiction*,

> As [the writer] writes, he creates not simply an ideal, impersonal 'man in general' but an implied version of 'himself' that is different from the implied authors we meet in other men's works. […] However impersonal he may try to be, his reader will inevitably construct a picture of the official scribe who writes in this manner — and of course that official scribe will never be neutral toward all values. Our reactions to his various commitments, secret or overt, will help to determine our response to the work.[510]

As for our response to this narrative ploy, Delisle may want us to read his incuriousness as a total reflection of the Western ignorance towards Islam and Muslim identity, in a similar way to Joe Sacco, who wants to draw attention to people's ignorance to the killings of Palestinians by instantly showing the brutal sacrifice of a bull for the feast for nine pages.[511] Additionally, a character utters the function of this part as 'We make a sacrifice of the bulls, and [Ariel] Sharon makes a sacrifice of us'.[512]

---

[509] Jimmy Johnson, 'Guy Delisle's "Jerusalem": Peering Through the Veil of Orientalism'.

[510] Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983 [1961]), pp. 70-71.

[511] Sacco, *Footnotes in Gaza*, pp. 137-50.

[512] Ibid., p. 139. In an interview Joe Sacco tells why he includes this scene in the book:

There's an early scene in which a bull's being taken out, and he's basically given the coup de grâce in the street, and that made my head swim. I've never seen anything like that. It was very difficult to watch. I mean, I was queasy. I wanted to confront the reader with those images, but then show the reason for it. I mean, it's shocking if you're a Westerner, seeing kids with blood on their hands, and putting them up and making blood prints on the wall. It was for me. My nephew would have keeled over and fainted, you know, if he'd seen something like that. But I want to show it, and also that there's a tradition behind it. A number of families

5. Conclusion

With his unique style and graphic technique, which is based on his experience in animation and humorous storytelling, Delisle expertly combines travel writing, journalism and the medium of comics in his books. He has become one of the most high profile comics artists of our age thanks to his production of works on the hard-to-reach, exotic countries of the world or its conflict zones.

In his last graphic novel *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, he makes a contribution as an external to our understanding of the region by giving a view from within. His cultural reporting also helps us to read the book as a journalistic piece which hides his skills in narration and comics. He is a good observer and tries to tell or draw whatever he sees with his own eyes or hears from other people without claiming any professional responsibility such as that of being a journalist or a reporter.

In a region where three major religions, Judaism, Islam and Christianity, coexist in constant tension with each other, by creating a naïve character in an unreliable narration in *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, Guy Delisle pretends not to give enough space to Muslims whereas adequately reflecting Jewish side of the Holy City in order to imply the general verdict against Muslims in the West.

---

have bought this bull together, they're working on it together. They all have to share in the butchering of the animal. Whether they know how to do that or not, they're still all participating. Then they divide the meat and give a third of the meat to the poor. What starts as sort of a hard event to watch ends up being part of a tradition. I was showing how people are still hanging on to things despite what's going on. It matters to them to keep that tradition going, and to do it in the right way.
Joe Sacco, interviewed by Hilary Chute.

CONCLUSION

As studies on comics journalism has mostly focused on Joe Sacco, other names in this field have not been given sufficient attention, and comics journalism has generally been understood as the comic narratives produced by the journalist Joe Sacco. For this reason, I wanted to show that there are other names in this field, and have tried to put comics journalism into a theoretical framework.

Within this framework, I looked at how national identities are represented in comics journalism. For a deeper focus, I chose the Middle East as my research field, and analysed graphic novels written on the region. To give a more specific point, I chose two graphic novels by two authors from different backgrounds in order to see how they represent national identities in their comics journalism works.

The first one of these authors is Kemal Gökhan Gürses from Turkey. With his graphic novel *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini*, I tried to give a look at the region from within and show how he uses comics journalism as a response to war. As he is nearly unknown in the English speaking world, this present work offers a glimpse of Turkish comics journalism as well as a brief history of comics in Turkey.

The second author was Quebecois Guy Delisle. With his last graphic novel *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City*, I approached he Middle East from outside of the region and wanted to show how comics journalism can work as cultural reportage. As he is a much under-publicised figure in comics studies, I have contextualised his previous graphic novels.

I analysed comics journalism by comparing it with journalistic aspects together with the new journalism movement of the 1960s and 1970s. I found that comics journalism is indeed a literary journalism like new journalism which stands somewhere between art and journalism. I also looked at the reasons that gave rise to new journalism and comics journalism and recognized that the September 11 attacks appears to be the reason behind the rise of comics journalism. I claimed that comics journalism functions as an alternative to mainstream journalism to show what is not seen there in a manner akin to the way the new journalism did after the Vietnam War.

I argued that the roots of comics journalism could be found in the *Glasgow Looking Glass* of 1825 whereas Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle were the two who created today's understanding of comics journalism. After them, Joe Sacco became the populariser of comics journalism thanks to his coverage of the Palestinian issue and Bosnian War.

Moreover this study shows that there is no necessity to be trained or educated in journalism to be a comics journalist.

I found that stereotypes played a key role to give a picture of the relationship between comics and national identities, and showed how Muslim stereotypes changed in comics after 9/11 which led me to argue that negative Muslim stereotypes are very rare in comics journalism. Additionally and interestingly it appeared that artists, regardless of their backgrounds, use the same stereotypes when they draw Middle Easterners and in particular Arabs. As religion and nationalism are intermingled with each other in the Middle East, it becomes nearly impossible to ignore this fact, thus they employed Islam as a part of their narratives.

I put forward that Kemal Gökhan Gürses' protagonist Ayşegül is the first genuine war journalist in comics journalism. Her identity also proved how women become non-gendered in war zones.

Guy Delisle proved that comics journalism is also a form related to autobiography and travel writing. I argued that to produce comics journalism, an artist does not have to chase news, s/he can use his/her own observations to collect information which actually creates more trustworthy news.

To conclude this study, it is worthwhile outlining the manner in which this thesis might inform other areas of inquiry. An obvious albeit important point is that although this research project has focused on the Middle East, its theoretical framework can be applied elsewhere.

As this study is multi-disciplinary, it makes further research possible. Firstly, rather than dealing exclusively with the Middle East, it would be possible to provide an overview of the relationship between comics journalism and national identities generally since comics journalism is a growing area and and new titles emerge daily deailing with not only wars or conflicts but also other issues. *Edible Secrets: A Food Tour of Classified US History*[513] which takes food as a theme to investigate successive U.S governments by studying over 500,000 classified documents including the usage of American doughnuts for international intelligence and how the U.S. government wanted to poison Fidel Castro. Josh Neufeld warns us against global warming by taking Hurricane Katrina that struck Louisiana on 29 August 2005 into account in *A.D. New Orleans after the Deluge*.[514] *The*

---

[513] Michael Hoerger and Mia Partlow, *Edible Secrets: A Food Tour of Classified US History* (Bloomington: Microcosm Publishing, 2010).

[514] Josh Neufeld, *A.D. New Orleans after the Deluge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2009).

Influencing Machine: Brooke Gladstone on the Media[515] questions the trustworthiness of the media with an inside look by the journalist Brooke Gladstone. Among comics journalists who produce mostly short and online works, one can include: Matt Bors,[516] who mentions both American domestic and foreign problems; Susie Cagle,[517] who mostly talks about social issues within the U.S.; Patrick Chappate,[518] who deals with conflict zones like Guatemala, Myanmar, Ossetia, Lebanon, Gaza, Beijing, Iran and Japan and Hanoi; and Gianluca Costantini,[519] who has covered several countries in his works. Additionally, *Best of Enemies: A History of US and Middle East Relations* investigates the long history of the U.S. and Middle East relations in two volumes.[520] These works may lead to further research in comics journalism.

Secondly, the study of the Muslim– or specifically Turkish – stereotypes in certain Western or Turkish comics could be expanded to European comics generally. For instance, two potentially interesting works to study in this connection which focus on approximately the same historical period would be the first four volumes of Jean Dufaux and Ana Mirallès *Djinn*,[521] which take the last ten years of the Ottoman Empire (1909-1918) as a theme, and Hugo Pratt's *La Casa Dorata di Samarcanda* (The Golden House of Samarkand),[522] a part of the *Corto Maltese* series, which travels from the west to the east of Turkey.

Thirdly, the relationship between comics journalism, autobiography and travel writing may be a topic for further exploration. Fourthly, the study of everyday events, mentioned in the chapter on Delisle, can be extended to cover other comics, e.g. the works of Tommi Musturi and Etienne Davadeau. This has already been done to some degree with reference to the work of Chris Ware, but other possibilities are seemingly boundless.

---

[515] Brooke Gladstone and Josh Neufeld, *The Influencing Machine: Brooke Gladstone on the Media* (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011).

[516] Matt Bors, 'Can We Stop Worrying about Millennials Yet?', in *CNN.com* <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/07/09/opinion/bors-millenial-comic-strip/index.html?hpt=op_t1> [accessed 26 September 2014]; 'Afghan Life', six chapters, in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/1> [accessed 26 September 2014].

[517] Susie Cagle, 'Down in Smoke', in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/icomic/44> [accessed 26 September 2014]; 'The Art of Peace', in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/16> [accessed 26 September 2014]; 'San Francisco's Class War, By the Numbers: Counting the new tech boom', in *Medium.com* <https://medium.com/the-nib/san-franciscos-class-war-by-the-numbers-700c51a43a4> [accessed 26 September 2014].

[518] Please see his website: <http://www.bdreportage.com/en/> [accessed 26 September 2014].

[519] Please see his website: <http://www.gianlucacostantini.com/> [accessed 26 September 2014].

[520] David B. and Jean-Pierre Filiu, *Best of Enemies: A History of US and Middle East Relations: Part One: 1783-1953*, trans. by Edward Gauvin (London: Self Made Hero, 2012 [2011]); *Best of Enemies: A History of US and Middle East Relations: Part Two: 1953-1984*, trans. by Edward Gauvin (London: Self Made Hero, 2014 [2013]).

[521] Jean Dufaux and Ana Mirallès, *Djinn* (Paris: Dargaud, 2001-).

[522] Hugo Pratt, *La Casa Dorata di Samarcanda* (Roma: Rizzoli & Lizard, 1980).

Lastly and most importantly, the section on the history of comics in Turkey could be a topic for further research as there has been no in-depth study of Turkish comics in English. As visual narratives in Turkey are a vast untouched area, there are many possible research topics in this field, e.g. Ottoman humorous magazines such as the pioneering *Diyojen*, mentioned in this thesis, but also *Hayal* (Dream), *Kahkaha* (Laughter), *Latife* (*Joke*). Further research could have several areas of focus: firstly, magazines published in the early modern Turkish Republic such as *Diken* (Thorn) and *Akbaba* (Vulture); secondly, the *Gırgır* tradition, which still persists with new weekly magazines such as *Leman*, *Penguen*, *Uykusuz*; and thirdly, comic books published in Turkey including series like *Karaoğlan*, *Tarkan*, and those mentioned in passing in the thesis like *Zombistan*, *Deli Gücük* and *Seyfettin Efendi ve Olağanüstü Maceraları*.

APPENDIX I

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW WITH GUY DELISLE

CONDUCTED IN ENGLISH, 23/04/2014[523]

KENAN KOCAK: What does producing or creating *bande dessinée*, or comics, mean to you? Why do you produce? Why do you do comics?

GUY DELISLE: Well, that's a big question. Because I like to draw and I like to tell stories, and I was working in animation, [where] for me, after a certain point I felt frustrated because it was not my drawing, it was not my ideas, it was not my design. And at the same time, I was doing my own short stories for magazines and I really enjoyed doing my own stories, my own design. I always thought about that when I was young. I always read comics and I found the opportunities to do short stories and I was thinking I would do that as long as I can, and then it became bigger stories and it became books. And it all moved gradually. I didn't start doing drawings. One day at my table thinking, 'Oh, I am going to do books and publish them', I just started with an idea for short stories and I had seen a magazine that was doing some independent stuff, and I thought maybe that magazine is going to like what I do. So, yeah, it goes down to because I like it.

KK: When did you decide to switch from animation to comics? Exactly which year, do you remember it? Was it after *Shenzhen*?

GD: No, by the time I did *Shenzhen* I was already doing comics. *Shenzhen* was in '97. I guess I started to do short stories around '95. Because when I came back from Shenzhen, I thought, 'Oh, maybe I can do a few short stories with the stuff that happened to me in China', and then it became the first part of *Shenzhen*. It was not planned to be a book. I was doing short stories before that, so I would say, yeah, around '93, '94, '95.

KK: Now you have settled down into the south of France after having been to various 'dangerous' places worldwide, how do you feel? Do you not miss those days? Are you happy with your current life?

GD: No, I don't miss those days. It was very nice to do it when it was possible to do it. And I have the feeling that I fulfilled that part of travelling a lot. For me, it was more of a family reason to stop, because the kids were a bit bigger and we knew we wouldn't do that for our lives. So, it was the time for us to stop and it was a good time, because everybody

---

is happy with that situation – me, my wife, my children, not to travel anymore! And yes, we did it, and it was a good time to do it, and for me, actually doing four books about travelling was enough because doing a fifth one would have been too much, I think. Maybe when I get old, I'll have some very interesting experience, and I might do one. But now, it's very nice for me to do different books because it's nice to do comics and it's nice to change and have different styles. So, yeah, that's a big freedom. If you keep doing always the same type of books, you can lose that freedom potential you have in comic books.

KK: But please don't give up producing graphic novels, because we really look forward to reading another *Jerusalem*, *Shenzhen* or *Pyongyang*.

GD: Thanks! I am still doing a kind of autobiography. Because I do the books with my children, you know, the one about being a father.

KK: *The Neglectful Parents*.

GD: So, this is some kind of autobiography, except it is not on travelling, it is more on everyday life.

KK: Yes, absolutely. I have read the first volume, but I believe the second one has not been translated into English?

GD: No, they are translating right now, so they are going to release it in a few months, I guess.

KK: How far do you feel that your training as a film animator has affected your production of graphic novels or comics albums, especially given their references to your animation work? How do you feel the connection between them?

GD: Well, I have been thinking about that recently, and I think that when you do animation, especially as an animator, I was not doing storyboards. Of course, if I was working on storyboards, it would be easy to think that once you do a storyboard, then you switch to a comic book. But I was an animator, so I have spent my time trying to work on the movement. And one thing you do when you are an animator is you have to observe. So, I think that is one thing I have learned from doing animation. You have to observe movements, but I have observed . . . more than that, I think. When I travel, I look at small details, I think this comes from animation, and when you are an animator, you have to learn to design the movement in different parts, like the anticipation, the movement as the second part, and then the rest, and you really have to work on that. I think I have applied the same system to a narration, to a storytelling narration, for which you have to have different parts where you start the story. I think this system of observing and observing movement, I have put that into my life as an observer. And I have put that into my storytelling as well.

KK: And I think that your training in animation has affected works such as *Albert and the Others* and *Aline and the Others*. We see the effect of your training as an animator in these two books, I think, because you are trying to exceed the boundaries of the comics. What do you think about this?

GD: Yes, it really is about a link between the movement and comic books. And it came right after I was doing animation. When I was doing animation I was thinking, maybe we could use the movement in some stories to try to describe just a moment in one page or so. I was thinking, you know, it would be nice to shrink time or compress time on just one page or have the time, for example, a year, passing from one image to another one, very quickly or very slowly. So I played with that in my short stories. I have it in one of my first short stories: I have a whole life passing in two pages; the character is saying one letter and the whole letter makes the sentence of life pass so quickly! You have that sentence to show the two pages of a life. And so I was playing with time and I was thinking when I was an animator that we could do that in the comic book. When I had the chance to do short stories I was thinking, 'Oh, I am going to try to do like a short film', because all these short stories could be short animation films, basically.

KK: Yes, definitely, and you did it really successfully, I think.

GD: Thanks. And I have also used that method afterwards. It is a very good exercise to do a story with no text because you realise you can actually see a lot of things, and I did the same thing when I was in Burma. I had to describe these movements where we were tourists and we were going to this nice place, but I did not want to talk about how nice it was, and I decided to use that technique where you have all very quick, small images, and so for me it is like a narration tool that I have developed. I applied it fifteen years later in *Burma Chronicles* because I thought, 'Yes, that is a good solution as a narration to tell what I want but quickly, with no details.'

KK: There are some differences between the French and English editions of your graphic novels. In English translations, they added subtitles, for example, when it is just *Shenzhen* in French, in English it is *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, or *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea*, and especially your last graphic novel, *Chroniques de Jérusalem*, was published with the addition of the words 'Holy City'. I see them as a bit problematic because these subtitles allow us to read your comics only as travelogues or chronicles. And the words 'Holy City' are a bit confusing. Whose Holy City is Jerusalem? Muslims? Jews? Or Christians? What do you think about this?

GD: Well, it is something that I do not really have control over. It is the publisher, the English publisher. I remember, he told me about Pyongyang, he said, 'We have to add a

subtitle because in the United States, nobody knows what Pyongyang is, and if we do not add a subtitle people are not going to know that it is in Korea.' So they really wanted to underline, to make a statement that it was somewhere in North Korea. So I thought at length, you know, and said, 'If you think it is best, I do not really mind actually', because for me, I do not see the translation, I see one book and then they are gone and so I leave, I trust the publisher and if they do not want to put a certain colour on the cover, usually I go with them and that applies to the rest as well. So, for *Shenzhen*, they did *Shenzhen* after they added the subtitle on *Pyongyang*. And they said, 'We are going to put a subtitle on *Shenzhen*, one which says *Travelogue in China* or something like that.' So they did the same for *Jerusalem: The Holy City*. Well, the city is holy for the three religions. They do not change a lot by putting that. Because it is actually three times holy: it is holy for the Muslims, it is holy for the Christians and it is holy for the Jews. So, I think that the 'Holy City' can fit to the three major religions that are there. So, for me, I do not really control that, and it is a bit up to them if they want to put that on the title. I have put all the translations of my books on my blog. I have one in Czech and there is a subtitle on it. I just have no idea what the subtitle means, really.

KK: And they have changed the front covers of your books as well.

GD: Yes, they keep changing. Not so much for *Jerusalem*, because I did try to control the one for *Jerusalem* and try to say, 'Well, enough of all these changes, I would like to keep the cover I have done.' But it is really hard to do that because sometimes, for instance, in Asia, there is one cover that is very strange in Taiwan, I think. We do not have a lot of control. They just send the book and we say we do not like it and then you do not hear from them. Well, I do not think about that so much. So, after that, I guess they just really adapt them, that is it. But, for some reason, publishers sometimes have a collection. So they have to fit the graphics to put into the collection, which is not such a good idea. And sometimes they just want to change the drawing for, I do not know for what reason, they do not like the cover. It is a bit like movies and their posters. They keep changing in every country, I do not know why.

KK: And also in English translations, the location that you are going to be is shown on the map, but we don't see it in French editions. Is it the same selling strategy?

GD: No, I forgot to put them in French once [laughs]. They forgot to put the map in. And when I realised that, I said, 'Wow', you know. For *Jerusalem*, especially in France, I think most people know more or less where it is. And within the book I have a lot of small maps and I think that is OK. And I thought after a while, it is going to be a problem, but since it

was with the book, I guess the other countries received the whole file. They did not forget the first page and they put it in the book.

KK: As far as I know, in one of your interviews, you said that you do not read or undertake any research about the country where you will be living for a while. Why do you prefer this? How does it affect your life there? Do you prefer to learn by experiencing your daily life?

GD: There is a bit of that. It depends, it is different for every country. Before going to China, twenty years ago, I was a much younger person. And I did not read about the country, I just wanted to see China: I was very excited to go there. When I came back, I read a lot of books about China, the history of China, the revolution [Cultural Revolution] and all that stuff. I thought it was fascinating. And then, for Pyongyang, I read beforehand. I read as many books as I could, because I knew that before going there, once I was there, if I asked a question, they would give me the answer that pleased them. And I thought, 'Well, I am going to read as much as I can. So, I will know about the country and I will be able to ask them questions, and know the answer that we have here, to see what they say so as to compare.' For Burma, it was different. We were going there for a year and I thought, 'Well, once I am there, I am going to be surrounded by the people that work in MSF [Médecins Sans Frontières] and they have been there for years; they know the whole country very well.' And that is what happened. I was there for a year. I met journalists, I met people from the UN, from the Red Cross, and they knew the country very well, and some of them knew it really well. And some of them had actually met [Burmese opposition leader] Aung San Suu Kyi, and some of them had been there for eight years. And they knew the country very well. And the same thing happened in Jerusalem. I did not know much about the country. We only knew one month before we left that we were going to Jerusalem. So, there was not much I could do in one month. And I looked at a few pictures and I thought it looked nice and we would see how it was there. And the same again, once I was there, I was there for a year. I could not spend the year reading books about the country. I did read a few while I was there. I read the books people advised me to read. I was with lots of friends; some of them were journalists, from the UN [United Nations] and from the Red Cross. And they knew the country very well as well.

KK: And you also learned many things from them in Jerusalem? From the people who work for Médecins Sans Frontières and the other organisations?

GD: Yeah, and the UN, the Red Cross, some of them were journalists from famous English newspapers and they knew the country very well. And I was learning on my own by just walking around and looking at stuff, but sometimes I was thinking how come this works

like this here, how come you need papers to go there, and they would know and they would say, 'Oh, it is because this was granted there and they decided to do it this way because blah blah blah . . .' In this way it would be very quick to get information.

KK: In my thesis, I am writing a chapter on nationalism and national identities, and their interaction with graphic novels. What does nationalism or national identity mean to you?

GD: Oh, for me, like my nationality is Canadian, which I still feel.

KK: What do you think about nationalism or patriotism?

GD: Oh, patriotism. Indeed, I do not hold this value very strongly. Probably because I am from Quebec and when you are from Quebec, you are from the French part and you are part of Canada, of course, but you don't really feel that you are part of Canada when you are in Quebec, but you feel it when you go outside the country. But you feel that you are from the French part of Canada. We have the English and the French [Canadians], so we do not have deep roots for patriotism, at least not for the whole country. A lot of French Canadians have very strong patriotic roots for Quebec, but I do not really have that either. And given that I moved when I was twenty – I moved to France – and have roots in France now, I feel that I'm half French and half Canadian. So it is hard to feel patriotic when you have parts from different countries, because which one are you going to choose? But I think if there were, for example, a basketball game, and it was France against Canada, I would go for Canada. I would give my vote to them. So I guess, I am more patriotic for the Canadian side.

KK: Actually, Quebec identity is my next question. Does that Quebecois identity affect the way you portray other national identities?

GD: Well, of course, when you are from a minority – because Quebec is a minority in North America – well, then you tend to see the other minorities in that perspective. Coming to France, you look at the language in the south of France, and you have to think about whether you are going to learn that language, since if you are in Quebec the English speakers have to learn French, so you do have a reaction like that because you have been in that situation. So I guess this also gives a perspective in countries like Burma, there are so many minorities right now, there is actually a lot of trouble with all the islands, where very small minorities are having a very tough time. It is surprising that Burma is doing that to these minorities, now that it is a much freer country. I have this kind of reaction, I don't know, maybe because I am Canadian and it is a minority, but I guess it is a part of my culture.

KK: How do you use visual and verbal irony to reflect national differences? How do you depict nationalities in your comics? For example, how can you show people from different

religions in Jerusalem? Or how do you distinguish yourself or Europeans in your *Shenzhen*, *Burma* or *Pyongyang*? How do you achieve this?

GD: In Burma, it was easy to draw Burmese people, because if you draw a guy, you have the Asian face and you can really portray that easily, as with all the Asian countries, it is easy to draw the people because they have a distinct face. Especially in Burma, the guys were all wearing those long skirts; it was easy to show it was a Burmese person. The context helped a lot because if I go outside on the street in Burma, people know that I am going to meet someone from outside the country, that it is going to be a foreigner. So the context helped a lot to explain that. In Jerusalem, it was different because in Jerusalem, I could be mistaken for a local person, I remember people would talk to me in Hebrew. Because they have so many different roots, I mean European, they all have very different faces. So, I needed to specify that in this context but not to explain them. I don't really have to explain.

KK: Could we say that you follow national stereotypes, or Oriental stereotypes, for *Jerusalem*?

GD: There were no Oriental stereotypes for *Jerusalem*. That's one thing. They look like Europeans, so there were no Asians, and some of them are red-haired and they have blue eyes, so apart from that, if you want to draw an Orthodox Jew, then it is easy because with the black hat and the long beard that they have, it is going to be the guys like that, and it's mostly with the way they dress. I would depict the ladies that are wearing long dress and the veil like the Muslim ladies, and it was easy to know where they are from, in my neighbourhood they all look[ed] like that. They all wear the headscarf and the long dress. And so, yes, for the foreigner it was easy. It is just like when you travel, if I go to Turkey, which is quite European, and I were to draw the people, you would know that they are all Turkish, and they can be tourists as well, but that is not really my problem. I mean, if I am taking a picture I do not really have to know who are in front of the camera. I just take a picture of the country and I will draw the people in front of me without knowing where they are from. Some of them can be just tourists, I do not mind.

KK: Have you ever been to Turkey?

GD: I have been, but from Israel. Actually, I have been on a very quick travel visit just to Antalya, which is a very touristic area. And we really needed to have a relaxing time, having been in Israel for half of a year. And we had a discount deal which was just next to the ocean and it was just relaxing and very nice. And the people were just fantastic. The children loved it as well. It is good. It is fantastic. I would like to go to Turkey.

KK: In *Jerusalem*, I recognised that you did not draw the face of the Prophet Muhammad when you drew him on the horse.

GD: I was worried because I know that it can be big trouble. Look at the movie about Noah. They are showing it right now, it has been banned in lots of Muslim countries because it portrays God somehow, and they do not like that over there. Yeah, I have managed to put the wing over his face, so I did not face any problems.

KK: My other questions will be about comics journalism, because I am writing a chapter on comics journalism. What do you think about comics journalism? As far as I know, you say that you do not do journalism like Joe Sacco does. But I analyse your works as comics journalism, because I believe that your works are more journalistic than Joe Sacco's. The only difference between you and Joe Sacco is your style: Joe Sacco draws very realistically, and you use basic and clear lines, and behind them we see a very realistic depiction of the environment. We can learn very specific things from Sacco, such as the massacre that happened in the past in *Footnotes in Gaza*, for which it was very hard for him to find people still alive who could talk about it; we also learn very many things from your books thanks to your experience, your daily experience. And I personally think your journalism is actually better, because you are just showing us what you see. What do you think about this? Can we call you a comics journalist?

GD: I do not know. I do not feel like a journalist. Joe Sacco is a journalist. He goes to Gaza; he knows what he is going to do, he knows he is going to work on 1956 somewhere in Gaza. He works with archives and all that. But me, I do not even know if I am going to do a book, or I go to Jerusalem because I was travelling with my wife, but I thought I would take notes. If anything interesting comes up during the year, if I can work on a book I do not know how far I could go. If something happens which is very exciting in a country, I do not think I am going to go there. I had the chance to see some of the fighting over Gaza during the war when we were there. And of course a journalist would go there; my friend asked me if I wanted to go and I said, 'I do not feel like watching these poor guys dying with F16 bombs', so I did not go. That was not a very journalistic reaction. But it is true that I put some information in: sometimes it's just information like when I explain what the Dome of the Rock represents, and I explained some religious stuff, so that part is more pedagogic, it is like teaching, so I have a bit of that. Then I like to mix that with everyday life, my life, so the people know what kind of guy you are, what kind of life you have when you are in Jerusalem and what kind of stuff you get to see, with the people you meet and from the people that are not very pleasant with you, and all the religions I have met. So, this is not so much journalism. This is more like daily life. It is a diary. And for me, when I

do that, I do not feel like I am doing journalism. I really feel that I am doing something like a long postcard that I would send to my family to explain to them, because there is some explanation needed here and there, such as what the situation is, what I saw while I was there, everything which is funny, strange for me or interesting. I put them in the book according to my notes, of course, it is everything I have just seen there. So that's why for me it's much more, as someone said once, more like anthropologists would do, which I kind of agree [with] because I go outside and I take very small details and with these small details after a year you have pictures of the whole thing. But I can look at the garbage and think, 'Wow, we do not do that the same way here and why do they put bread on the outside of the garbage can', and just with these small observations I like to explain the bigger thing somehow. And I think this is more observation. You try to do it on your own. But I do not try to do all the analysis. I leave the analysis to the reader. I just present the stuff I have seen and from that, you can make up your own mind. That is the good thing about comics. I can just show and I do not have to say, 'They do not look at the poor Palestinians they are going to shoot', terrible, which is true, everybody can agree with that. But if you write it, it does not have the same impact, and if you just show what it is to go to a checkpoint, you say nothing, you just show the way it is, and everybody will go, 'Wow. This is a little bit crazy.' And you do not have to say it, and I think it is better.

KK: Do you think that comics journalism can be an alternative journalism to show the things that it is not possible to see in mainstream journalism? For example, your *Pyongyang* is still one of the few works showing life inside North Korea. Do you think comics journalism can be an alternative?

GD: Well, the problem with comics journalism is it takes a long time and today journalism, with Internet, you have to go very, very quickly; sometimes too quickly. But for something like *Pyongyang*, that kind of reportage is different because I was in the perfect situation, I was able to remember and draw, and this would not have been possible with a camera or with a movie camera. There is no way I would have been able to show all that, but with comics it was perfect. I could just remember touring that museum and then I could just read it, read my notes and remember it and draw it, and for that drawing was perfect and I guess unique because there is no [other] way you could do that; you can do text, but it is different. I have read books about people who have been there, but to be able to show what you think somehow, that was very different, and for that I guess it was a unique way to do it because of Pyongyang. In most of the other countries you do not have that, you can take pictures, but for that one especially it was very useful.

KK: Why did you decide to use colours in *Jerusalem*?

GD: Because I had the opportunity to do it, because the other books were all planned to be with a small publishing house and they cannot afford to do colour. But *Jerusalem*, I knew from the start that would be with a bigger one, and they said we can do colour and I knew that it would not be too expensive. Even though it is 300 pages I would do colour. But it would not be too expensive. So I thought, 'Well, I would like to have a few colours.' I did not use many.

KK: Especially for maps and exclamations you use colours.

GD: Yeah, for sound. And it really comes out. But Jerusalem is a very monochromatic city because they use the same stones. They have to, they have no choice. And it all comes out. It is like beige everywhere. So that's what I wanted to represent with the colours.

KK: Yes, and, for example, you use red to depict the gunshot or you use yellow to show people shouting. How do you choose them? Why did you use, for example, red for gunshot and yellow for shouting?

GD: Well, it is something you do in comics. In children's comics, for example, there is some violent scene, there is some action or gunshot, and they put the whole image in red and I used to have to just do sound. That is frustrating. In comic books you do not have sound; you just write the sounds in words, but it has never really, really worked. So with a little splash of colour, especially when it is a gun, red is like a violent colour. So I thought, you know, I did not invent that, I just used what I have seen, and throughout the book you have just a few spots when it was like a shocking sound or something like that, yelling, and I just look at it and then on the page it looks nice, I just want a spot of colour.

KK: If we turn back to *Shenzhen*, in *Shenzhen*, you use Chinese letters for some conversations, possibly the ones when you cannot understand what they say, whereas in some parts you translate them. And we do not see that style in your other works. Why did you abandon it? Why haven't you used the same technique for your other works?

GD: The situation was different in China, because I was in a translation situation, so I had to explain, so that is something you can do in comics. Someone is talking to you and you do not understand at all what he is saying, but it is like a cloudy image. So you can do that, you can have someone shouting and you can do just rubbish stuff. But I was not confronted with that in the other countries, because there was no translator and I was in an English-speaking country like in Burma, [or] in Jerusalem, that never really happened, but in China, yeah, and I do not think I would use that technique now. I add a few Arabic words in *Jerusalem*, and I do not know, at that time I thought that is the way to transpose the experience I had in China. And today maybe I would do it differently.

KK: Yes, as far as I recognised, you use the same character that you used in *Albert and the Others* in *Jerusalem*, right? I cannot remember his name, but with a fez on his head. You use the same guy in *Jerusalem*.

GD: Oh, really? Is there . . . ? Yes, because they have the fez in Jerusalem. They wear the fez especially in the old pictures. If you look at the old pictures of the Palestinians they all wear the fez. And I find that hat very funny.

KK: But when you draw the Ottoman sultan in *Jerusalem*, you made a chronological mistake there because the fez was introduced into the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century, but the time that you were talking about is the sixteenth century.

GD: Ah, OK. I did not know that [laughs].

KK: I think it was only me who noticed it!

KK: It is not possible to see the fez in the sixteenth century. It was in the nineteenth century. Anyway, if we turn back again to *Shenzhen*, in *Shenzhen* you use wordless full-page splashes to separate your chapters. I find that some of them are related to the chapters that they separate, but some of them are not related. For example, what is the underlying significance of the three frames at the start of chapter 8 of *Shenzhen*, which depict an elegant Chinese woman entering a traditional building and, if appropriate, what interrelationship is intended between them?

GD: I think I was mentioning the work of the Chinese artist that I discovered when I was there, and I think I have been collecting a lot of these small books that you can find in the streets of China. And I mention at one point, maybe it is not in that chapter, but [at] a certain point, I was influenced by the way the Chinese draw, and I have tried to do some work, like even the beginning of a comic book, and that one page of the comic book I was working on after being influenced by the Chinese graphic artist. So, that is the reason it is there. But I do not know if it is in the right chapter, because I guess I like that page and I thought, 'Wow, I am going to use it.'

KK: You don't follow the same style, for example, in *Shenzhen*, you divide your book into sixteen-page chapters, but you do not follow the same for your other works. Why did you abandon it?

GD: Because *Shenzhen* was prepublished in a magazine and in that magazine you do sixteen pages because it is a printing size. You can have your own paper if you want within the magazine. It is the printing system, where it is folded in sixteen pages. So that was the reason, because *Shenzhen* started as a magazine short story. And then I did one chapter and I thought, 'Wow, I am going to do the second one', because I liked it. Then I said, 'I am going to do the third one', and then people started to really enjoy it. And we thought,

'Wow, why not do a book?' And then I said, 'OK. I am going to stop prepublishing it and just work on the book.'

KK: To what extent do you use cultural symbolism? For example, in *Pyongyang*, you are obsessed with the tortoise and constantly show it to us, the one in the restaurant, in the aquarium. Although you don't say anything about the tortoise, I know that it is a symbol for long life in Korean culture. Do you follow the 'don't tell only show' style?

GD: Well, it is not necessary to tell if it is not . . . It was very present in our life because it was a big tortoise and it was in a very small aquarium. And every time we went to the restaurant we saw that tortoise. And you can feel sorry for that big thing being in an aquarium. And I remember one day I was drunk and I was looking at that aquarium. And yes, somehow it represented to me being trapped: somehow like that tortoise is trapped in the aquarium, just like the people in North Korea. They were trapped in that country. And there is no need to say it if you just feel it and if it is not felt well; it is OK too, because it is just a nice living animal in an aquarium. It is nice to draw. But if it can add to the, like, to underline between the lines, the stuff you just feel while you read the comic, well, then, it is good, yes.

KK: And you wanted to show the contradiction because the tortoise is a symbol for long life, but it is trapped there.

GD: No, I did not have that information. I know it means long life, but it did not work as a symbol for me. No. For me the symbol was to be trapped. Like a big animal trapped in a small aquarium. For me that was the feeling I had when I was there myself, being trapped there. And to some extent, of course, the whole country where you have the citizen trapped in that small country just like the tortoise.

KK: I really like the scene in *Pyongyang* when you talk about the Turkish delegates. Thanks to them you ate better food in the restaurant!

GD: I remember that guy. He was quite big with a moustache. Oh, very Turkish. And I remember that one day he was talking to – I did not put it into the book – he was talking to the guy who was preparing the food and obviously he was not very happy with the food, but he was very diplomatic. But I think he went in the kitchen to show or to see how they were preparing such disgusting food somehow, and yes, I thought it was very cute. He was trying to have a good meal. But that is not likely to happen [there]!

KK: And until the day I finished *Pyongyang*, I didn't know that Turkey has diplomatic ties with North Korea.

GD: Yes, a few countries. There are still quite a few countries which have diplomatic ties.

KK: Everybody knows your love for *Tintin*. Have you ever taken any inspiration from Hergé? I think your style follows that of Hergé closely. What do you think about that?

GD: For me, it was when I arrived in Hong Kong, I spent a few weekends in Hong Kong, I was really seeing the Hergé way of describing China, because in some of his books you have all these very typical scenes on the street with lots of Chinese people. I did not get that so much in Shenzhen. But when I was in Hong Kong, yes, I really felt that I was in a *Tintin* book somehow. It was China a bit like you imagined. I remember when I was drawing it just happened that I had a little frame [of a Tintin album], and I have that image in a frame, and I was looking at it in China and I felt, yeah, that was how I felt when I was in Hong Kong. So I took it and I just retraced it. And I have put it in the book.

KK: It is going to be very hard to ask, to answer, actually, but which of your books do you like the most?

GD: Well, I think *Pyongyang*, because I like the narration of it. I really like the ending of the book, with the airplane, paper airplane. And that country was so special, and I was in a situation where you could only do that with a comic book. You know, no matter how big a team or camera you could have, they would have never worked in North Korea. So I was in a situation and had a perfect time, had just the perfect cover working there, and for me this book is a bit special. In the other ones I could establish the way you tell a story, the narration. I really like *Jerusalem*, but I guess *Pyongyang* was after *Shenzhen*, with more on the funny side, with some jokes. In *Pyongyang* I could show that you can actually have fun, but kind of, because it is not so much fun at the end of the book . . . And you can put in some information, you can learn about a country, and some journalistic aspects. For all these reasons, for me, yes, it is a special book.

KK: As far as I know, on the Amazon U.K. website, they put *Pyongyang* in the Korean politics section, not in the comics section.

GD: Ahh, really? Thank you. I remember when that book was reviewed by some like *Foreign Policy* magazine in which they had never talked about comics before. The interesting thing is they were talking about the book regarding the info you get from the book, and not because it was a comic. It was interesting to see a comic book talking about North Korea. But they were actually talking about what was inside the comic book. So, I thought, 'Wow, that is interesting.'

KK: As far as I know, none of your works has been translated into Turkish. Could you suggest how one might go about translating your works into Turkish? For instance, does one need to get in touch with your agency, or just yourself?

GD: First, you would need to find a publishing house in Turkey. And they would contact my publishing house in France. And they would work out a deal. And then you could translate it, but you would need to find a publishing house that does independent works, because these are different comic books. Do you have a lot of comic book translations in Turkey?

KK: Yes, we have a very strong tradition.

GD: Oh, OK, I did not know that. So you have to find a comic book publishing house that is doing like the new stuff that we have in France. And it is going to have to be able to attract the public that is interested in comics not for children, alternative comics. And then they can buy the rights easily from my publishing house. But if you just translate it and you do not get it published afterwards, it would be too bad to do all that work, I think. So, make sure you can find a publishing house that my books would fit in. If they exist, I am sure they have heard about the books, because I get a lot of translations and, yes, I even have a book in Croatian, translated recently.

KK: Do you want to add anything else? Do you have any additional comments?

GD: I think we have covered quite a lot. No, I don't see anything else.

KK: Absolutely. We've spoken for at least fifty-five minutes, because I am recording this interview. Thank you!

KK: Thank you!

GD: It's a pleasure! You are welcome. I remember one word in Turkish. It's *teşekkür*.

KK: *Teşekkür*, yes, thanks!

GD: Yeah, that's all I remember

APPENDIX II
INTERVIEW WITH KEMAL GÖKHAN GÜRSES
IN TURKISH[524]
KENAN KOCAK'S QUESTIONS BY E-MAIL,
SENT ON 01/05/2013, PLUS
KEMAL GÖKHAN GURSES' ANSWERS BY E-MAIL,
RECEIVED ON 07/05/2013

KK 1.) Maalesef sizinle ilgili bilgim çok sınırlı, Ayşegül'deki kadar bir bilgi bulabildim hakkınızda. Bu bilgilere ek olarak neler söyleyebilirsiniz kendiniz hakkında?

KGG 1.) Wikipedia'daki bilgiler genel hatlarıyla doğru. En azından bir CV'yi dolduracak kadar. Bunlara belki çocukluğumdan beri film setlerinde uyuyup uyandığım ya da babamın kasaba kasaba dolaşan turne tiyatrosunun bir üyesi olduğum, bunun 9-10 yaşlarıma kadar sürdüğü bilgisini de eklemeliyim. Bir çocuğun düşlerini kuran sahne amirlerinin, oyuncuların, yarı deli tiyatrocuların arasında geçmiş bir çocukluk bana her zaman avantajlı başladığım duygusunu vermiştir. 12 Eylül'e denk gelen ve kendi okulumda olmam gerekirken Boğaziçi Üniversitesi'nde, oranın tiyatro kolu olan Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Oyuncuları ile geçirdiğim beş yılda çalıştığımız, dramaturgisini yaptığımız, birlikte oynadığımız, afişlerini yapıp, kimilerini yönettiğim oyunlarla geçen gençlik yıllarını da bir renk olarak, sanatsal gelişimime kolektif çalışma alışkanlığı katan bir artı değer olarak ekleyebilirim.

KK 2.) Neden çiziyorsunuz? Çizginiz kadar hikâye anlatma beceriniz de muhteşem, bunu neye borçlusunuz? Çok genel, klişe oldu Ağabey ama aklıma gelen her şeyi sormam lazım.

KGG 2.) Bunu kendime sorma imkânım olmayan bir yaşta, 11 yaşında benim de Gırgır Dergisinin amatörleri arasında yer almama yol açan ağbim Hakan Gürses'in karikatüre olan ilgisi bu maceraya beni çağıran baş etken. O sonra benim kadar bu işe asılmadı, çok iyi bir müzisyendi, 12 Eylül sonrası gittiği Viyana'da halen hem bir akademisyen felsefeci hem de bir müzisyen olarak yaşamını sürdürüyor. Ailemde sanatla uğraşmayan kimse yok neredeyse. Babam sinema yönetmeni, oyuncu ve senarist. Bir başka ağbim komedyen. Annem gizli şair. Bunların toplamından bir hikâyeci ve çizer olarak çıkmak büyük sürpriz

---

[524] Only questions have been included here, irrelevant with peripheral.

değil. Sadece sorun olan bu rekabeti sevecenlikle harmanlamış ailenin içinde işini iyi yapma mecburiyeti. Kimsenin kimseye toleransı yok. Ben de hikâye anlatmaya, dinlemeye küçük yaşta başladım. Sinema her şeyimdi. Ne zaman ki Gırgır'ın kapısından içeri girdim; "Benim yolum bu" dedim o anda. Sabırsız biriyim. Hemen olsun istiyorum. Bu sinema için de, tiyatro için de uygun bir insan yapısı değil. Karikatür ise (hele gazetede çalıştığım yıllar boyunca) benim için biçilmiş kaftandı. Bugün çiz yarın yayınlansın… Şunu da söylemeden geçemeyeceğim; şu anda sabır sınavlarını tamamlamış biri olarak sinemaya bir yerinden yeniden buluşmak için randevu verip duruyorum. Beni ciddiye aldığı an oradayım. Ayrıca kızım da deliler gibi yazıyor. Çok etkileyici bir edebi dili var. Bu da bu zincirin devamlılığını gösteriyor sanırım…

KK 3.) Ayşegül ismi bana çocuk serisi Ayşegül'ü çağrıştırmakta; bununla bir alakası var mı? "Ayşegül artık büyüdü, çocukça şeylerle uğraşmıyor, savaşa gidiyor" mu demek istiyorsunuz?

KGG 3.) Elbette ismin çıkış sebebi Ayşegül serisidir. Belçikalı Marcel Marlier ve Gilbert Delehaye tarafından yaratılmış ilk kitabı 1954'te yayınlanmış, birçokları gibi beni de çocukluğumda müthiş etkilemiş bir dizi çizgili öykü. Ama bizi "hayata hazırlayan" bu dizinin ideolojik hatları genel toplamda yoksul ve yoksun üçüncü dünyalı evlerimizde derin bir özlem duygusu, bir imrenme ve "keşke" arzusuyla tarif edilebilir sanırım. Ben de tam bu nedenle aynı isimle hayatın başka bir tarafını, şiddetle, savaşla, yoksulluk ve acımasızlıkla dolu "ayın karanlık yüzü"nü gösteren bir hikâyeye aynı dizinin adını verdim. Bu tip bir ironiyi oldum olası sevmişimdir. Sirkte, Yolculukta, Tiyatroda, Kampta değil; bu kez Ayşegül Savaşta…

KK 4.) Önsözde bunu "hafızayı diri tutmak için" yazdığınızı belirtiyorsunuz, bu bana çok kolay unutuyoruz demeye bir tepki gibi geliyor; kolay unutmak ya da unutturulmak konusunda hem Türkiye hem dünya aynı hızla ilerliyor, bu konuda neler söylersiniz?

KGG 4.) Ben bütün kayıtlı çalışmaların belge niteliği taşıdığını düşünüyorum. Bir yemek tarifi kitabını da bir devrim öncesi Rus edebiyatı klasiği kadar önemsiyorum. Bunların büyük toplamı insanlık tarihini, kültürünü, davranış ve alışkanlıklarını sonraki toplumlara bilgi olarak sunar. Şimdi baktığımızda barbarlık olarak gördüğümüz birçok naif savaşın (bugünkülerle kıyaslayarak söylüyorum) bize sunduğu bilgiyi iyi, kötü, doğru yanlış diye nitelemeden önemsiyorum. Bu kayıt tutma meselesinin bence birinci ayağı. İkincisi ise, bütün sanat eserleri gibi taraf tutan benim çalışmalarımın da, mazlumun güncesi, ya da yenilen adına kayıt tutma olarak önemine inanıyorum. Biliyorsunuz, tarih birçokları için kazananların arenasıdır. Kimse "ne muhteşem kaybettim" diye anlatmaz. Ya da çoğunlukla diyelim. Ben kaybedenlerin kaydını tutmak istedim. Babil'in talanı eğer bugün insanlığın

önemsemediği bir barbarlıksa, ben bu kaydın isimsiz vakanüvisi olmayı seve seve kabul ederim.

KK 5.) Belki bu soru çok sorulmuştur ama ben gene de sorayım: Ayşegül kim? Nevin Hanım mı?

KGG 5.) Bunu biraz magazinsel bir soru olarak algılıyorum. Hoşuma gitmediğini söyleyemem elbette… Nevin (Sungur), doğru. Aynı zamanda Mete Çubukçu. Aynı zamanda Coşkun Aral… Adı lazım değil birçok savaş muhabirinin mümkün olduğunca karışımı bir karakter. Bizde kadınlar birçok meslek için henüz hazır değil diye algılanadursun, ben bu geleneğe sahip olmayan bu ülkede bu işi çok derin bir duyarlılıkla ve mesleki olarak da tam manasıyla yapan birçok kadın savaş muhabiri olduğunu biliyorum… Elbette asıl biri var kafamda ama bu saydığım isimlerden hiç biri değil… Bu da benim kişisel sırrım olarak kalsın…

KK 6.) Joe Sacco ve Guy Delisle Kudüs'e, Filistin'e gidip yaşayıp çizen adamlar. En büyük farkınız bu; ama ben bunu eksiklik olarak görmüyorum, hayal gücünüz çok kuvvetli olmalı ki bu açığı kapatabilmişsiniz. Onlar sadece gördüklerini çizdiler, sizse duyduklarınızı ve fotoğraflardan anladıklarınızı. Bence değil ama sizce bu eksiklik mi? Gitseydim daha farklı çizerdim yazardım dediniz mi hiç?

KGG 6.) Bu işi de yeterince sessiz yapmış olmalıyım. Kudüs'te, Ramallah'ta, Betlehem'de çok uzun olmasa da zaman geçirdim. Hem de Ayşegül için… Sağ olsunlar o tarihte çalıştığım gazete benim uçak biletimi aldı ama gerisine karışmadı. Irak'ı da çok zorladım. Ama savaş çok canlı ve kanlı sürüyordu. Erbil'den öteye geçemeyeceğimi anlayınca belge toplayıcılığı ile bu eksiği kapamaya çalıştım. Bu hoşuma gitmiyor… Oryantalist ressamların görmediği ülkelerle ilgili bireysel fantezilerini tuale taşımalarına benzetiyorum bunu. O resimlere bakan yereller hep alaycı gülümserler haklı olarak…

KK 7.) Tüm aramalarıma rağmen Irak Şahini diye bir şey bulamadım. Bu sizin kurgunuz mu? Öyleyse esinlendiğiniz şey ya da konu nedir?

KGG 7.) Küçücük bir gazete haberi görmüştüm Saddam'ın sarayından çalınan bir heykelle ilgili. Adana'da bulunduğu söyleniyordu. Ama bazen sanatçı sanıyorum işine yarar bir fikri gerçeğin etkiye olan katkısını bilerek gördüğüne kendini de inandırarak yoluna devam edebiliyor. Galiba vardı böyle bir haber… Ama şaka bir yana, benim esinlendiğim, bana ilham veren tek şey, geleneksel, klasik diyebileceğim bir avantür anlatım geleneği. Onun kurgu ve motifleriyle kurdum hikâyeyi. Hikâye çoğu kez, hikâyedir. Benim derdim sürükleyici bir hikâyenin içine bu sert ve hakiki işgalin varlığına işaret edecek kimi sözleri, görüntüleri yerleştirmekti. Binlerce fotoğraf arşivledim. Onlarca kitap, yüzlerce makale

okudum bu hikâyeyi çizmek için. Vakaların çoğu, karakterlerin bir kısmı gerçekle harmanlanmıştır.

Ama bir bandıma da adını veren bir diskurum var:

"Hiç bir şey gerçek kadar aldatıcı değildir"…

KK 8.) Hikâye Ayşegül üzerinden dönse de bir de Alaaddin'imiz var. Alaaddin'e neden ihtiyaç duydunuz? Irak Şahini heykeli aslında nedir? Herkesin elinden geçiyor ve herkesi olduruyor ya da sakat birikiyor. Bu heykel bizim unutkanlığımız mı aslında? Çabuk unutur olmamız mı?

KGG 8.) Alaaddin geleceğimiz. Umudumuz. Kaybedenlerin kahramanı. Belki uğruna ölünen şeyi değiştirmesini beklediğimiz beyaz atlı çocuk. Bu işlerin bir kişi tarafından yapıldığına asla inanmasam da… Bütün kötülüklerin, sertliklerin, acıların sonu beyaz çarşaflı bir yatakta uyandığınız barış uykusuyla gelir... Alaaddin biraz da bu barışın getirdiği huzur duygusu...

Heykele gelince; heykel sahip olma güdüsü gem vurulamaz şekilde gelişmiş, her şeyi ele geçirmek için her yolu mubah sayan erk'in hoyratlığını anlatıyor. Bunu yaparkenki acımasızlığı... Belki de Irak'ta savaş giderlerinin tazmini için Amerika'nın 130 yıllığına el koyduğu bütün petrol kaynaklarını simgeliyordur Irak Şahini heykelciği...

KK 9.) Kuran'dan 6 tane alıntınız var. Bu alıntıları kitabı bölümlere ayırmak için kullanıyorsunuz diyebilir miyiz? Öyleyse bu alıntılar sizce o bölümlere ne kadar uymakta? Ve neden böyle alıntılar yaptınız?

KGG 9.) Alıntıların hepsini bölümlerle ilintilendirmeye özen gösterdim. Fil suresi örneğinde olduğu gibi… Beş ayetten oluşan bir suredir. Kabil'i yıkmak isteyen Ebrehe'yi konu edinir. Ebabil kuşlarının gagalarındaki taşlarla fillerle hücum edip Kabil'i ele geçirmek isteyenlere verdiği dersi konu alır. "Rabbin mucizesi" olarak geçer… Irak direnişini anlattığım alegorik bir bölümdü. Ama Kur'an'daki mucizenin gerçekleşemeyeceği kadar rasyonel, güç dengelerinin olmadığı bir savaştan söz etiğimizi de anlatmaya çalışıyordum. Bunlar hep benim arzularım elbette. Çizgi romana ne kadarını taşımayı becerdiğimi benim anlamam mümkün değil…

KK 10.) Kendi yarattığınız karakterleri ve şeyleri çizerken daha sert çizgiler kullanıyorsunuz ama kullandığınız fotoğrafları çizerken çizgiler yumuşak, pastelimsi ve gerçeğe daha yakın hale gelmekte. Böyle bir ayrımı neden yaptınız? Bunlar fotoğraf, benim çizgilerim değil demek için mi?

KGG 10.) Evet, iki ayrı üslubun net bir şekilde algılanmasını istedim. Desendeki sertlik resmi yorumlarkenki yaklaşımımı, bendeki iç kavgayı bütünüyle yansıtıyor. Fotoğraflar ise

daha belgesel amaçlı ve gerçekle olan köprü… Bir anda ikisi arasındaki ilişki ve farklılık böylece daha net bir şekilde algılanır hale geliyor…

KK 11.) Kitabınızda milliyetçilikle, milli kimlikle alakalı neler var diyebiliriz? Örneğin Ayşegül'ün batılı rasyonalizmini eleştirmesi gibi... Tekst üzerinde gördüklerimizden başka sizin su da var diyebileceğiniz bir şeyler var mı?

KGG 11.) Benim genel politik bakışım içinde milliyetçilik zaten olumsuz anlamda uyarıcılarım arasında en önemli nosyondur. Diğeri ise din… Bu ikisi birbirini ikame ederek, birbiri ile yer değiştirerek geçerliliği kalmamış, kanserli ve insanların acıları üzerine inşa edilmiş bütün sistemlerin harcı işlevini görür. Kimi kez ikisinin bir arada bulunduğu dönemleri de olmuştur tarihin… Bence hepsi insanların ölümüne, yok olmasına, birbirine acımasızca kıymasına gerekçe gösterilen iki temel nosyon. Amerika Irak'ı işgal ederken hangi gerekçeleri sundu? Müslümanların terörist olarak algılanmasını sağlayan 11 Eylül'ü gerçekleştirilenlerle ilgili benim de komplo teorilerini hiç sevmesem de inanmama yol açacak kadar basit ve kötü kurgulu bir oyun görüyorum ortada. Ve kimyasal silah yalanı. Yıllar sonra "yanlış istihbaratmış, özür dileriz" diyenlere bütün bir toplum, hatta dünyanın geneli işgal için alkış tutmuştu. Din ve milliyetçilik bu savaşta da her köşe başında karşınıza çıkan en yaygın ve etkili propaganda ve gerekçelendirme imkânlarını yaratıyordu… Batı rasyonalizmine karşı çıkışı da belki Ayşegül'ün tandansını oluşturan kendi tarihsel kökenleri ve içkin ideolojisidir… Bilemem…

KK 12.) Siz de Joe Sacco da Arapları çizerken ayni tasvirleri kullanıyorsunuz, pörtlek göz, kocaman ağız, kalın dişler... Bu stereotipiler nereden çıkıyor?

KGG 12.) Fotoğraflardan, kişisel bilgilerden, yolculuklardan, tanışmalardan. Ama bunları stenotipe dönüştüren şey yaptığınız işin mecrasını düşünmenizden kaynaklanır. Yani inceltmek yerine, genel ve yaygın algıyı kullanarak algıyı hızlandırmak çizgi roman gibi yüzeyselliği öne çıkan anlatım dillerinde bana biraz kaçınılmaz geliyor. Gerçi Ayşegül'ün Kapkaççı hikâyesinde mavi gözlü, sarışın Ahmet adında bir Kürt karakterim de yok değildi. (http://aysegulsavasta.blogspot.com/)

KK 13.) Kullandığınız sinematik tekniklere gelirsek, geniş açının pek görülmediğini fark ediyoruz. Örneğin Sacco ve Delisle bir hatta iki sayfayı kaplayan çizimler yaparlar. Sizde olmamasının sebebi bunların ilk önce bant olarak yayınlanması olduğu aşikâr. Direkt çizgi roman yapsaydınız geniş açıya çok yer verir miydiniz?

KGG 13.)Kesinlikle… Yani kesinlikle evet… Çok severim genel planları… Ama günlük gazetede okuyucu açısından söylüyorum; buna zaman ve sabır yok…

KK 14.) Bir önemli konu da eserinizden alıntı yapabilmem için sizin onayınız gerekmekte. Yaptığım alıntıları kitapta yayınlanmasına izin verir misiniz?

KGG 14.) Bütün alıntıları istediğin gibi kullanabilirsin. Ayrıca sana daha rahat kullanman için kitabın dijital halini de arzu ettiğin sayfa ve parçaları belirtirsen tek tek ayıklayıp verebilirim.

KENAN KOCAK'S QUESTIONS
SENT VIA FACEBOOK ON 11/07/2013 PLUS
KEMAL GÖKHAN GÜRSES'ANSWERS
RECEIVED VIA FACEBOOK ON 11/07/2013

KK 1.) Neden Ayşegül erkek gibi? Neden kadınsal özellikleri az tasvir edildi? Hiç mi hiç kadın arkadaşı yok. Sevgilisi yok. Etek bile sadece bir kaç karede var o da evdeyken, tek başınayken.

KGG 1.) Ayşegül'ün bir sevgilisi var mı? Kadınsı değil mi? Hiç kadın arkadaşı yok mu? Bu soruyu sıcak çatışma ortamındaki birçok meslektaşı gibi Ayşegül için de sorabiliriz elbette. Ama aynı şeyi savaş muhabiri erkek arkadaşları için de sorabiliriz. Bu insanların duyguları yok mu? Cesetlerin fotoğraflarını çekerken. Kolu-bacağı kopmuş insanların daha o anın sıcak dramatik etkisi kocaman bir sille gibi suratlarına inmişken nasıl olur da ellerinde fotoğraf makineleri, film kameraları bu görüntüleri kalpsiz insanlar gibi dünyaya servis etmeye çalışırlar. Bir savaş muhabiri dostumun anlattıklarını çok net hatırlıyorum. Her şey olup bittikten sonra bir duvarın dibinde hüngür hüngür nasıl ağladığını düşününce onun bu halini gözümde canlandırmıştım, doğrusu benim de gözlerim dolmuştu. Savaş muhabiriyseniz neredeyse sizin de üniforma diyebileceğimiz bir giysiniz olur. Gerillalarınkine benzer. Gerillaların giysileri kadınsı ya da erkeksi değildir. Bir tabir uydurmam gerekirse; "savaşsı"dır. Toprağın rengine benzer ya da çok yakındır. Belirgin hiç bir rengi yoktur. Kendini kolay görülür olmaktan uzak tutacak renklerdedir bu üniformalar. Keklik gibi avlanmamak için. Ayşegül de mesleği gereği bu üniformalardan giyer. Ayağında topuklu ayakkabı ile Irak sokaklarında dolaşamayacağı aşikâr. Saçları da kısa olmak zorundadır. Suyun bile büyük bir nimete dönüştüğü bir ortamda uzun bir saçın derdiyle uğraşmaması gerekir. Çok yekten, direkt davranması gerekir. Lafı uzatamaz. Vakit duygusunun temelinde "an meselesi" yatar. Hızlı konuşur. Ne istediğini çok net söyler. Cevabı da sorusu gibi kısadır. Bunlar mesleki koşullarıdır Ayşegül'ün. Bu davranışlarla şekillenmiş bir hayatı ve beden dili vardır. Bu dil erkeksi midir, yoksa dediğim gibi mesleki mi; buyurun cevabını siz verin. İstanbul'a, kanala geldiğinde kendisini uzun süredir "bekleyen" bir çilekeş olduğunu görüyoruz. Timuçin miydi oğlanın adı, Teoman mı tam hatırlamıyorum şimdi... TV kanalında çalışıyor o da. Rıza da Ali de dalga geçiyorlar bu platonik aşkla... Savaş alanlarının cinsiyetsizliği diyebiliriz Ayşegül'ün konumu için. Örneğin Erev le Saheer hikâyesinde bir check-point'inden "sorunsuz"

geçmek için (bagajındaki Hıristiyan Arap İbrahim'i İsrail tarafına geçirmek istemektedir) giydiği mini eteği hatırlıyorum.

KK 2.) O savaşın, o tehlikenin ortasındayken Ayşegül'e hiç cinsel taciz bile olmuyor! Sadece bir karede Amerikalı bir asker "Gel yavrum, seni ben arayacağım" diyerek sözel tacizde bulunuyor; bunun dışında asla bir şey yok. Mısırda 2011'de ve geçen hafta olanları da düşünürsek ve Irak Savaşı'ndaki durumları da göz önüne alırsak; neler söyleyebiliriz? Neden Ayşegül'e kimse dokunmadı?

KGG 2.) Ayşegül'e kimse dokunmadı mı? Bilmiyorum. Sanmıyorum. Birçok tacizle, birçok zor durumla karşı karşıya kalmıştır mutlaka. Bunu şehirde muhabirlik yapan kadınlar da yaşıyor. Barış koşullarında da yani... Polisle, askerle, kimi gerillalarla karşılaştığı bu tür sıkıntılar vardır mutlaka... Yine de uluslararası muhabirlik yapan birinin koruma kalkanı ne kadar işe yarıyorsa onda da o kadar işe yaramıştır. Ben daha çok bunun bir fanteziye dönüşmesine, bir öncelik kazanmasına izin vermedim. Yer yer bu benzeri durumlarla karşılaşabileceğinin işaretini verdim. Amerikalı askerin tavrında da bu var... Ama yine aynı hikâyede tutsak düştüğünde başına gelen başka bir durumu anlattım. Regl olduğunu fark edişini ve o an yanında çantası olmayışını... Bu insani durumun zorluğunu... Bu gibi bir takım ayrıntılar dışında Ayşegül'ün kadınlığı bu hikâyede onu diğer meslektaşlarından farklılaştırmıyordu...

KK 3.) Öyküyü neden basit bir düzlemde anlatmadınız? Çok karmaşık, bulmaca gibi! Bir suru flashbackler, ani sahne değişimleri, geçişler... Bunlara neden ihtiyaç duydunuz? Dümdüz anlatılmaz mıydı bu hikâye?

KGG 3.) Bir tür sinema diline yaklaşmak için. Bu birinci neden. İkincisi, hikâyenin kendisi de yeterince karmaşık bir akışa ve dinamiğe sahip. Birileri orada can derdine düşmüş, ülkesinin işgaline karşı bir şeyler yapmaya çalışırken, orada olması hiç akla bile gelmeyecek kimi insanlar ise bu kaotik ortamda bir iş adamı gibi kazanç elde etme peşinde... Savaşların genel karakterinde var olan bir şey bu bence... Daha bir sürü nedenle orada bulunan insanlar kendi amaçları için attıkları oltalarla aynı kan gölünde balık tutmaya çalışıyorlar. Ben bu karmaşık mekanizmayı yeniden kurgulamak istedim...

KK 4.) Joe Sacco Filistin'i bana yazdıran Edward Said ve Chomsky'dir der. Size bunu yazdıran kim Ağabey? Yani kimden beslendiniz? Kimi okudunuz da ben böyle bir şey yaratmalıyım dediniz? Ya da ben böyle bir şey yaratmalıyım dedikten sonra kimi okudunuz?

KGG 4.) Bunun cevabı bir hayli geniş... Beni bu hikâyeyi yazmaya iten yazarlar diye bir sınıflandırmayı Joe Sacco kadar net yapamayacağım. Çünkü çıkış nedenim Filistin'i anlatmak değil. Bir savaş muhabiri kahramanım var. Bütün o ana kadarki birikimim bu

hikâyeyi kurgulama yöntemlerimi, bakış açımı, anlatım dilimi şekillendirdi bence... Bu kararı verdikten sonra Irak işgali konusunda yazılanları, Irak tarihini, Ortadoğu üzerine düşünmüş ve yazmış birçok yazarı, yüzlerce makaleyi okumak zorunda kaldım. Yer yer alıntılar yaptığım Kur'an'ı bile yeniden okumak zorunda kaldığımı söylemeliyim... Bu işin metinsel desteğini sağlayacak araştırmam yaklaşık 6 ayımı aldı...

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW WITH KEMAL GÖKHAN GÜRSES
IN ENGLISH[525]
KENAN KOCAK'S QUESTIONS BY E-MAIL,
SENT ON 01/05/2013, PLUS
KEMAL GÖKHAN GURSES' ANSWERS BY E-MAIL,
RECEIVED ON 07/05/2013

KK 1.) Unfortunately I have very limited information on you and your life. I have just read the short biography on [the inner cover of your graphic novel] *Ayşegül*. What else do you want me to say about you?

KGG 1.) The Wikipedia entry is quite OK. At least it fills a CV. I need to add that I was brought up on film sets and travelled from one town to another as a member of my father's mobile theatre which continued until I was nine or ten years old. [Muharrem Gürses (1913-1999) was one of the leading actors and directors in Turkey.] I always feel myself lucky and privileged to have spent a childhood among stage managers and wacky actors, something which many children always dream of. Additionally, when I was a young person I worked with the *Boğaziçi University Troupe*, where I created our own dramaturgy, poster and even directed and played, although I was supposed to be studying at my university, an experience which was just before September 12 [the 1980 *coup d'état*]; this cooperative work added a colourful and positive side to my artistic development.

KK 2.) Why do you draw? You are also a talented story-teller as well as artist. How can you achieve this? I know this question seems very clichéd, but I must ask everything that occurs to me.

KGG 2.) My brother Hakan Gürses took me to the offices of *Gırgır Humorous Magazine* when I was eleven years old, not an age to ask yourself why you draw. Later he did not want to be a cartoonist, since he was very talented in music and after September 12 went to Vienna, where he has been living ever since as an academic in a philosophy department and a musician. Almost every member of my family is interested in the arts. My father was a director, playwright and an actor, my mother was a closet poet and my other brother is a

---

comedian. So, it was not a surprise for me to be a born narrator and cartoonist. The only problem was to ensure you could do your job properly in a competitive family. No one in the family was shown indulgence. I started to tell and listen to stories when I was very young. Cinema was everything to me. Once I entered *Gırgır,* I said to myself 'this is my way'. I am impatient, I want everything to be done in a sudden. This is not an acceptable thing for the world of cinema or theatre. But caricature (especially during the days I worked for a newspaper) was perfect for me. Draw today, publish tomorrow! I also have to admit, though, that as someone who has paid his debt to patience, I want to renew my acquaintance with cinema [he means he has waited for a long time in patience to turn back to cinema]. I will be back there the moment it takes me seriously. Also my daughter loves writing. She has a very impressive mastery of language. I think it shows the continuity of this genetic chain.

KK 3.) Ayşegül reminds me of the children's series of *Ayşegül* books. [For information, the Franco-Belgian children's series of *Martine* books, created by Marcel Marlier and Gilbert Delahaye in 1954, were translated into Turkish as *Ayşegül*.] Is there any relationship between them? Do you want to say 'Ayşegül is now a grown-up, no longer deals with childish things, and she goes to war'?

KGG 3.) Of course, my departure point is the Ayşegül series. This series whose first issue was created by the Belgians Marcel Marlier and Gilbert Delehaye in 1954 tremendously affected me like other kids in my childhood. But I think that the ideological lines of this series which prepares us for life can entirely be described as a deep hunger, a longing and an "if only" in our poor and deprived third world homes. And, for the same reason, I gave this name as title to my story in order to show the other side of life, the dark side of the moon which is full of violence, wars, poverty and cruelty. I do always like this kind of irony! Not set in a circus, on a trip, in a theatre or on a camping holiday; this time Ayşegül is at war.

KK 4.) In the preface you say that you wrote this book 'in order to keep [people's] memory alive'. I feel that it is a reaction to the thought that we forget [the pains we have experienced] easily. Not only Turkey but also the whole world forgets very easily, what do you want to say about this?

KGG 4.) I personally believe that all recordings have some quality of documentary. I attach importance to a cookery book as much as I care about a Russian classic before the revolution. The sum total of these kinds of things present and convey the history, culture, behaviour and traditions of mankind for posterity. I ascribe high importance, without classifying as good, bad, true or false, to the knowledge that has been gained from many

naïve wars which we now see as barbaric (from the modern point of view). Documentation is the first stage in the writing process. Secondly, I believe it to be important that my works should take a side like all other kinds of art, since they document the diary of the oppressed or record events in the name of the loser. For many people, history is the arena of winners. Nobody says "How magnificently I lost!" Never! Or let's say rarely! I wanted to keep the record of the losers. While the destruction of the Tower of Babel is a barbarism which no one cares about today, I do undertake the role of the anonymous chronicler of events.

KK 5.) This question may have been asked many times but let me ask again. Who is Ayşegül? Ms Nevin [i.e. the Turkish award-winning journalist Nevin Sungur]?

KGG 5.) I am accepting this question as magazinish. I cannot say that I don't like it, of course! Yes, Nevin, that's right! Also Mete Çubukçu, also Coşkun Aral... [Ayşegül] is the most plausible likely conflation of a lot of nameless war correspondents. While in Turkey we still think that women are not yet ready for a lot of occupations, I know that there are many female war journalists who work with very deep sensitivity in this country with its non-sexist tradition and who deserve to do so. Of course, there is a real person who inspired me, but s/he is not one of the names mentioned... Let me keep it as my personal secret.

KK 6.) Joe Sacco and Guy Delisle travelled to Jerusalem so as to draw things on-site, but you have not seen Iraq. This is [to my mind] the biggest difference between you. However, I do not see this disparity as a big disadvantage since you compensate for it with your very strong imagination and artistic talents. They drew what they saw; you drew what you heard and took from the pictures. Do you feel this dissimilarity to be a disadvantage? Do you ever say to yourself that if only I had gone, I would have drawn differently?

KGG 6.) I must have done this job also quite enough. I have been to Jerusalem, Ramallah and Bethlehem to do research for Ayşegül's next story. The news agency I work for paid my flight tickets, nothing more. I really would have liked to go to Iraq, but the war was so violent that I understood that I would not have been able to go beyond Erbil. I tried to overcome this by gathering as many documents as I could. I don't like it. I feel like an orientalist artist who paints his own fantasies about the countries he has never seen. The natives of those countries of course sneer at these pictures.

KK 7.) In spite of my extensive research, I could not find anything about the Iraqi Falcon [statuette]. Is this fictional? If so, what was your inspiration?

KGG 7.) I saw a tiny newspaper article about a statuette stolen from one of Saddam's palaces. It was said that the statuette was found in Adana [a city in Turkey]. But sometimes an artist can make progress through the credibility of his/her vision, knowing how

beneficial it would be for his/her story. I had such a story… But joking aside, the only genre that inspires me is adventure, which is a classical and traditional narration type. I created my story according to its themes and motives. A story is always a story, an invention. My concern was to embed some words and images, showing this brutal and real invasion, into this fluent story. I gathered thousands of photographs. I read lots of books, too many articles to draw upon in this story. Most of the events and some of the characters are blended with reality. But I have a discourse that I also named in one of my strips: "Nothing is as deceptive as reality".

KK 8.) Although you tell the story via the protagonist Ayşegül, we have also a figure called Aladdin. Why did you need a character like Aladdin? What was the thing you wanted to convey by creating the Iraqi Falcon statuette? It travelled from hand to hand and killed or disabled people who ever possessed it. Is this actually intended to symbolize our habit of easily forgetting?

KGG 8.) Aladdin is our future, our hope. The hero of losers. Maybe, the long-awaited child, who was supposed to change the things we die for, thought 'I do not believe that that kind of thing can be achieved by a person…'. All evil, all bitterness, all grief ends with a peaceful sleep that you get when lying in a white sheeted bed. Aladdin is also a touch of serenity that this peace has brought.

The statuette symbolizes the vulgarity of the power which employs every trick to have everything they aspire to, their cruelty of this ambition. Maybe the Iraqi Falcon statuette symbolizes all the oil resources which America robbed for 130 years as compensation for their expenses in the war.

KK 9.) You include six quotations from the Quran. Can we say that you use them to separate your chapters? To what extend do they fit into the chapters? And why did you want to quote from the Quran?

KGG 9.) I tried to correlate all of the quotations with the chapters. As in the example of the surah Al-Fil. It is a surah consisting of five verses. It tells of Abraha who wants to demolish Kaaba. It recounts the lesson given to those who want to capture Kaaba by the attacks of the swifts carrying stones in their bills. It is called "the miracle of God". Mine was an allegorical chapter in which I narrated the resistance of Iraq. At the same time, I was trying to say that we were talking about a war in which there was no power balance, i.e. an asymmetric war, and which was just as rational as the miracle in the Quran as it couldn't come true. They were all figments of my wishful imagination. I myself find it impossible to understand how much of this imagination I managed to incorporate into the graphic novel.

KK 10.) To draw your real characters and elements in your book you employ sharp lines, whereas you use soft and clear lines with pastel tones to render the photographs you draw [Gürses also creates an album with this redrawn photographs at the end of the book]. Why did you distinguish these two things? Was it so as to say these are my lines, and those are the real photographs?

KGG 10.) Yes, I wanted to show these two completely different styles. The sharpness in my lines completely reflects my inner war. As for the photographs, they are for documentation, the bridge to the reality. So the connection and difference between these two become easily perceptible at first glance.

KK 11.) What kind of message can we find in your book about nationalism and national identities? As in the section where Ayşegül criticises western rationality, for example. Are there any points [on the subject] that you want to add to what you say in the book?

KGG 11.) In my general political point of view, nationalism is one of the most negative notions; and the other one is religion. By substituting and replacing each other, these two function as the biggest ingredients of all the cancerous systems built on the suffering of people. In some periods, it is even possible to see them functioning in tandem. They are two main ideas that explain why people kill people without mercy. What kind of reasons did America put forward when it was invading Iraq? Though I do not like conspiracy theories, I see a facile and badly plotted intrigue which makes me believe that there is a connection between those who did the September 11 attacks and those who wanted to show Muslims as terrorists. And the lies about chemical weapons. All society, even the vast majority of the world, applauded those who years later said "Sorry, it was a false piece of intelligence". Nationalism and religion together created the most effective and common propaganda and justification methods that we encountered in every corner in this war. [He means people were killed mostly because of their sectarian identities.] Ayşegül's critique of western rationalism may be found in the historical roots of her own ideology. I don't know.

KK 12.) Both Joe Sacco and you use the same stereotypes when you draw Arabs; big eyes, big mouth and thick teeth. Where did these stereotypes stem from?

KGG 12.) From photographs, personal acquaintances, and travels. But what transforms these into stereotypes stems from the aim of your work. I mean, I find it inevitable to use common and general perceptions rather than trying to individualize when rarefying while using comics narrative which aims at glibness. Actually I had a blonde Kurdish character called Ahmed who had blue eyes in Ayşegül's *Purse Snatcher* story.

KK 13.) As for the 'cinematic' techniques you use, it is noticeable that you do not very often employ wide-angle shots. For example, Joe Sacco and Guy Delisle sometimes use one-, even two-page splashes. The reason why you do not use them is obviously that yours were originally comic strips published in a newspaper. If you had directly published this book as a graphic novel, would you have used wide angles more often?

KGG 13.) Definitely, absolutely yes. I love wide-angle shots, but in terms of a daily newspaper, there's no time and patience...

KK 14.) Another important point is that I need your permission to use some pages from your books. Would you let me use them, please?

KGG 14.) You can quote as much as you want. In addition, I can give you individual extracts from the digital version of the book.

KENAN KOCAK'S QUESTIONS
SENT VIA FACEBOOK ON 11/07/2013 PLUS
KEMAL GÖKHAN GÜRSES' ANSWERS
RECEIVED VIA FACEBOOK ON 11/07/2013

KK 1.) Why is Ayşegül like a man? Why did you describe her feminine characteristics very little? She does not have any female friends. She does not have a boyfriend. In not more than two or three frames, we see her in skirt, and those frames are when she is at her home.

KGG 1.) Does Ayşegül have a boyfriend? Is she not feminine? Doesn't she have any girlfriends? We can definitely put these questions to Ayşegül as we do to many of her female colleagues in hot conflict zones. But we can ask the same question of her male colleagues, too. Do these people not have emotions? When they take pictures of dead bodies, when they are aghast at the dramatic effect of the moment of seeing people who have lost their hands or legs, how on earth can they still try to keep informing the world with their cameras and video recorders like heartless people? I remember clearly what a war correspondent friend told me. I visualised how he cried sobbing in a corner after it was all over, and I indeed cried, too. If you are a war correspondent, you have a garment like a guerrilla uniform. Guerrillas' uniforms are not feminine or masculine; they are made for war with vague khaki colouring for camouflage. These uniforms are coloured so as to keep you from being noticed. Because of her profession, Ayşegül wears this uniform as well. It is obvious that she cannot move in the streets of Iraq wearing high-heeled shoes. She has to have short hair. She does not have any time to care for long hair in a place where water is a blessing. She should be active and speak directly without belabouring her point. Time is vital there; so she speaks fast and is clear in uttering her needs. Her questions and answers are short. These are all the necessities of her profession. She has a body and life shaped by this behaviour. Is this language masculine or, as I said, a jargon? You are free to choose. When she comes to her television channel in Istanbul, we see Ayşegül's platonic lover Cenk, whom Rıza and Ali mock. We can call Ayşegül's situation the sexlessness of battlefields. For instance, I remember a scene from the adventure of *Erev and Saheer* when Ayşegül wears a mini skirt so as to allow the Christian Arab Ibrahim, who is hiding in the boot of the car, to pass through an Israeli checkpoint.

KK 2.) In the thick of war with all its danger Ayşegül suffers no sexual harassment! Only in one frame does an American soldier go so far as to assault her verbally by saying 'Come on baby, I will search you'. If we think of the things [i.e. abuses] that happened last week and also in 2011 in Egypt, and the Iraq War, what can you say? Why does nobody touch Ayşegül?

KGG 2.) Didn't anybody touch Ayşegül? I don't know. I don't think so. For sure she faces a lot of molestation and very difficult situations. Female correspondents also face that in city centres. In peaceful environments, I mean. Especially when they encounter police, soldiers and guerrillas. However, her international press card helps her as much as it helps others. I didn't let it become a fantasy or gain priority. I slightly meant it; for example with that American soldier. But I did recount the difficult situation when she is not ready for her period. Except for a couple of little details, Ayşegül's womanhood doesn't make her different from her other colleagues.

KK 3.) Why didn't you tell your story simply? It is very complex, like a puzzle! Why did you need so many flashbacks, sudden scene changes and transitions…? Couldn't this story be told more plainly?

KGG 3.) Firstly, I want to be close to cinematic narration. Secondly, the story itself has highly complicated dynamics and narrative flow: Whereas people in Iraq struggle for their lives and their homeland, some businessmen chase money in this chaotic atmosphere. In my opinion, it is one of the general characteristics of wars that people whose aims are completely different from each other want to catch fish in the same bloodbath. I wanted to re-fictionalize this multifaceted mechanism.

KK 4.) Joe Sacco says it was Edward Said and Noam Chomsky who made him write *Palestine*. Who was it that made you write this book? What was your source? Who did you read and suggested that you should create this book? Or what did you read after having said 'I should create this book'?

KGG 4.) This question needs a long answer… I cannot make a clear classification such as Joe Sacco does of the authors that encourage me to write. Because, my aim isn't to tell people about Palestine. I have a war journalist protagonist. My cultural background gave the shape to the story. I had to read hundreds of articles and authors on the history and the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and on the Middle East itself. I even had to reread the Quran from which I take some quotations. It took me six months to prepare the textual structure.

APPENDIX IV: ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. The first self-proclaimed graphic novel: 'To Wed the Devil: A Graphic Novel of Gothic Terror' *The Sinister House of Secret Love*, vol 1. no. 2.
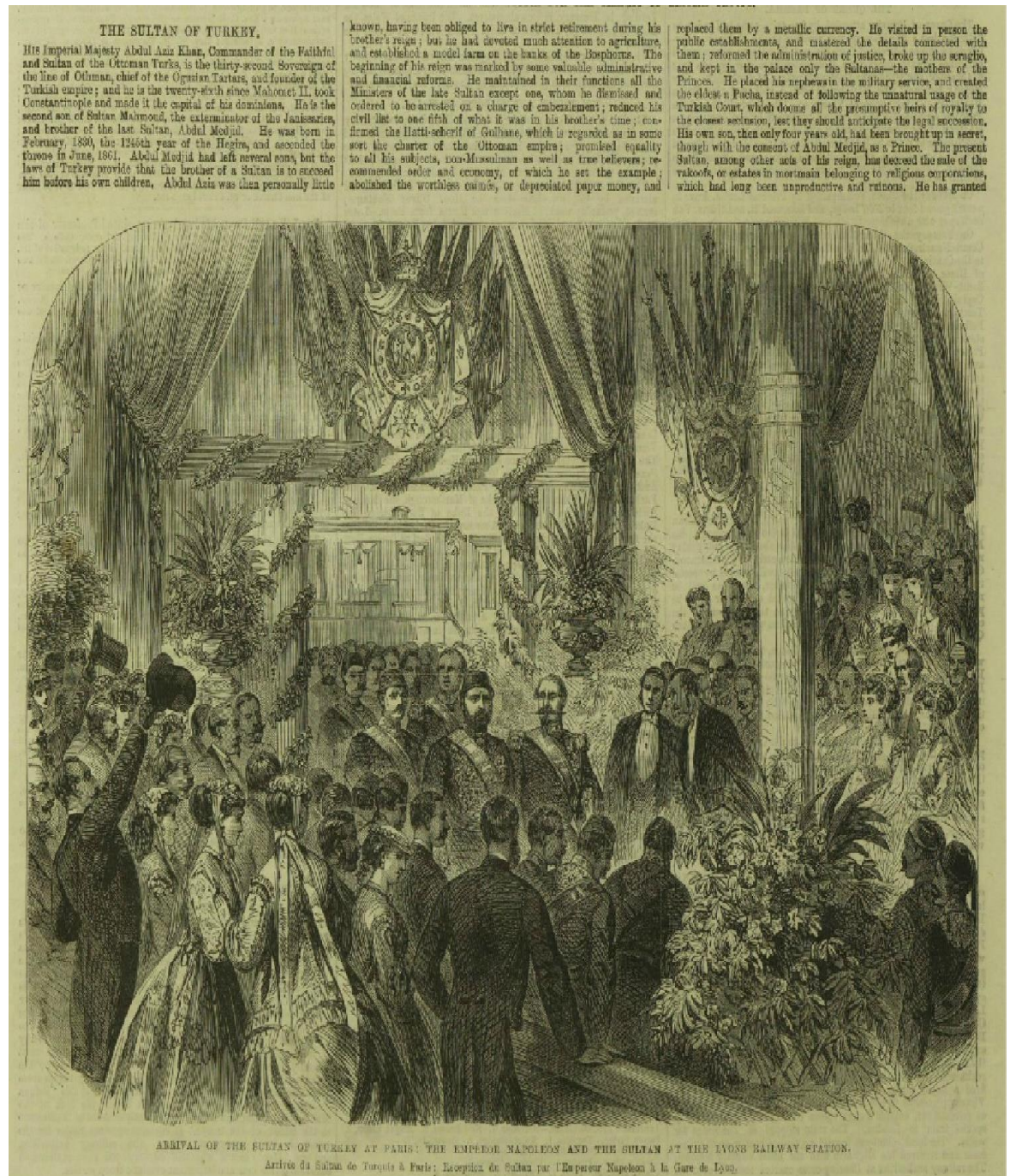
Fig. 2. An example of documentary illustration: *Battle Scene, Syria* by George Butler.

Fig. 3. An example of documentary drawing: Sketch of a Guantanamo tribunal, Janet Hamlin's *Sketching Guantanamo*, p. 111.

THE SULTAN OF TURKEY.

His Imperial Majesty Abdul Aziz Khan, Commander of the Faithful and Sultan of the Ottoman Turks, is the thirty-second Sovereign of the line of Ottoman, chief of the Ogonian Tartars, and founder of the Turkish empire; and he is the twenty-sixth since Mahomet II. took Constantinople and made it the capital of his dominions. He is the second son of Sultan Mahmoud, the exterminator of the Janissaries, and brother of the last Sultan, Abdul Medjid. He was born in February, 1830, the 1246th year of the Hegira, and ascended the throne in June, 1861. Abdul Medjid had left several sons, but the laws of Turkey provide that the brother of a Sultan is to succeed him before his own children. Abdul Aziz was then personally little known, having been obliged to live in strict retirement during his brother's reign; but he had devoted much attention to agriculture, and established a model farm on the banks of the Bosphorus. The beginning of his reign was marked by some valuable administrative and financial reforms. He maintained in their functions all the Ministers of the late Sultan except one, whom he dismissed and ordered to be arrested on a charge of embezzlement; reduced his civil list to one fifth of what it was in his brother's time; confirmed the Hatti-scherif of Gulhane, which is regarded as in some sort the charter of the Ottoman empire; promised equality to all his subjects, non-Mussulman as well as true believers; recommended order and economy, of which he set the example; abolished the worthless caime, or depreciated paper money, and replaced them by a metallic currency. He visited in person the public establishments, and mastered the details connected with them; reformed the administration of justice, broke up the seraglio, and kept in the palace only the Sultanas—the mothers of the Princes. He placed his nephews in the military service, and created the eldest a Pacha, instead of following the unnatural usage of the Turkish Court, which dooms all the presumptive heirs of royalty to the closest seclusion, lest they should anticipate the legal succession. His own son, then only four years old, had been brought up in secret, though with the consent of Abdul Medjid, as a Prince. The present Sultan, among other acts of his reign, has decreed the sale of the vakoofs, or estates in mortmain belonging to religious corporations, which had long been unproductive and ruinous. He has granted

ARRIVAL OF THE SULTAN OF TURKEY AT PARIS: THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON AND THE SULTAN AT THE LYONS RAILWAY STATION.

Arrivée du Sultan de Turquie à Paris; Réception du Sultan par l'Empereur Napoleon à la Gare de Lyon.

Fig. 4. An example of 19th century graphic journalism: An illustration showing the arrival of the Ottoman Sultan to Paris, *Illustrated London News*, 13July1867, p. 32.

Fig. 5. The cover of the first issue of the *Glasgow Looking Glass*, 11 June 1825.

Fig. 6. A day of King Charles X, *Northern Looking Glass*, vol. 1 no.6, 18 August 1825, p. 1.
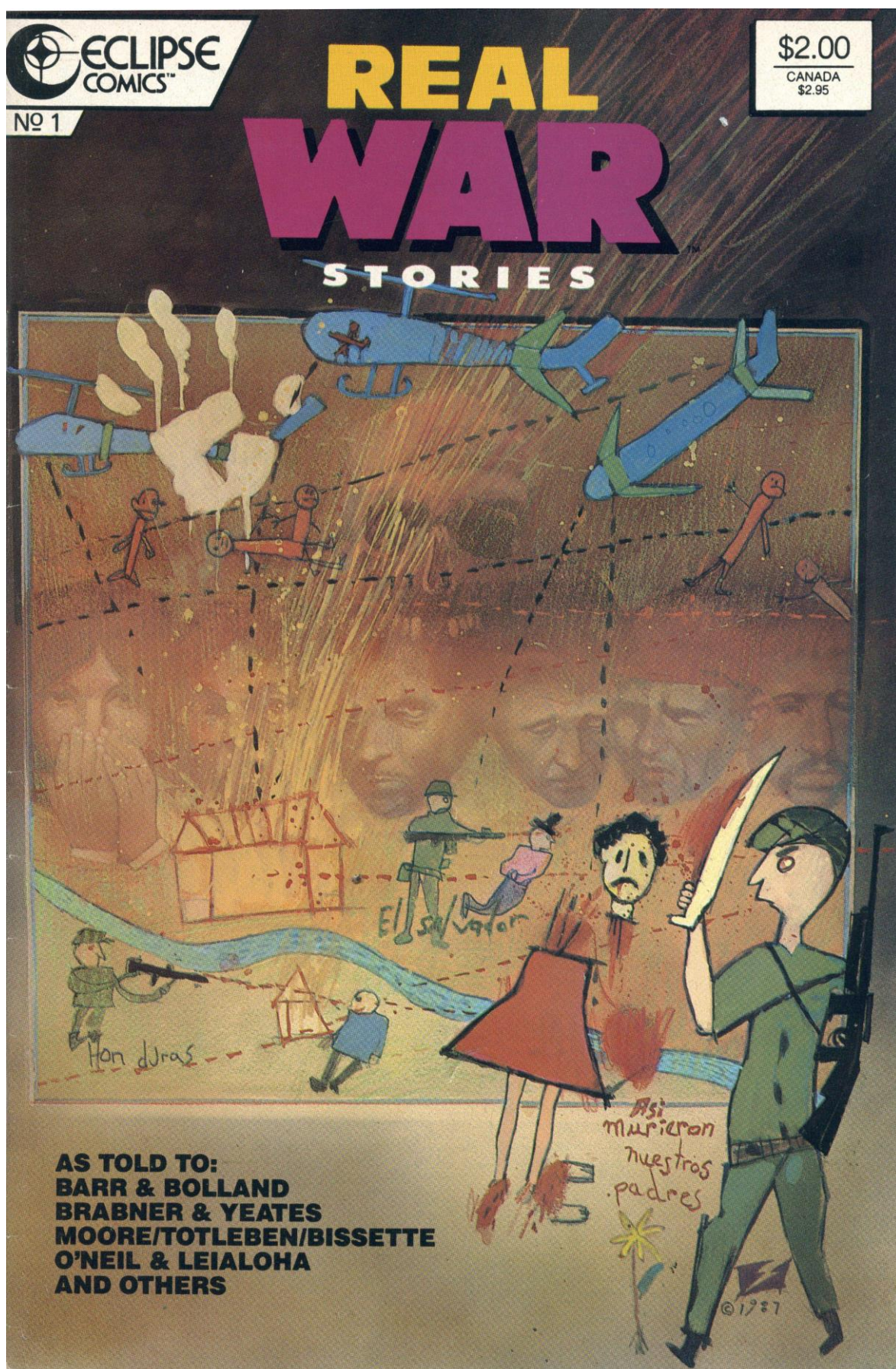
Fig. 7. The cover of *Real War Stories*, vol. 1, ed. by Joyce Brabner and Lou Ann Merkle.

Fig. 8. Brabner and Merkle in interview with Felipe, *Real War Stories*, vol. 1, p. 39.

Fig. 9. Sacco meeting Ali from Palestine, reprinted in *Notes from a Defeatist*, p. 184.
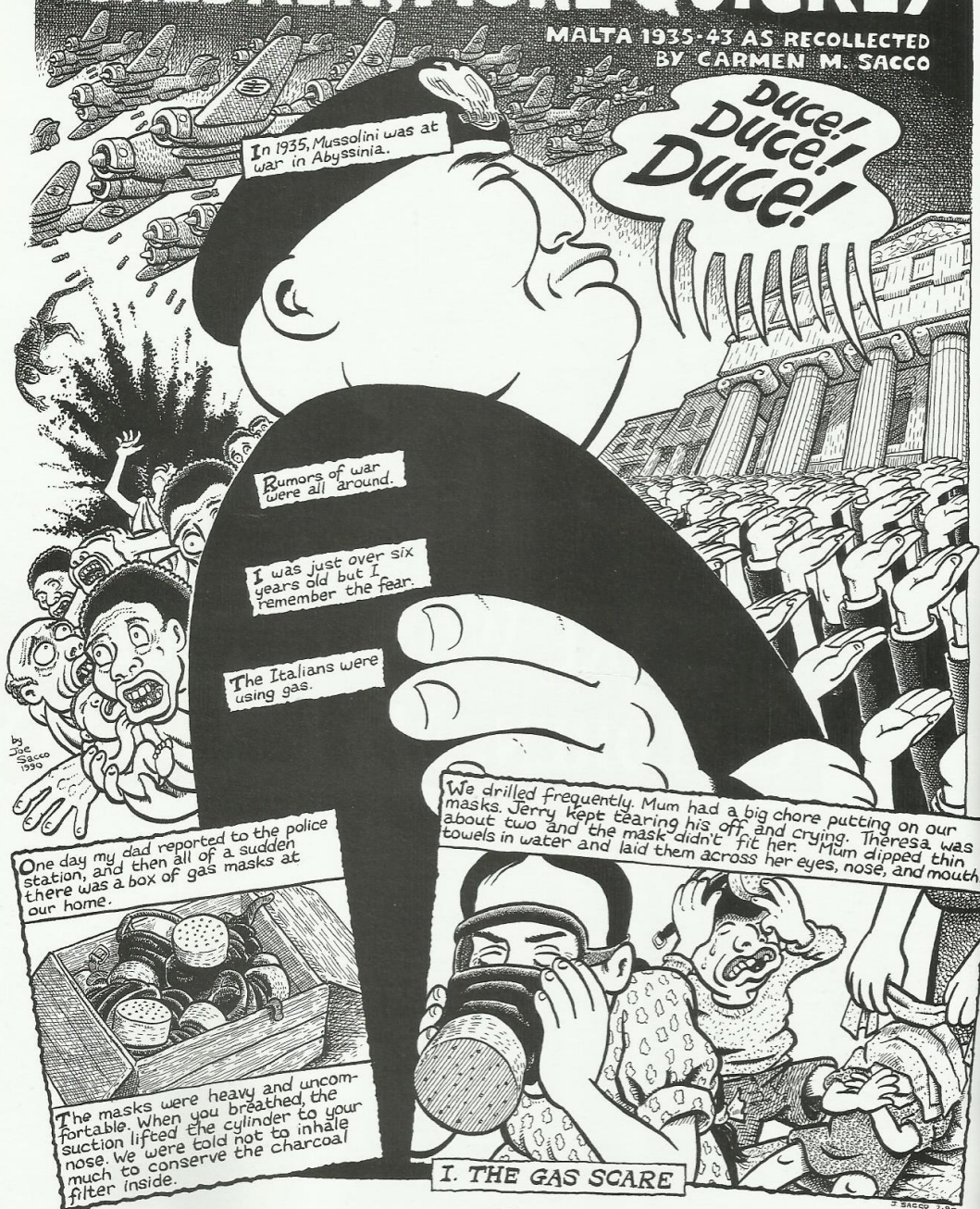
Fig. 10. Sacco's first comics journalism, reprinted in *Notes from a Defeatist*, p. 132.
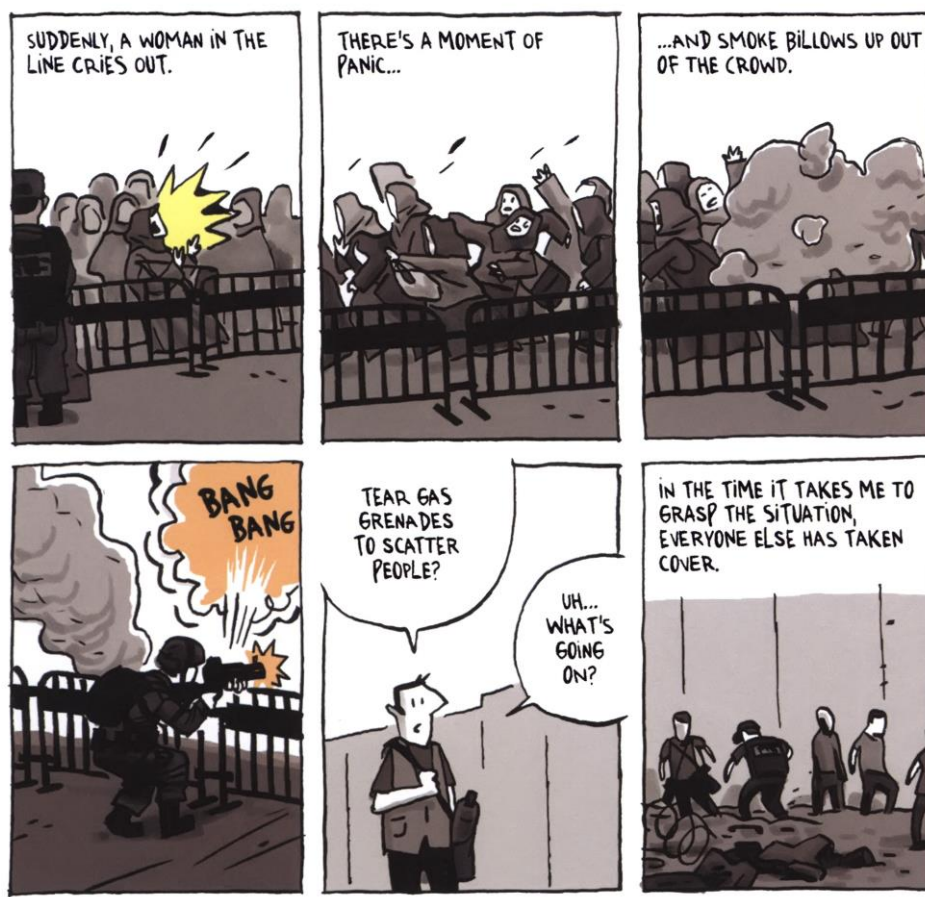
Fig. 11. Guy Delisle at the checkpoint, *Jerusalem*, p. 45.

Fig. 12. Muddy streets, *Palestine*, p. 22.
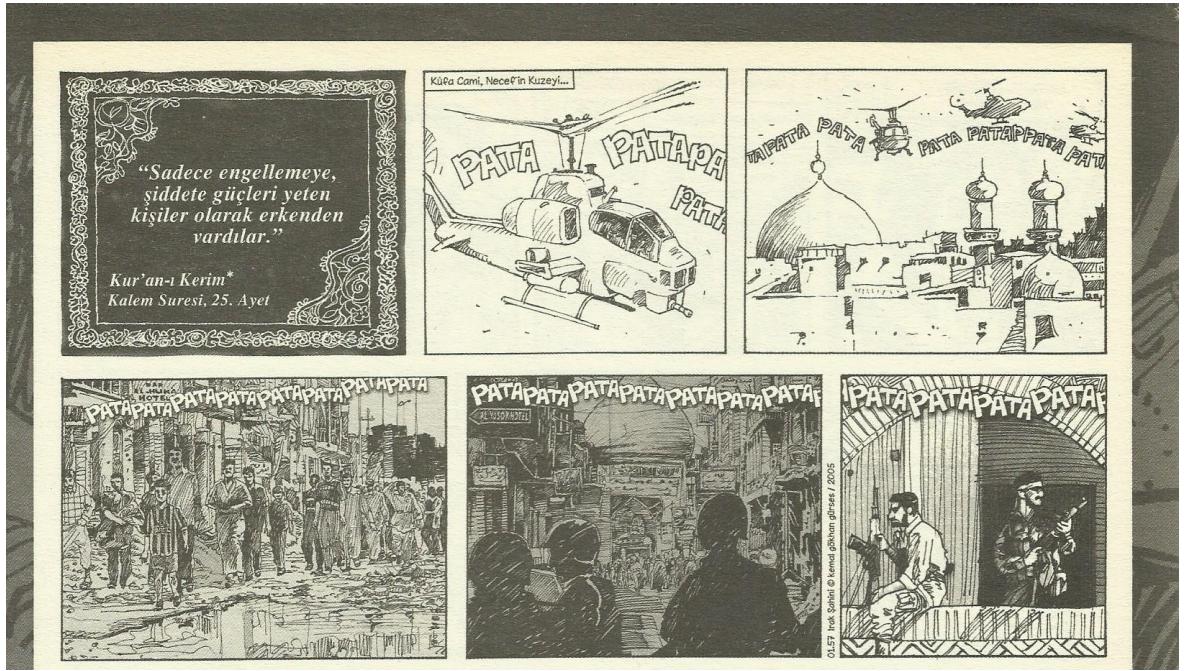
Fig. 13. Iraq in ruins, *Ayşegül Savaşta*, p. 35.

Fig. 14. An example of the similarity in drawing Arab faces: Sacco's *Footnotes in Gaza*, p. 271; Gürses' *Ayşegül Savaşta*, p. 41.

Fig. 15. An extract from Sarah Glidden's *The Waiting Room*.

Fig. 16. An extract from David Axe's *Everyone Told Us Not to Go to Syria*.

Fig. 17. An extract from *Army of God* by David Axe and Tim Hamilton.

Fig. 18. An extract from Josh Neufeld's *Bahrain: Lines in Ink, Lines in the Sand.*

Fig. 19. An extract from *Quebec's Not-So-Quiet Revolution* by Ted Rall.
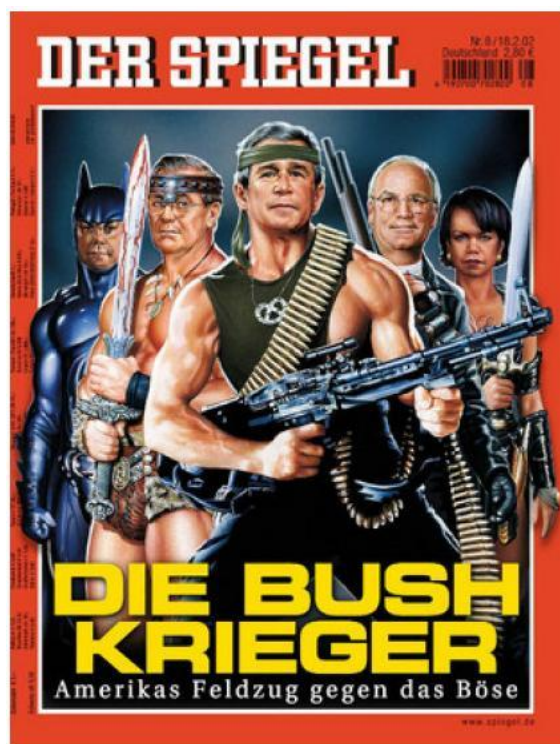
Spiegel 2002-02-18
"The Bush Warriors – America's Crusade Against Evil"

Spiegel 2008-10-27
"The Bush Warriors – End of the Performance"

Fig. 20. Two covers portraying Bush and his Team, from *Der Spiegel*.
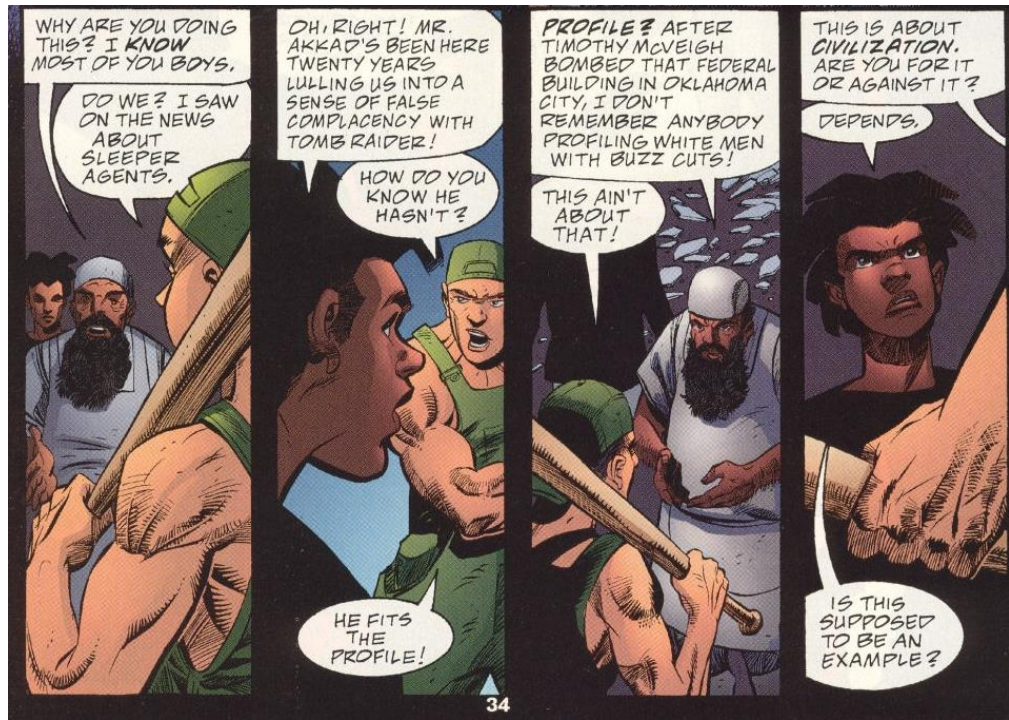
Fig. 21. An extract from 'Static Shock: Wednesday Afternoon' by Dwayne McDuffie, Denys Cowan and Prentis Rollins, p. 34.

Fig. 22. Miller's *Holy Terror*, p. 72.

Fig. 23. *Ayşegül Savaşta*, p. 62.

Fig. 24. *Palestine*, p. 105.
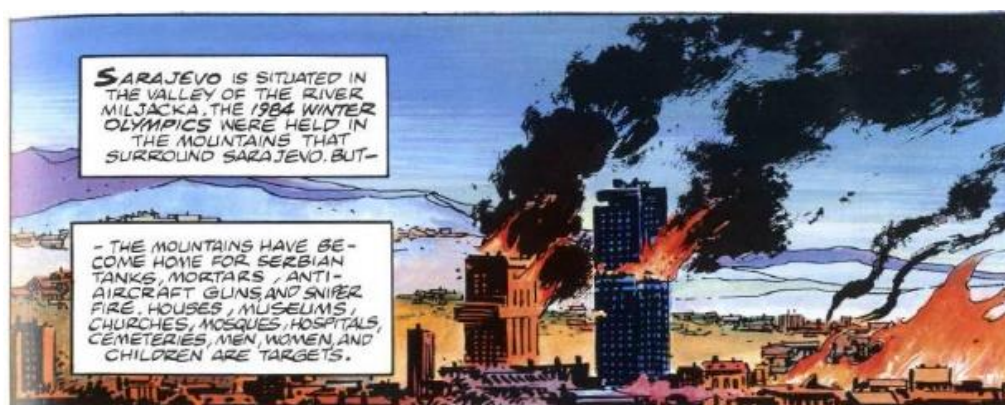
Fig. 25. *Fax from Sarajevo*, p. 35.

Fig. 26. A sketch of Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II by Davenport, *My Quest of the Arab Horse*, p. 27.
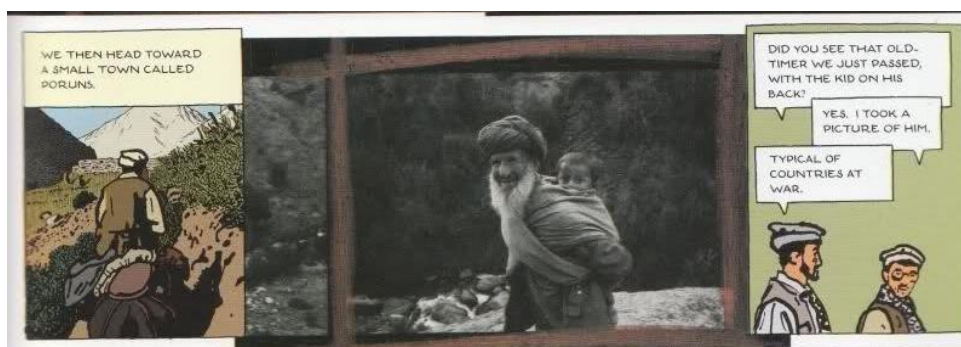
Fig. 27. A hybrid comics journalism mixing photographs, text and comics: *Photographer*, p. 56.
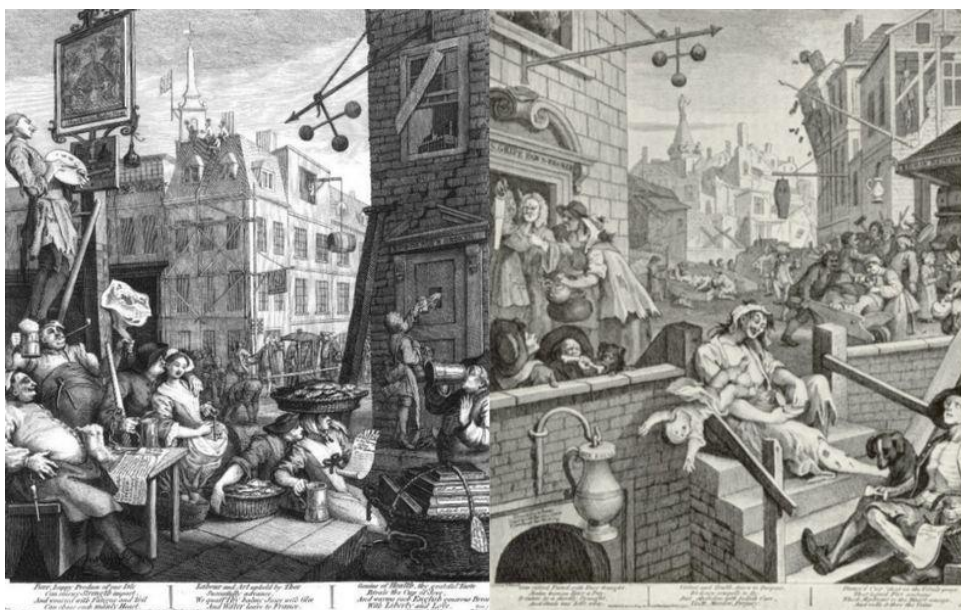
Fig. 28. Hogarth, *Beer Street and Gin Lane,* 1751.

Fig. 29. Goya's 'Y son fieras' from the set of *Los Desastres de la Guerra*.

Fig. 30. Goya's *The Third of May*, 1808.

View of the Conflagration of the City of Hamburgh.

Fig. 31. 'Destruction of the City of Hamburg by Fire', *The Illustrated London News*, 14 May 1842, p. 1.
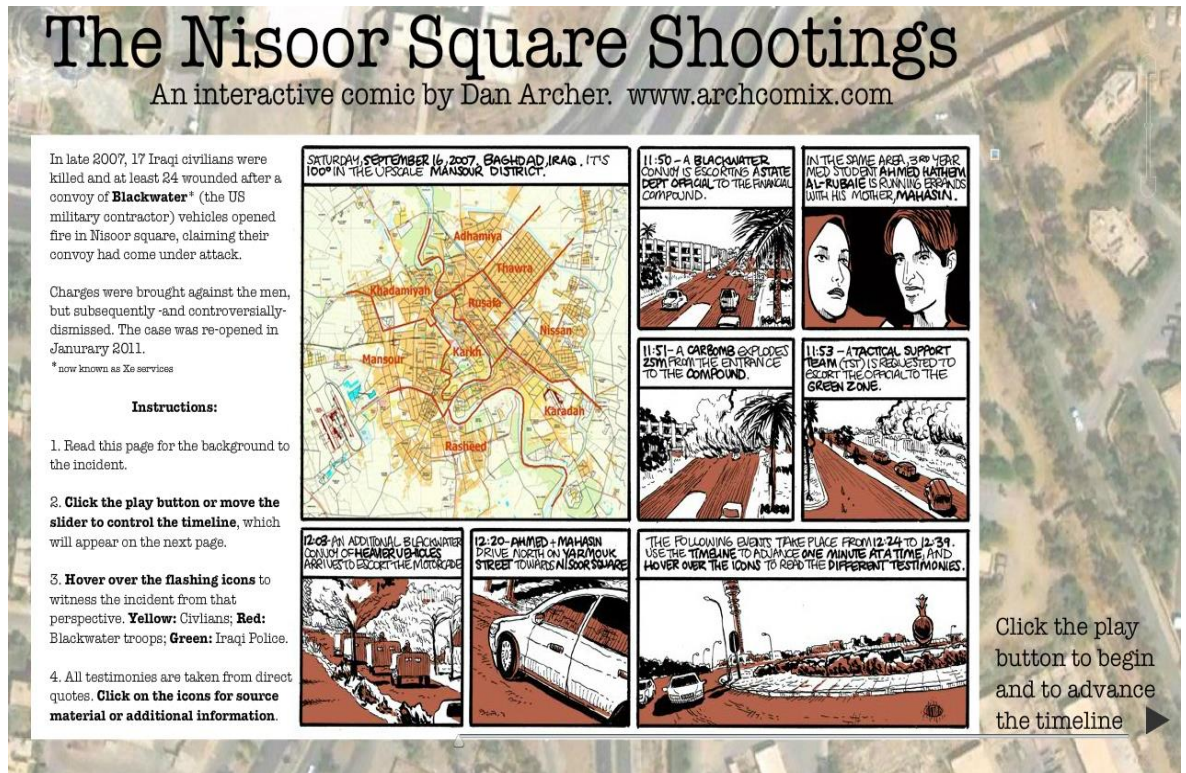
Fig. 32. *The Nisoor Square Shootings.*

Fig. 33. *Kathy has a Question.*

Fig. 34. Depiction of Jews as mice and Poles as pigs, *The Complete Maus*, p. 32.

Fig. 35. Depicting national identities, top: *Jerusalem*, p. 237; bottom: *Burma Chronicles*, p. 80.

Fig. 36. An Orientalist painting: *Namouna* (1887) by Adrien Henri Tanoux.
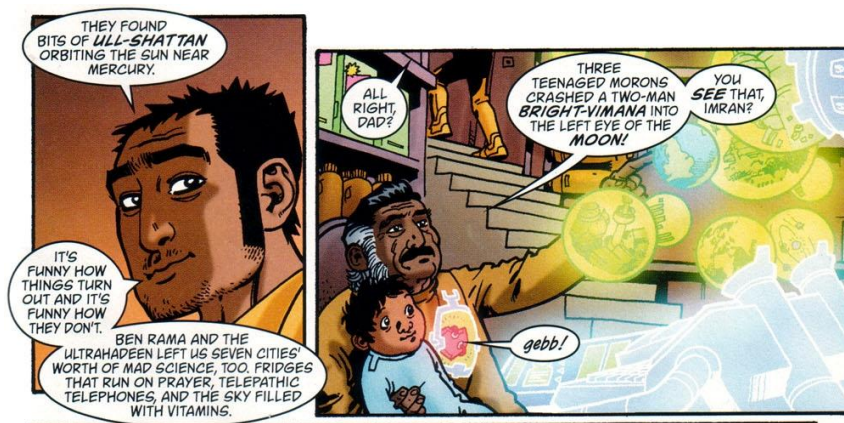
Fig. 37. An extract from *Vimanarama*, vol. 3, p. 29.

Fig. 38. Delisle showing a servant of the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II with a fez, *Jerusalem*, p. 224.
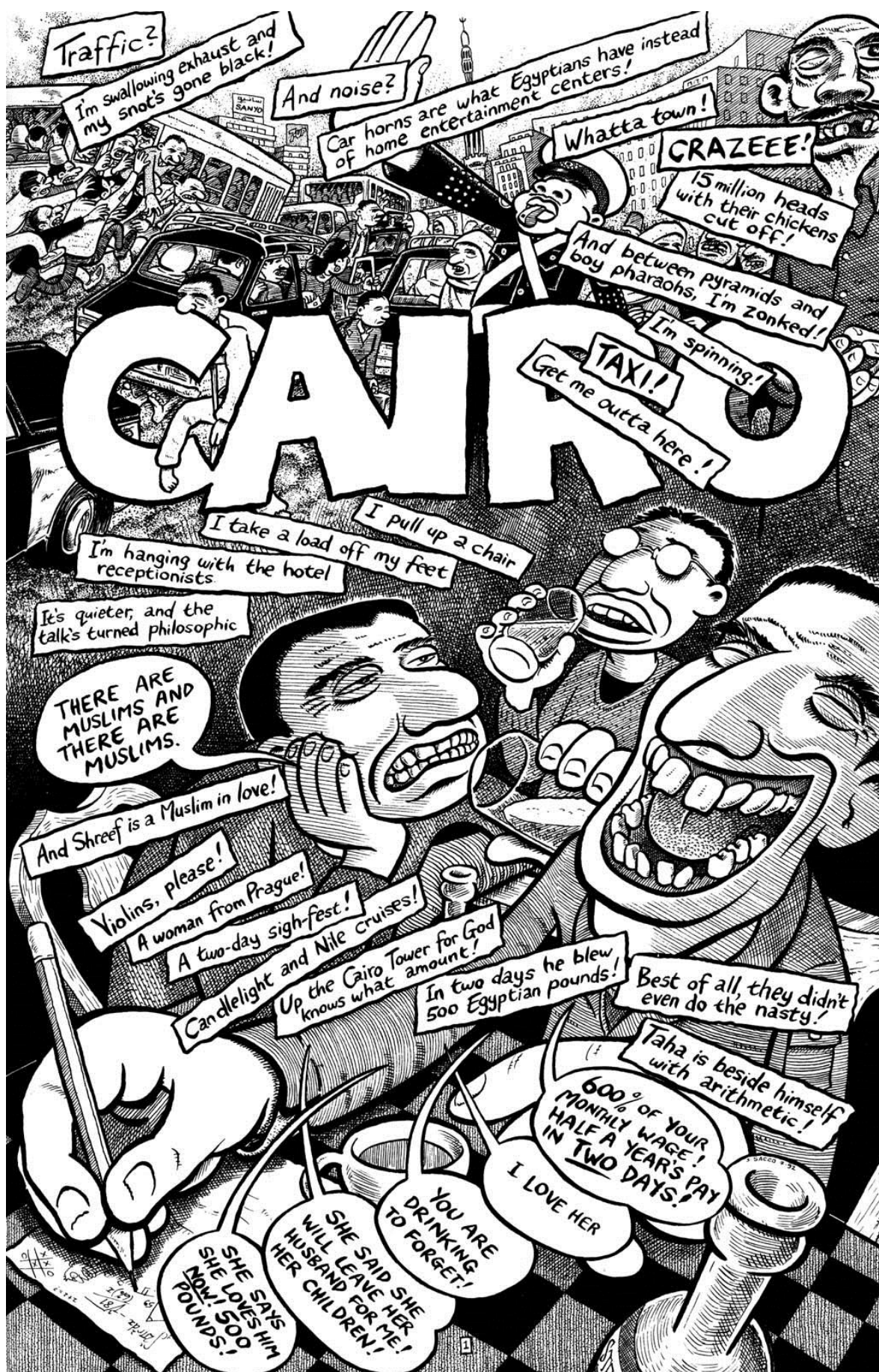
Fig. 39. Sacco's Cairo, *Palestine*, p. 1.

Fig. 40. Delisle wakes up with adhan, *Jerusalem*, p. 11.

Fig. 41. Gürses uses Quran surahs to separate chapters, *Ayşegül Savaşta*, p. 11.

Fig. 42. Delisle's depiction of Muslims, *Jerusalem*, p. 37.

Fig. 43. Sacrificing of a Bull, *Footnotes in Gaza*, p. 141.

Fig. 44. Diogenes of Sinope meeting Alexander the Great, *Diyojen*, 24 November 1870, p. 1.

Fig. 45. The 'Turkification' of the Swedish cartoon Adamson as Bican Aktüre.

Fig. 46. The first Turkish comic strip.

Fig. 47. *1001 Roman*, 1 November 1965, p. 1.

Fig. 48. The cover of *Doğan Kardeş*, August 1958.
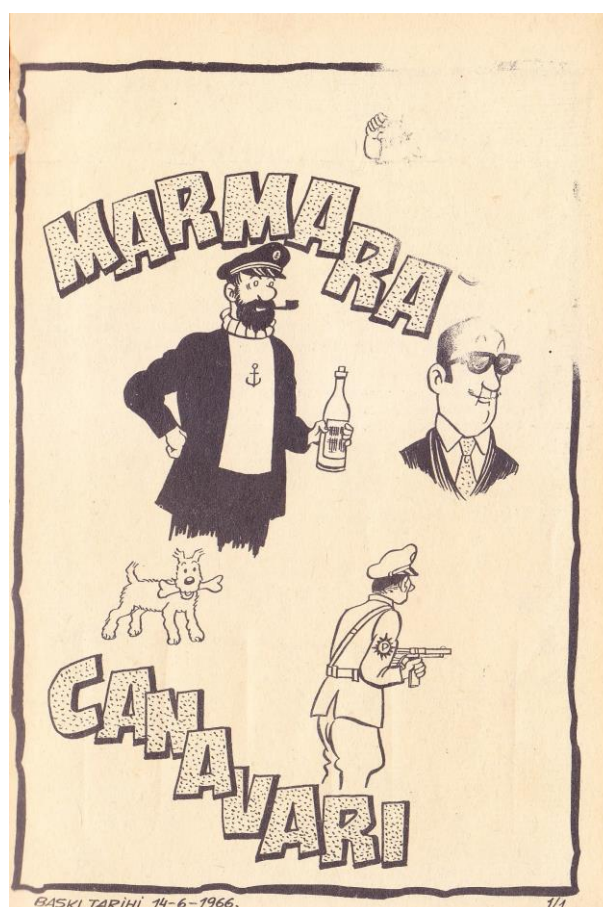
Fig. 49. A Turkish-made, pirate *Tintin* album: *Marmara Monster*, 14 June 1966.

Fig. 50. The Istanbul Gentleman, Abdülcanbaz.

Fig. 51. From the first issue of Suat Yalaz's *Karaoğlan*, 21 April 1963, p. 12.

Fig. 52. The cover of *Gırgır*'s first issue, 7 August 1972.

Fig. 53. An extract from *Yüzbaşı Volkan* from the early 1980s.

Fig. 54. The cover of *Penguen*, 25 September 2014.
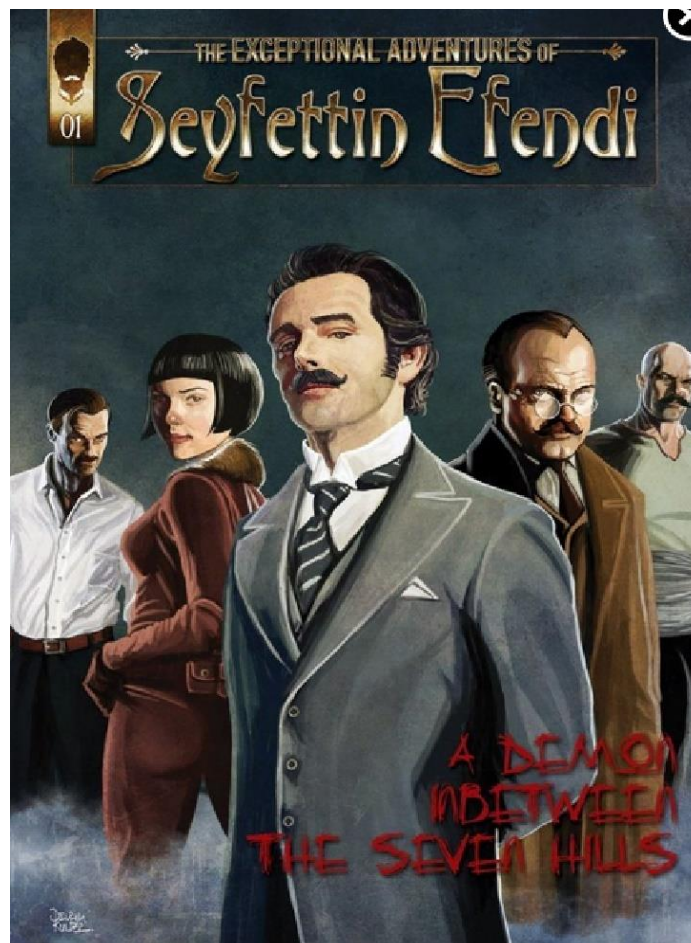
Fig. 55. The cover of *The Exceptional Adventures of Seyfettin Efendi* in Comixology.
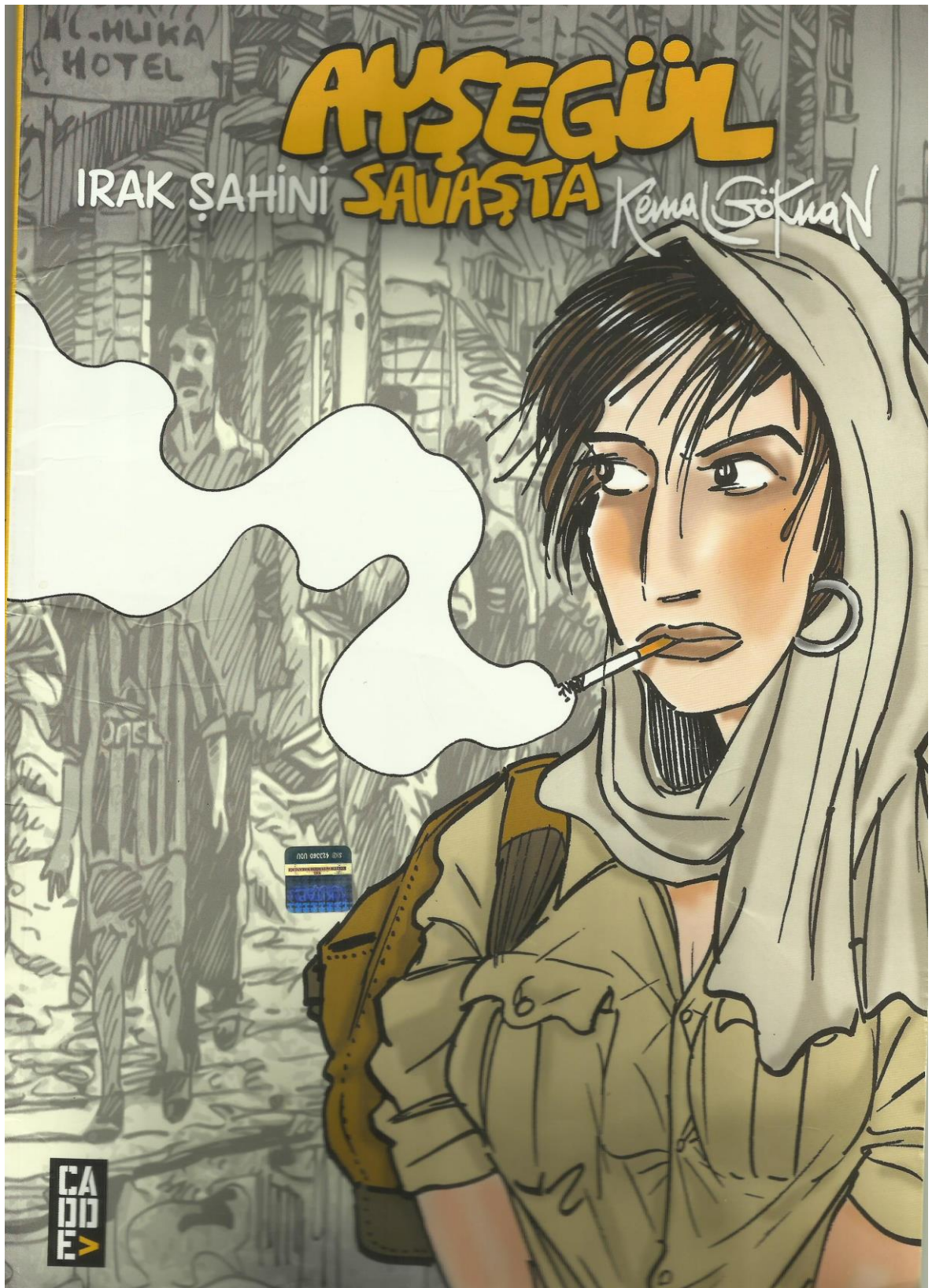
Fig. 56. The cover of *Ayşegül Savaşta*.
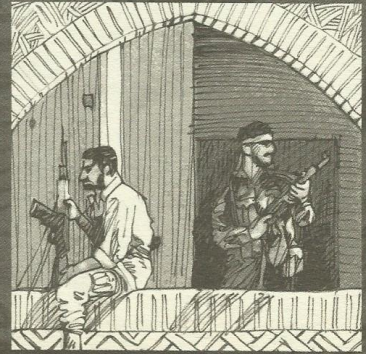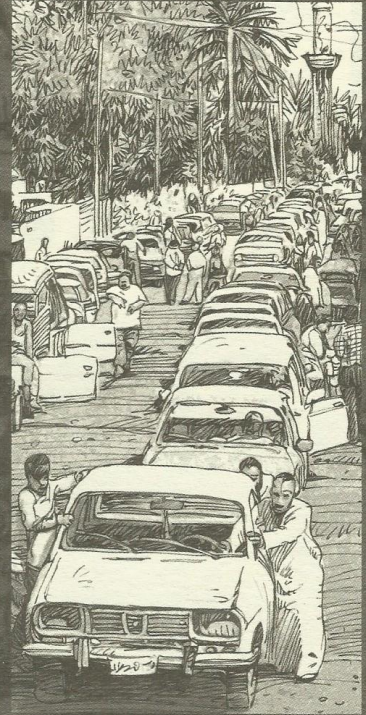
Fig. 57. Photographs, *Ayşegül Savaşta*, p. 68.

Fig. 58. The Maltese Falcon and the Iraqi Falcon.
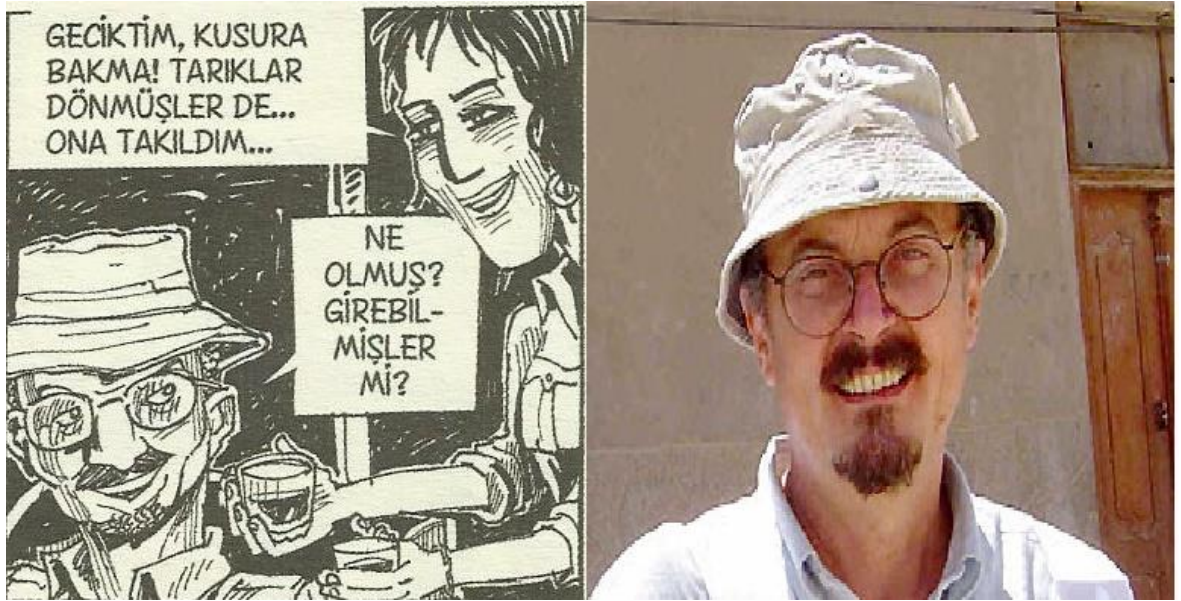
Fig. 59. Italian journalist Enzo Baldoni.

Fig. 60. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Fig. 61. Muqtada al-Sadr.

Fig. 62. Aladdin.

Fig. 63. 'Is there anyone who is not afraid of death, Enzo?'

Fig. 64. 'Oh my God, who is this?'

Fig. 65. 'What kind of a feeling it is to be in love with this girl?'
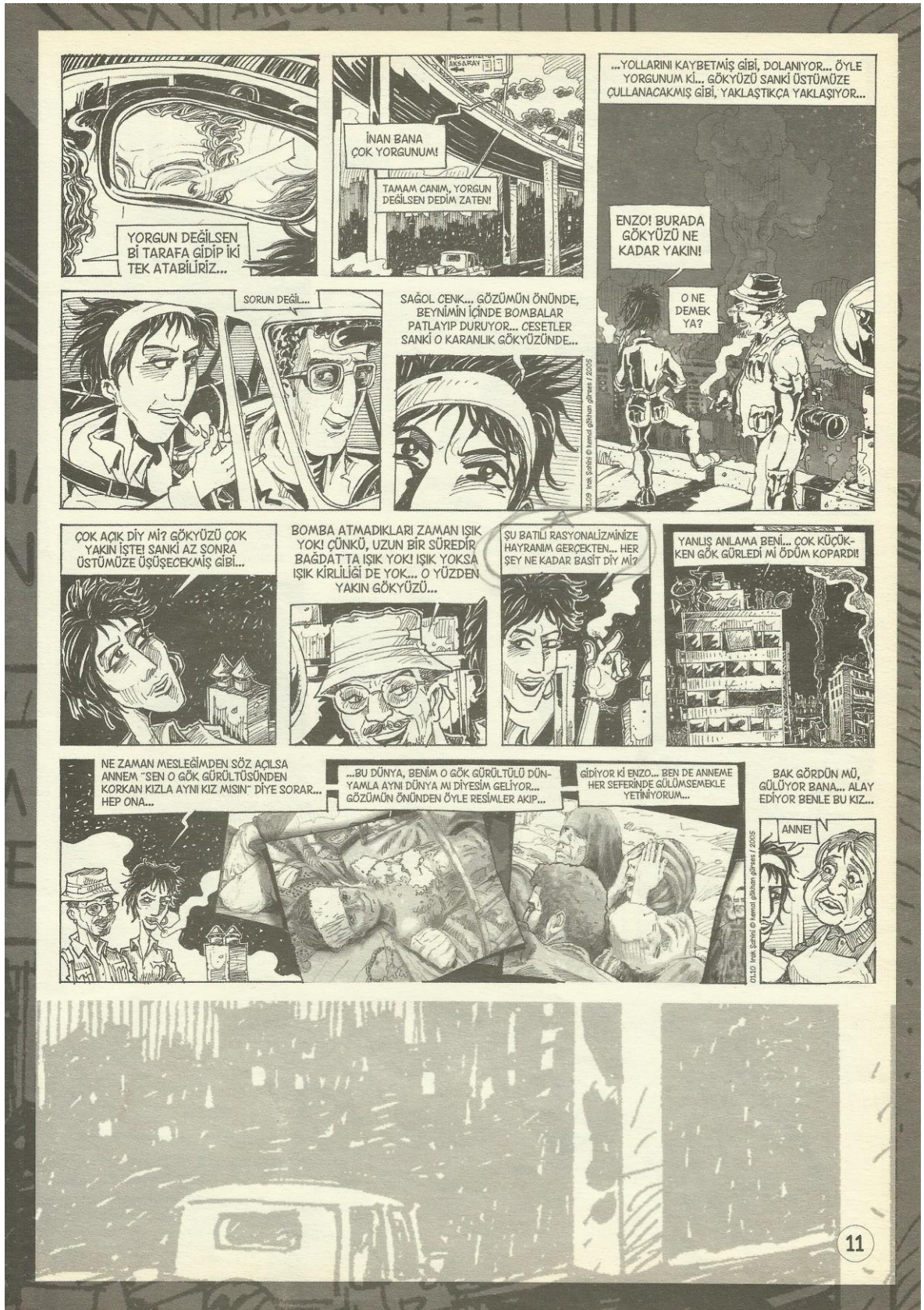
Fig. 66. 'Enzo! How close the sky is here!'

Fig. 67. Serge, *Albert and the Others*, p. 67.

Fig. 68. Cripples begging in the street, *Shenzhen*, p. 17.

Fig. 69. From roof-tops to the streets, *Shenzhen*, p. 12.

Fig. 70. Lost in Translation, *Shenzhen*, p. 25.

Fig. 71. Shaun Tan's *The Arrival*, p. 32.

Fig. 72. George Orwell's *1984*, *Pyongyang*, p. 2.
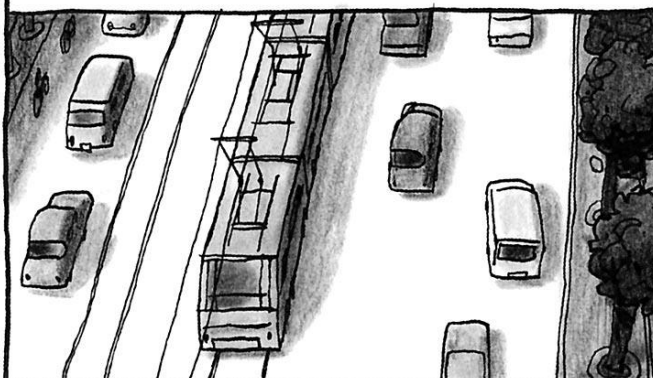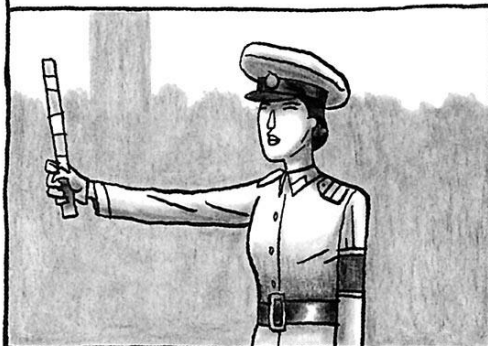
Fig. 73. Hermit Nation, *Pyongyang*, p. 25.
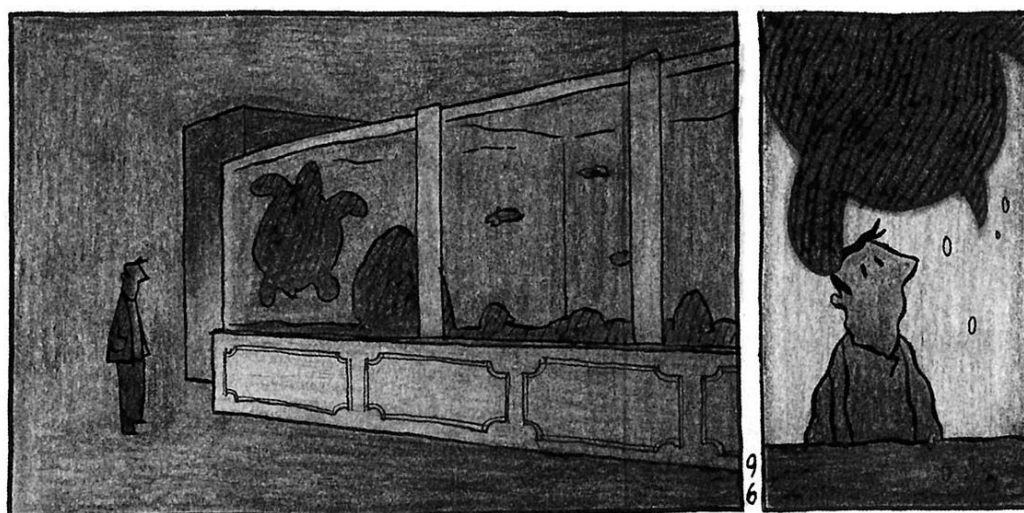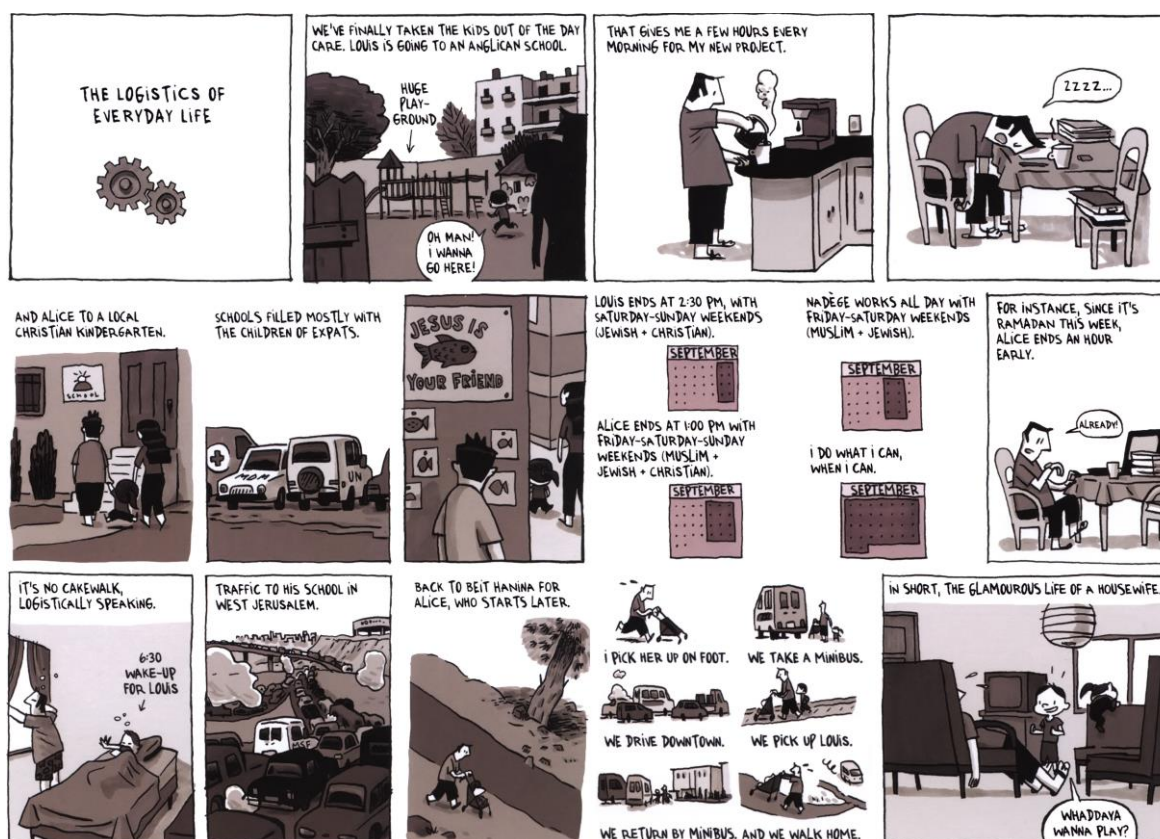
Fig. 74. The tortoise, *Pyongyang*, p. 96.
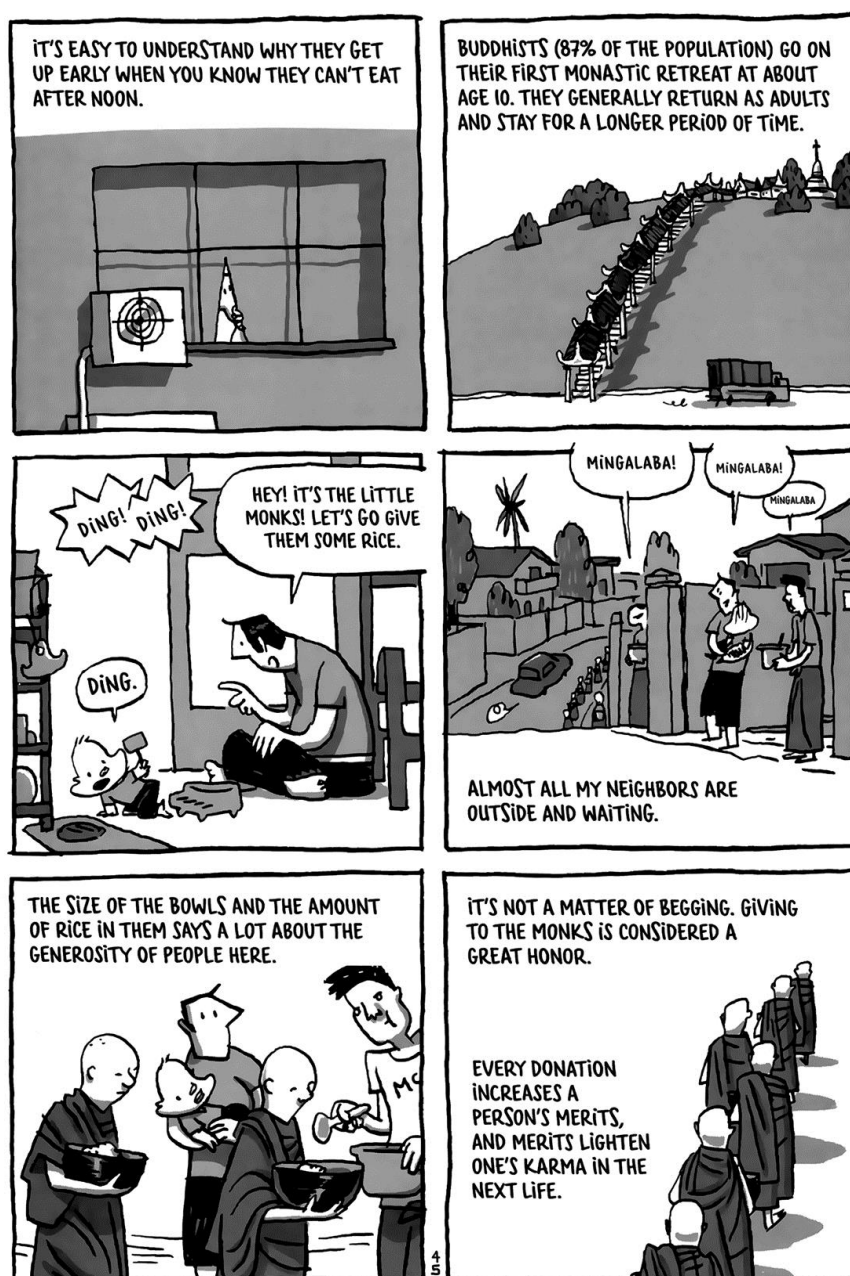
Fig. 75. Buddhists, *Burma Chronicles*, p. 45.

Fig. 76. City with borders, *Jerusalem*, p. 71.

Fig. 77. 'The Logistics of Everyday Life', *Jerusalem*, pp. 50-51.

Fig. 78. 'They're using us for laughs', *Footnotes in Gaza*, p. 13.

Fig. 79. 'Drawing the Wall', *Jerusalem*, p. 179.

Fig. 80. Ramallah, *Jerusalem*, p. 101.

Fig. 81. Hani, *Footnotes in Gaza*, pp. 147-8.
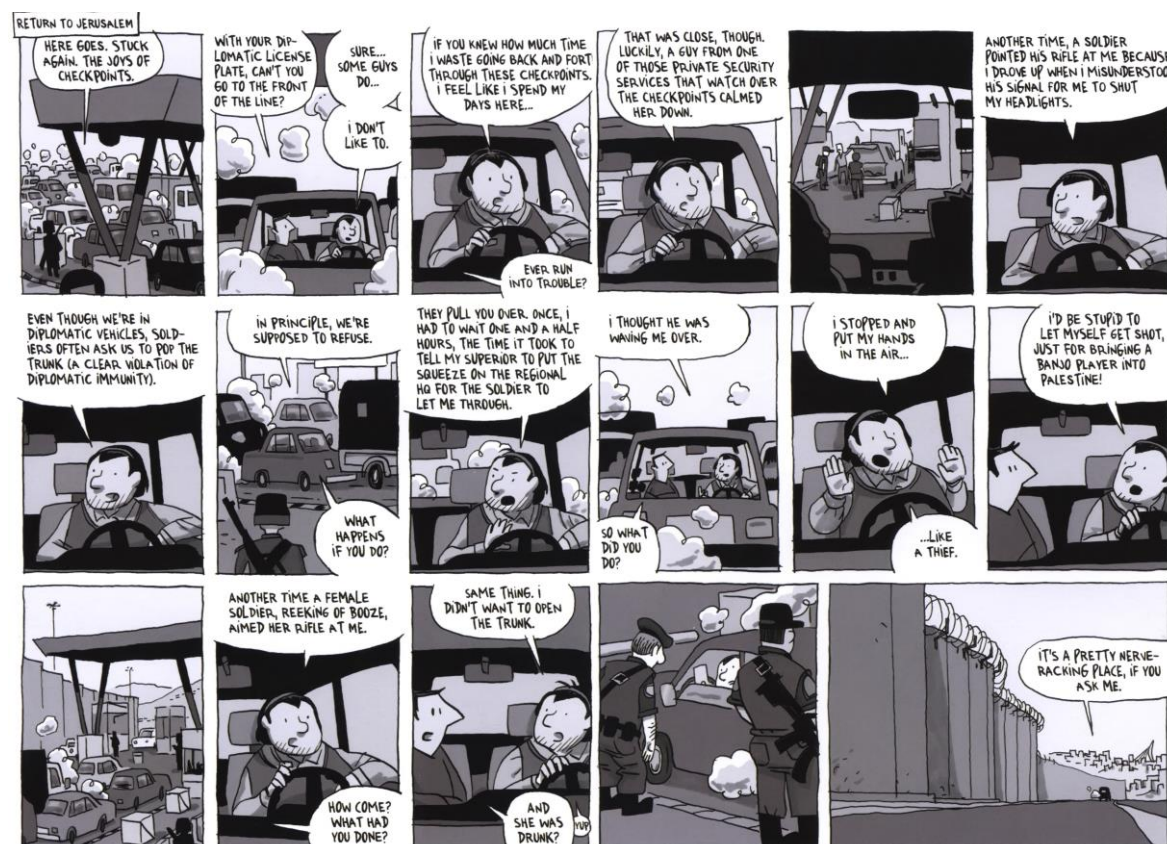

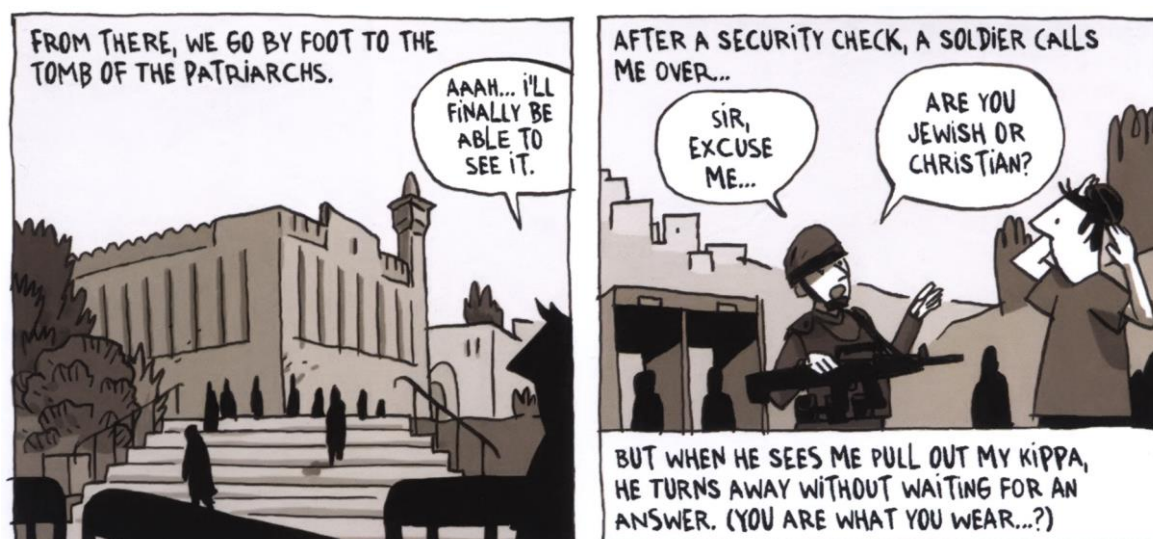**Fig. 82.** Sebastien, *Jerusalem*, pp. 232-3.

Fig. 83. Kippa, *Jerusalem*, p. 311.

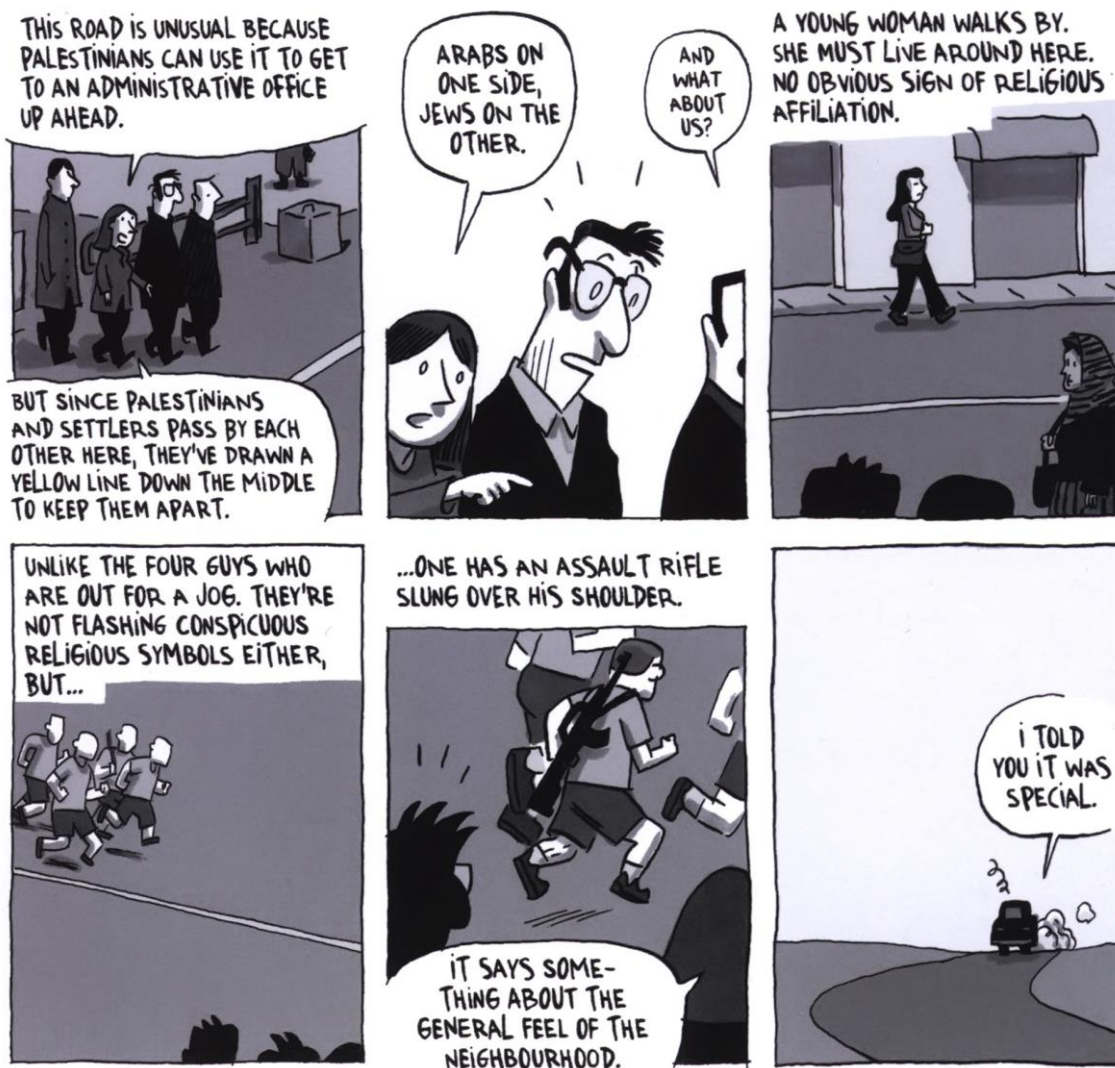**Fig. 84.** Sects, *Jerusalem*, p. 111.

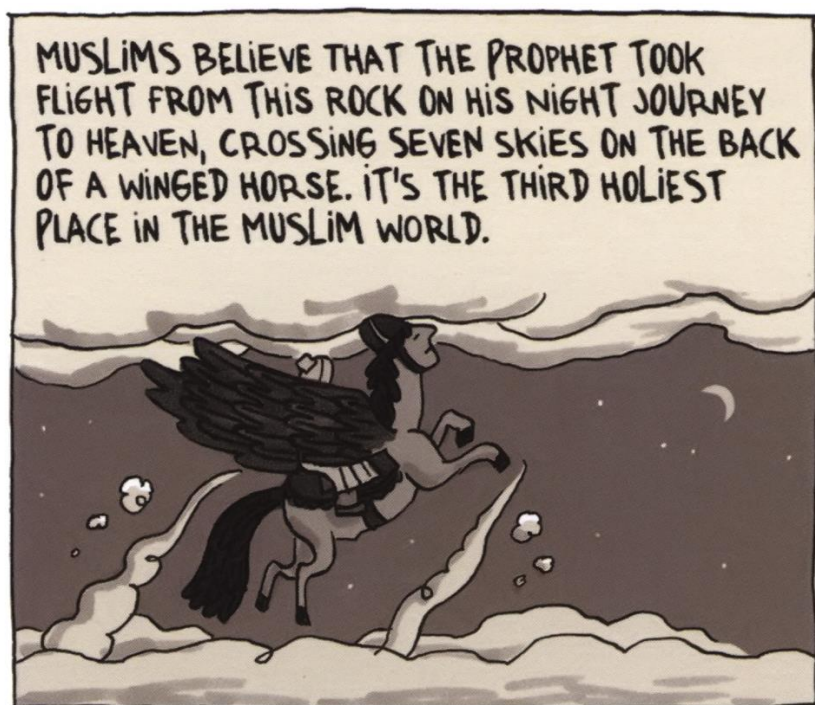**Fig. 85.** 'No sign of religious affiliation', *Jerusalem*, p. 190.

Fig. 86. Prophet Muhammad on the back of the horse with wings, *Jerusalem*, p. 140.

Fig. 87. A Scot?, *Jerusalem*, p. 12.

Fig. 88. An Arab couple holding hands, *Jerusalem*, p. 149.

Fig. 89. Recorded Surah player, *Jerusalem*, p. 144.

Fig. 90. Traditional Jewish Warrior's Clarion, *Jerusalem*, p. 184.

Fig. 91. Purim, *Jerusalem*, p. 210.

Fig. 92. Kissing hand, *Jerusalem*, p. 126.

Fig. 93. Heluva Party, *Jerusalem*, p. 212.

Fig. 94. A Strange Muslim Wedding, *Jerusalem*, p. 77.

Fig. 95. A Muslim Neighbour, *Jerusalem*, pp. 69-70.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

9:02 am, April 19, 1995: The Official Record of the Oklahoma City Bombing (Oklahoma
City: Oklahoma Today, 2005)

'Avicenna (Ibn Sina) (c.980—1037)', in *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*,
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/avicenna/> [accessed 18 May 2014]

'Bremer brands Moqtada Sadr an outlaw', *Middle East Online*, 5 April 2004,
<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=9514> [accessed 18 May 2013]

'Code of Ethics', in *Society of Professional Journalists*
<http://www.spj.org/pdf/ethicscode.pdf> [accessed 5 October 2011]

'Dedelerimizin Hava Tahminleri [Our Ancestor's Weather Forecast]', in *Kabataş Haber*
<http://www.kabatashaber.com/dedelerimizin-hava-tahminleri-arastirma/> [accessed
17 September 2014]

'Die Bush Krieger: Amerikas Feldzug gegen das Böse (The Bush Warriors: America's
Crusade against Evil)', *Der Spiegel*, 18 February 2002

'Die Bush Krieger: Ende der Vorstellung (The Bush Warriors: End of the Performance)',
Der Spiegel, 27 October 2008

'Enzo Baldoni, who's killing him one more time?', in *Pipistro.wordpress.com*
<http://pipistro.wordpress.com/2006/03/27/enzo-baldoni-why-are-they-killing-him-
one-more-time/> [accessed 16 May 2013]

'Glasgow / Northern Looking Glass', in *Glasgow University Library Special Collections
Department: Book of the Month*, June 2005
<http://special.lib.gla.ac.uk/exhibns/month/june2005.html> [accessed 22 September
2014]

'Iraqi militants say Turkish driver beheaded', *Nbcnews.com*, 13 September 2004,
<http://www.nbcnews.com/id/5990226/ns/world_news-mideast_n_africa/t/iraqi-
militants-say-turkish-driver-beheaded/#.UZexerWyDTo> [accessed 18 May 2013]

'Korean Myths and Folktales', in *Blog.asianart.org*
<http://blog.asianart.org/pdf/education/previsit/Korean-Myths.pdf> [accessed 31
March 2014]

'Leica History', in *Leica-camera.com* <http://uk.leica-camera.com/culture/history>
[accessed 15 May 2012]

'Status of Journalists and Journalism Ethics: IFC Principles', in *International Federation of Journalists* <http://www.ifj.org/en/articles/status-of-journalists-and-journalism-ethics-ifj-principles> [accessed 4 October 2011]

'The Looking Glass (1825 ~ 1839)', in *The Print Shop Window Archive*, 29 November 2011 <http://printshopwindow.blogspot.co.uk/2011/11/looking-glass-1825-1839.html> [accessed 21 September 2014]

Abirached, Zeina, *A Game for Swallows: To Die, To Leave, To Return* (Minneapolis: Graphic Universe, 2012)

Adams, Jeff, *Documentary Graphic Novels and Social Realism* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008)

Adams, Lucas, 'An Illustrated Account of the 1830's Mulberry Craze', in *Modernfarmer.com* <http://modernfarmer.com/2014/02/illustrated-account-1830s-mulberry-craze/> [accessed 31 August 2014]

Ahmad, Feroz, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (New York: Routledge, 2003)

Al-Ali, Naji, *A Child in Palestine* (London: Verso, 2009)

Allen, Michael, 'A Sketch of the Life' in *A Companion to Charles Dickens*, ed. by David Paroissien (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 3-17

Amir and Khalil, *Zahra's Paradise* (London: First Second, 2011)

Amphlett, Hilda, *Hats: A History of Fashion in Headwear* (Mineola, NY: Courier Dover, 2003)

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed (London: Verso, 2006)

Archer, Dan, and Ruth Tam, 'Different Person, Different Life: A Survivor's Account of Domestic Violence in San Fransisco', in *Sfpublicpress.org* <http://sfpublicpress.org/files/section1-4web.jpg> [accessed 31 August 2014]

———, 'The Nisoor Square Shootings' in *Cartoon Movement* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/icomic/11> [accessed 22 September 2014].

Arnold, Andrew B., 'From Ming to Kim', *Time*, 23 September 2005 <http://content.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,1108801,00.html> [accessed 23 March 2014]

Arzuk, Deniz 'Vanishing Memoirs: Doğan Kardeş Children's Periodical Between 1945 and 1993' (unpublished master dissertation, Boğaziçi University, 2007)

Axe, David, 'Everyone Told Us Not to Go to Syria' in *Medium.com* <https://medium.com/war-is-boring/everyone-told-us-not-to-go-to-syria-b942d3c4dea9> [accessed 20 September 2014]

——, and Tim Hamilton, *Army of God: Joseph Kony's War in Central Africa* (New York: Public Affairs, 2013)

Aydın, Salih, 'Saddam'ın altın şahini İstanbul'a kondu, yakalandı', *Sabah*, 19 September 2004, <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/2004/09/19/gnd106.html> [accessed 15 May 2013]

Aytekin, Mahmut, 'Lifting the veil of obscurity: Abdulhamid II, the issue of Palestine', in *Worldbulletin.net* <http://www.worldbulletin.net/historical-events/113589/lifting-the-veil-of-obscurity-abdulhamid-ii-the-issue-of-palestine> [accessed 4 September 2014]

Bain, Iain, 'Bewick, Thomas (1753–1828)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2334> [accessed 27 August 2014].

Barker, Martin, 'The Reception of Joe Sacco's Palestine', *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies* 9.2 (2012), pp. 58-73

Barnett, Emma, 'The unique advantage of female war reporters in Muslim countries', *The Telegraph*, 21 November 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-life/9692810/The-unique-advantage-of-female-war-reporters-in-Muslim-countries.html> [accessed 11 May 2013]

Barth, John, 'The Literature of Exhaustion' in *The Friday Book: Essays and Other Non-Fiction* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), pp. 62-76

Bashi, Parsua, *Nylon Road: A Graphic Memoir of Coming of Age in Iran* (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 2006)

Bauer, Otto, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*, ed. by Ephraim J. Nimni, trans. by Joseph O'Donnell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000)

Bauman, Zygmunt, *Identity: Conversations with Benedetto Vecchi* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004)

Bessie, Adam, 'Warning: This Article Contains Graphic Journalism', in *Truth-out.org* <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/2569:warning-this-article-contains-graphic-journalism> [accessed 20December 2013]

Billig, Michael, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage Publications, 1995)

Bolton, John, 'Beyond the Axis of Evil', in *Acronym.org.uk* <http://www.acronym.org.uk/docs/0205/doc01.htm> [accessed 30 January 2014]

Booth, Wayne, *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983 [1961])

Bors, Matt, 'Can We Stop Worrying about Millennials Yet?' in *CNN.com* <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/07/09/opinion/bors-millenial-comic-strip/index.html?hpt=op_t1> [accessed 26 September 2014]

———, 'Afghan Life', in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/1> [accessed 26 September 2014]

Bowen, Jeremy, *Six Days: How the 1967 War Shaped the Middle East* (London: Pocket Books, 2004)

Brabner, Joyce, and Lou Ann Merkle, eds, *Real War Stories*, 2 vols (Forestville, CA: Eclipse Comics, 1987-1991)

———, and Thomas Yeats, 'Flashpoint: The LA Penca Bombing' in *Brought to Light: A Graphic Docudrama* (London: Titan Books, 1989) [A Flip Book]

———, Harvey Pekar, and Frank Stack, *Our Cancer Year* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1994)

———, Mark Badger and Wayne Vansant, *Activists!* (Stabur Press, 1995)

———, and Mark Badger, *Animal Rights Comics*, 2 vols (Stabur Press, 1996)

Brighton, Paul, and Dennis Foy, *News Values* (London: Sage Publications, 2007)

Brister, Rose, and Belinda Walzer, 'Kairos and Comics: Reading Human Rights Intercontextually in Joe Sacco's Graphic Narrative', *College Literature* 40.3 (2013), pp. 138-55

Bush, George Walker, 'Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People', in *Whitehouse.archives.gov* <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html> [accessed 18 January 2014]

———, 'President Delivers State of the Union Address', in *Whitehouse.archives.gov* <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/01/print/20020129-11.html> [accessed 30 January 2014]

Cadava, Eduardo, *Words of Light: Theses on the Photography of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997)

Cagle, Susie, 'Down in Smoke' in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/icomic/44> [accessed 26 September 2014]

———, The Art of Peace' in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/16> [accessed 26 September 2014]

———, 'San Francisco's Class War, By the Numbers: Counting the new tech boom' in *Medium.com* <https://medium.com/the-nib/san-franciscos-class-war-by-the-numbers-700c51a43a4> [accessed 26 September 2014]

Campbell, Duncan, 'I do comics, not graphic novels', *The Guardian*, 23 October 2003 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2003/oct/23/comics.politics> [accessed 21 September 2014]

Cantek, Levent, 'Türkiye'de Çizgi Roman'ın Umumi Manzarası [The General View of Comics in Turkey]', in *Çizgili Hayat Kılavuzu: Kahramanlar, Dergiler ve Türler* [A Guide for a Striped Life: Heroes, Magazines and Genres], ed. by Levent Cantek (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004)

———, *Türkiye'de Çizgi Roman* [Comics in Turkey] (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012)

———, 'On Comics in Turkey' in *Seruven.org* <http://www.seruven.org/> [accessed 9 September 2014]

Carey, James W., 'The Problem of Journalism History', *Columbia Journalism Review*, 13.2 (1974); reprinted in *James Carey: A Critical Reader*, ed. by Eve Stryker Munson and Catherine A. Warren (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 86-94

Choueiri, Youssef M., 'Nationalisms in the Middle East: The Case of Pan-Arabism', in *A Companion to the History of the Middle East*, ed. by. Youssef M. Choueiri (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005)

Chuan-Yao, Ling, and David Shook, 'Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China by Guy Delisle; Helge Dascher', *World Literature Today*, 81.2 (2007)

Cleveland, William L., and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 4th edn (Philadelphia: Westview Press, 2009)

Cooke, Rachel, 'Guy Delisle: 'The challenge is not to explain too much'', *The Guardian*, 31 May 2012 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/may/31/guy-delisle-jerusalem-review-interview> [accessed 11 June 2014]

D'hoker, Elke, and Gunther Martens, eds, *Narrative Unreliability in the Twentieth-Century First-Person Novel* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008)

Davenport, Homer, *My Quest of the Arab Horse* (New York: B. W. Dodge & Company, 1909)

Davis, Tricia, and Niki Jepson, 'Operation Free Iraq: A Gendered Content Analysis of Newspapers' Poster, University of Wisconsin – River Falls <http://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/302/IRAQ.pdf?sequence=1> [accessed 10 May 2013]

Day, Julia, 'Italian journalist killed in Iraq', *The Guardian*, 27 August 2004, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2004/aug/27/pressandpublishing.iraq> [accessed 16 May 2013]

Delisle, Guy, *Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea*, trans. by Helge Dascher (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2005)

———, *Aline and the Others* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2006)

———, *Shenzhen: A Travelogue from China*, trans. by Helge Dascher (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2006)

———, *Albert and the Others* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2007)

———, *Burma Chronicles*, trans. by Helge Dascher (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2008)

———, *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City, trans. by Helge Dascher* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2012)

———, *A User's Guide to Neglectful Parenting*, trans. by Helge Dascher (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2013)

———, interviewed by Mike Miliard, *The Phoenix*, 11 October 2006 <http://thephoenix.com/boston/news/24766-comic-possibilities-of-north-korea/?page=2#TOPCONTENT> [accessed 23 March 2014]

———, interviewed by Mike Rhode, *Washington City Paper*, 25 April 2012 <http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/blogs/artsdesk/visual-arts/2012/04/25/meet-a-visiting-cartoonist-a-chat-with-guy-delisle/> [accessed 11 June 2014]

———, interviewed by Piya Chattopadhyay, *Youtube*, 30 August 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Uu20ZdLPx0> [accessed 10 July 2013]

———, interviewed by Koldo Gutiérrez, *Cactus*, 10 November 2013 <http://revistacactus.com/entrevista-guy-delisle/> [accessed 2 April 2014]

Dowling, Peter, 'Truth versus Art in Nineteenth-century Graphic Journalism: the colonial Australian case', *Media History* 5.2 (1999), pp. 109-125

Dufaux, Jean and Ana Mirallès, *Djinn* (Paris: Dargaud, 2001-)

Durkheim, Emile, 'The Method of Sociology (1908)', in *The Rules of Sociological Method*, ed. by Steven Lukes, trans. by Wilfred Douglas Halls (New York: The Free Press, 1982), pp. 245-47

Eisner, Will, *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories*, 6th ed. (New York: DC Comics, 2000 [1978])

———, *Comics and Sequential Art* (New York: Norton, 2008 [1985])

———, *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008)

Eliot, T. S., '"Ulysses, Order, and Myth," Review of Ulysses by James Joyce', *The Dial* 75.5 (1923), pp. 480-83 (p. 483).

Esposito, John L., ed, *The Oxford History of Islam*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)

Fénelon, François, *Les Aventures de Télémaque* [The Adventures of Telemachus] (1699)

Fiedler, Leslie, *Waiting for the End: The American Literary Scene from Hemingway to Baldwin* (London: Cape, 1965)

Filiu, Jean-Pierre, and David B., *Best of Enemies: A History of US and Middle East Relations: Part One: 1783-1953*, trans. by Edward Gauvin (London: Self Made Hero, 2012)

———, *Best of Enemies: A History of US and Middle East Relations: Part Two: 1953-1984*, trans. by Edward Gauvin (London: Self Made Hero, 2014)

Flaubert, Gustav, Dictionary of Received Ideas, trans. by Gregory Norminton (London: Oneworld Classics, 2010 [1913])

Frazer, Jenni, 'The foreign correspondent who survived war, sexism and hate in Iraq' *The Jewish Chronicle Online*, 6 December 2012 <http://www.thejc.com/lifestyle/lifestyle-features/93483/the-foreign-correspondent-who-survived-war-sexism-and-hate-iraq> [accessed 17 September 2014]

Frus, Phyllis, *The Politics and Poetics of Journalistic Narrative: The Timely and the Timeless* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)

Galtung, Johan, and Mari Holmboe Ruge, 'The Structure of Foreign News: The Presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus Crises in Four Norwegian Newspapers', *Journal of Peace Research* 2.1 (1965), pp. 64-90

Gardner, Jared, 'Home/fronts: Joe Sacco's Footnotes in Gaza (Metropolitan Books, 2009)', *The Huffington Post*, 13 April 2010 <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jared-gardner/homefronts-joe-saccos-emf_b_457789.html> [accessed 22 September 2014].

Gaunt, Philip, *Choosing the News: The Profit Factor in News Selection* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990)

Gellner, Ernest, *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1964)

———, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983)

———, *Encounters with Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994)

———, 'The Coming of Nationalism and Its Interpretation: The Myths of Nation and Class', in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. by Gopal Balakrishnan (London: Verso, 1996)

———, *Nationalism* (London: Phoenix, 1997)

Gennis, Emi, 'What is a Juggalo', in *Symboliamag.com*
<http://www.symboliamag.com/what-is-a-juggalo/> [accessed 31 August 2014]

Gernsheim, Helmut, *A Concise History of Photography* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971)

Gladstone, Brooke, and Josh Neufeld, *The Influencing Machine: Brooke Gladstone on the Media* (London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011)

Glidden, Sarah, *How to Understand Israel in 60 Days or Less* (New York: Vertigo, 2011)
——, 'The Waiting Room' in *Cartoonmovement.com*
<http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/10> [accessed 20 September 2014]

——, interviewed by Sara Drake, 12 May 2013 <http://badatsports.com/2013/meanwhile-on-comics-journalism-and-an-interview-with-sarah-glidden/> [accessed 27 November 2013]

Glocker, Winfrid, 'Sen(n)efelder, Johannes Nepomuk Franz Alois (auch: Aloys)', in *Neue Deutsche Biographie (NDB)* <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz80036.html> [1st September 2014]

Gold, Herbert, 'On Epidemic First Personism', in *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy,* ed. by Ronald Weber (New York: Hastings House, 1974), pp. 283-287

Gombrich, Ernst, *Art and Illusion*, 4th ed. (London: Phaidon Press, 1972 [1960])
——, *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and Other Essays on the Theory of Art* (London: Phaidon Press, 1963)

Grier, Peter, 'Iraq's bin Laden? Zarqawi's rise', *The Christian Science Monitor*, 14 May 2004, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0514/p03s01-usfp.html> [accessed 16 May 2013]

Grove, Laurence, *Comics in French: The European Bande Dessinee in Context* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013)
——, interviewed by Amanda McCall, 20 June 2013 <http://news.stv.tv/west-central/230141-glasgow-looking-glass-first-ever-comic-debate-at-glasgow-university/> [accessed 21 September 2014]

Guibert, Emanuel, Didier Lefevre and Frederic Lemercier, *The Photographer: Into War-torn Afghanistan with Doctors without Borders*, trans. by Alexis Siegel (London: First Second, 2009)

Gutkind, Lee, *The Art of Creative Nonfiction: Writing and Selling the Literature of Reality* (Wiley Books for Writers) (New York: John Wiley, 1997)

Güler, Emrah, 'The return of Abdülcanbaz, the Formidable Turk', in *Hurriyet Daily News*, 11 March 2013 <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/the-return-of-abdulcanbaz-the-formidable-turk.aspx?pageID=238&nID=42679&NewsCatID=386> [accessed 9 September 2014]

Gürses, Kemal Gökhan, *12 Eylül Öncesine Dönmek İstiyorum* ([n.p.], 1989)

——, *Aydınlarla Zontaların Savaşı* ([n.p.], 1990)

——, *Booşver... Nasılsa Halk Anlamaz!* ([n.p.], 1991).

——, *Aslında Bunların Hepsi Hikaye* ([n.p.] 1991)

——, *Zontellektüel Abdullah* ([n.p.], 1993)

——, *Kırkından Sonra* ([n.p.], 2003)

——, *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* (İstanbul: Cadde Yayınları, 2006)

——, *Kapkaç* (Unpublished Comic Strips)

——, *Erev ile Saheer* (Unpublished Comic Strips)

——, *Moskova Gözyaşlarına İnanmıyor* (Unpublished Comic Strips)

Haeri, Safa, 'Concocting a 'Greater Middle East' brew', *Asia Times Online*, 4 March 2004 <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/FC04Ak06.html> [accessed 1 August 2013]

Hagen, Rainer, and Rose-Marie, *Bruegel: The Complete Paintings* (Cologne: Midpoint Press, 2001)

Haleem, M. A. S. Abdel, trans., *The Qur'an, A New Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Hall, Stuart, 'The Determinations of News Photographs', in *The Manufacture of News: Deviance, Social Problems and the Mass Media*, ed. by Stanley Cohen and Jock Young, rev. edn (London: Constable, 1981), pp. 226-43

Halliday, Fred, *Two Hours that Shook the World: September 11, 2001: Causes and Consequences* (London: Saqi Books, 2002)

Hamlin, Janet, *Sketching Guantanamo: Court Sketches of the Military Tribunals, 2006-2013* (Washington: Fantagraphics Books, 2013)

Han, Jung-Sun N, 'Empire of Comic Visions: Japanese Cartoon Journalism and its Pictorial Statements on Korea, 1876–1910', *Japanese Studies* 26. 3 (2006), pp. 283-302

Harcup, Tony, and Deirdre O'Neill, 'What Is News? Galtung and Ruge revisited', *Journalism Studies* 2.2 (2001), pp. 261-80

Hatfield, Charles, *Alternative Comics: An Emerging Literature* (Mississippi: University Press of Mississippi, 2005)

Hentoff, Nat, 'Behold the New Journalism – It's Coming After You', in *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy*, ed. by Ronald Weber (New York: Hastings House, 1974), pp. 49-53

Hobsbawm, Eric, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983)

———, 'Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914', in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983)

———, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990)

Hoerger, Michael, and Mia Partlow, *Edible Secrets: A Food Tour of Classified US History* (Bloomington: Microcosm Publishing, 2010)

Holiday, Darril, and E. N. Rodriguez, 'Kathy has a Question', in *Thinglink.com* <http://www.thinglink.com/scene/324735881179037697> [accessed 22 September 2014]

Holland, Edward C., '"To Think and Imagine and See Differently": Popular Geopolitics, Graphic Narrative, and Joe Sacco's "Chechen War, Chechen Women"', *Geopolitics* 17 (2012), pp. 105-29

Hourani, Albert, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984)

Hoyland, Robert G., *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1997)

Huntington, Samuel, 'The Clash of Civilizations?' *Foreign Affairs* 72. 3 (1993), pp. 22-49

Johnson, Gregory C., 'Climate Change Science 2013: Haiku', in *Slightline.org* <http://daily.sightline.org/2013/12/16/the-entire-ipcc-report-in-19-illustrated-haiku/> [accessed 31 August 2014]

Johnson, Jimmy, 'Guy Delisle's "Jerusalem": Peering through the Veil of Orientalism', *Truth-Out*, 8 September 2012 <http://truth-out.org/opinion/item/11231-guy-delisles-jerusalem-peering-through-the-veil-of-orientalism?tmpl=component> [accessed 14 June 2014]

Kamrawa, Mehran, *The Modern Middle East: A Political History since The First World War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005)

Kaplan, Robert D., 'The Lure of Nationalism', *Forbes*, 3 May 2014
     <http://www.forbes.com/sites/stratfor/2014/03/05/the-lure-of-nationalism/>
     [accessed 17 September 2014]

Kedourie, Elie, *Nationalism*, 4th ed (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994[1960])

Klar, Nicholas, 'How did the 1960's protest movements force American society from a
     position of consensus, to accommodation, and finally to division?' in *Klarbooks.com*
     <http://klarbooks.com/academic/1960s-protests.html> [accessed 11 December 2013]

Knickmeyer, Ellen, and Jonathan Finer, 'Insurgent Leader Al-Zarqawi Killed in Iraq', *The
     Washington Post*, 8 June 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-
     dyn/content/article/2006/06/08/AR2006060800114.html> [accessed 16 May 2013]

Kohn, Hans, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in its Origins and Background* (New York:
     The Macmillan Company, 1945)

Kunzle, David, *Father of the Comic Strip: Rodolphe Töpffer* (Mississippi: University Press
     of Mississippi, 2007)

Laërtius, Diogenes, 'Διογένης (Diogenes)' *Βίοι καὶ γνῶμαι τῶν ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ
     εὐδοκιμησάντων* [Lives of eminent philosophers], vol.2, trans. Robert Drew Hicks
     [Loeb Classical Library], (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925)

Lefebvre, Henri, *The Critique of Everyday Life*, vol.1, trans. by John Moore (London:
     Verso, 1991)

Lejeune, Philippe, *On Autobiography*, ed. by. Paul John Eakin, trans. by. Katherine Leary
     (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989 [1975])

Lewin, Kurt, 'Frontiers in Group Dynamics', *Human Relations* 1. 2 (1947), pp. 143-53

Lewis, Bernard, 'The Roots of Muslim Rage', *The Atlantic Monthly* 266.3 (September
     1990), pp. 47-60 <http://www.theatlantic.com/past/issues/90sep/rage.htm> [accessed
     25 March 2014]

Lippmann, Walter, *Public Opinion* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1998 [1922])

Lockman, Zachary, *Contending Visions of the Middle East: The History and Politics of
     Orientalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press. 2004)

Logan, Lara, interviewed by Scott Pelley, 1 May 2011
     <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7364550n> [accessed 11 May 2013]

Luhmann, Niklas, *The Reality of the Mass Media*, trans. by Kathleen Cross (California:
     Stanford University Press, 2000)

Marshall, Monica, *Joe Sacco* (New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2004)

Maurus, Véronique, 'Voile ou foulard?', *Le Monde*, 19 February, 2010 ('Idées' section) <http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2010/02/19/voile-ou-foulard-par-veronique-maurus_1308488_3232.html> [accessed 20 September 2014]

McCloud, Scott, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994)

———, 'Google Chrome: Behind the Open Source Browser Project', in *Google.com* <http://www.google.com/googlebooks/chrome/big_00.html> [accessed 31 August 2014]

McCombs, Maxwell E., and Donald L. Shaw, 'The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media', *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 36.2 (1972), pp. 176-87

McDuffie, Dwayne, Denys Cowan and Prentis Rollins, 'Static Shock: Wednesday Afternoon', in *9-11: The World's Finest Comic Book Writers and Artists Tell Stories to Remember,* vol. 2 (New York: DC Comics, 2002), pp. 29-37

McGarty, Craig, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt and Russell Spears, 'Social, Cultural and Cognitive Factors in Stereotype Formation', in *Stereotypes as Explanations: The Formation of Meaningful Beliefs about Social Groups*, ed. by. Craig McGarty, Vincent Y. Yzerbyt and Russell Spears (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)

McIlvanney, William, 'Freeing Ourselves from inner Exile', *The Herald*, 6 March, 1999 <http://www.heraldscotland.com/sport/spl/aberdeen/freeing-ourselves-from-inner-exile-1.302772> [accessed 1 August 2013]

Mclean, Rory, 'Burma through the artist's eye', *The Guardian*, 19 May 2009 <http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2009/may/19/burma-chronicles-books-review> [accessed 27 March 2014]

McNair, Brian, *The Sociology of Journalism* (London: Arnold, 1998)

McNeese, Tim, *The Great Hispanic Heritage: Francis Goya* (New York: Chelsea House Publishing, 2007)

Mead, George Herbert, *Mind, Self and Society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*, ed. by Charles William Morris, 18th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972 [1934])

Mercer, Kobena, 'Welcome to the Jungle: Identity and Diversity in Postmodern Politics', in *Identity: Community, Culture Difference*, ed. by. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrance & Wishart, 1990)

Miller, Frank, *The Dark Knight Returns*, 4 vols (New York: DC Comics, 1986)

———, *Holy Terror* (California: Legendary Comics, 2011)

Miller, John J., 'Writing Up a Storm', *The Wall Street Journal*, 13 August 2011, <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB1000142405311190480030457647614282121 2156> [accessed 3 October 2011]

Moore, Alan, and Dave Gibbon, *Watchmen* (New York: DC Comics, 1987 [1986])

———, and Brian Bolland, *Batman: The Killing Joke* (New York: DC Comics, 1988)

———, interviewed by Barry Kavanagh, 17 October 2000 <http://www.blather.net/articles/amoore/northampton.html> [accessed 15 August 2014]

Moores, John Richard, 'Representations of France and the French in English Satirical Prints, c. 1740-1832' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2011)

Morrison, Grant, Philip Bond, *Vimanarama*, 3 vol. (New York: Vertigo, 2005)

Moscovici, Sergei, 'Foreword', in *Health and Illness: A Social Psychological Analysis*, ed. by Claudine Herzlich, trans. by Douglas Graham (London: Academic Press, 1973), pp. ix-xiv

Nairn, Tom, *The Break Up of Britain* (London: New Left Books, 1977)

Neufeld, Josh, *A.D.: New Orleans after the Deluge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2009)

Noakes, Richard, 'Punch and comic journalism in mid-Victorian Britain', in *Science in the Nineteenth-Century Periodical: Reading the Magazine of Nature*, ed. by Geoffrey Cantor and others (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 91-122

Orlando, Joe, Len Wein, and Tony Dezuniga, 'To Wed the Devil: A Graphic Novel of Gothic Terror' *The Sinister House of Secret Love*, vol 1. no.2 (New York: DC Comics, 1972)

Ortega y Gasset, José, *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Essays on Art, Culture, and Literature* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968)

Ossowski, Yaël, 'The Fading Concept of Nationalism', *The Stateless Man*, 21 January, 2013 <http://thestatelessman.com/2013/01/21/nationalism/> [accessed 8 September 2014]

Özçınar, Meral, 'A Cornerstone of Turkish Fantastic Films: From Flash Gordon to Baytekin', in *Comics as a Nexus of Cultures: Essays on the Interplay of Media, Disciplines and International Perspectives*, ed. by Mark Berninger, Jochen Ecke and Gideon Haberkorn (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2010)

Özkaracalar, Kaya, 'Kıral's Pekos Bill', in *Geocities.ws.* <http://www.geocities.ws/rick40s2005/pekosbill.html> [accessed 9 September 2014]

Pergola, Sergio Della, 'Demography in Israel/Palestine: Trends, Prospects, Policy Implications', *IUSSP XXIV General Population Conference*, August 2001, Salvador

de Bahia, Brazil, 1-34 <http://www.archive-iussp.org/Brazil2001/s60/S64_02_dellapergola.pdf > [accessed 1 August 2013]

Perlez, Jane, 'At Least 3 Journalists Die in Blast at Baghdad Hotel', *The New York Times*, 8 April 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/04/08/international/worldspecial/08CND-CAMERAMAN.html> [accessed 15 May 2013]

Peters, Tim, 'Far from Home: Guy Delisle's Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City', *Slant Magazine*, 25 April 2012 < http://www.slantmagazine.com/house/2012/04/far-from-home-guy-delisles-jerusalem-chronicles-from-the-holy-city/> [accessed 18 April 2014]

Pierre, Chevelin, and Pharès Jerome, 'Haiti: Tents beyond Tents', in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/29> [accessed 31 August 2014]

Plimpton, George, 'The Story Behind a Nonfiction Novel', *New York Times Book Review*, 16 January 1966, <http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/12/28/home/capote-interview.html> [accessed 3 March 2012]

Powell, Colin L., 'The U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative: Building Hope for the Years Ahead', *U.S. Department of State Archive*, 12 December 2002 <http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2002/15920.htm> [accessed 1 August 2013]

Pratt, Hugo, *La Casa Dorata di Samarcanda* (Roma: Rizzoli & Lizard, 1980)

Prusher, Ilene, *Baghdad Fixer* (London: Halban Publishers, 2012)

Quinn, Audrey, and Lucy Bellwood, 'Greening Islam', in *Symboliamag.tumblr.com* <http://symboliamag.tumblr.com/post/87605147693/yearsoflivingdangerously-this-comic> [accessed 31 August 2014]

Rall, Ted, *To Afghanistan and Back: A Graphic Travelogue* (New York: NBM, 2002)

———, 'Quebec's Not-So-Quiet Revolution by Ted Rall' in *Cartoonmovement.com* <http://www.cartoonmovement.com/comic/47> [accessed 20 September 2014]

Renan, Ernest, 'What is a Nation?', in *Becoming National: A Reader*, ed. by. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 42- 55

Rhodes, Gillian, *Superportraits: Caricatures and Recognition* (Hove: Psychology Press, 1996)

Rice, Condoleezza, 'Excerpts: Condoleezza Rice', *BBC.co.uk* <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/4184751.stm> [accessed 30 January 2014]

Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London: Routledge, 2002)

Robinson, Leonard Wallace, 'The New Journalism: A Panel Discussion with Harold Hayes, Gay Talese, Tom Wolfe and Professor L. W. Robinson ', in *The Reporter as Artist: A Look at the New Journalism Controversy*, ed. by Ronald Weber (New York: Hastings House, 1974), pp. 66-75

Rubin, Louis Decimus, 'The Curious Death of the Novel: Or, What to do about Tired Literary Critics', in *The Curious Death of the Novel: Essays in American Literature* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), pp. 3-23

Ryan, David, '9/11 and US Foreign Policy', in *American Thought and Culture in the 21st Century*, ed. by Martin Halliwell and Catherine Morley (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), pp. 49-64

Sabin, Roger, *Adult Comics: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1993)

Sacco, Joe, *Yahoo*, 6 vols (Seatle: Fantagraphics Books, 1988-1992)

——, *Palestine* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003 [1993])

——, *Safe Area Gorazde: Special Edition* (Seattle: Fantagraphics, 2011 [2000]).

——, *Notes from a Defeatist* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003)

——, *But I Like It* (Seatle: Fantagraphics Books, 2006)

——, *The Fixer and Other Stories* (Montreal: Drawn and Quarterly, 2009)

——, *Footnotes in Gaza* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2009)

——, *Journalism* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2012)

——, 'Burmese days', *The National*, 7 November 2008 <http://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/books/burmese-days#full> [accessed 27 March 2014]

——, interviewed by Kristine McKenna, 1 January 2004 <http://www.laweekly.com/2004-01-01/news/brueghel-in-bosnia/?showFullText=true> [accessed 22 September 2014]

——, interviewed by Omar Khalifa, 19 July 2008 <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2007/11/2008525185042679346.html> [accessed 27 November 2013]

——, interviewed by Roger Sabin, 29 November 2009 <http://www.eyemagazine.com/blog/post/notes-on-saccos-footnotes-in-gaza> [accessed 22 September 2014].

——, interviewed by Hilary Chute, June 2011, <http://www.believermag.com/issues/201106/?read=interview_sacco> [accessed 5 December 2013]

———, interviewed by Liz Crain, July 2011 <http://progressive.org/crainjuly11.html> [27 November 2013]

———, interviewed by Ernesto Priego, 2 August 2011, <http://blog.comicsgrid.com/2011/08/sacco-interview/> [accessed 27 November 2013]

Said, Edward, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979)

———, 'The Clash of Ignorance', *The Nation*, 4 October 2001 <http://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance> [accessed 28 December 2013]

———, 'Homage to Joe Sacco', in *Palestine* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2003), pp. i-iv.

Sanders, Kathy, *After Oklahoma City: A Grieving Grandmother Uncovers Shocking Truths about the Bombing ... and Herself* (Arlington, TX: Master Strategies, 2005)

Scanlon, Molly, 'Comics, Journalism, and War Discourse', *Public Knowledge Journal* 3.1 (2011) <http://pkjournal.org/?page_id=1443> [accessed 22 December 2013]

Schack, Todd, 'A failure of language': Achieving layers of meaning in graphic journalism', *Journalism* 15.1 (2014), 109-127

Scherr, Rebecca, 'Shaking Hands with Other People's Pain: Joe Sacco's Palestine', *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 46.1 (2013), pp. 19-36

Schneider, Greice, 'Comics and Everyday Life: from Ennui to Contemplation', *European Comic Art*, 3.1 (2010)

Schudson, Michael, 'What's unusual about covering politics as usual', in *Journalism after September 11*, ed. by Barbie Zelizer and Stuart Allan (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 36-47

Self, Will, 'The novel is dead (this time it's for real)', *Guardian*, 2 May 2014 <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/may/02/will-self-novel-dead-literary-fiction> [accessed 5 May 2014]

Seton-Watson, Hugh, *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1977)

Shaheen, Jack G., 'Arab Images in American Comic Books', *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 28.1 (1994), 123-33

Shan, Den, 'Unreliability', in *The Living Handbook of Narratology*, ed. by Peter Hühn (Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2011) <https://web.archive.org/web/20130116110219/http://hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php/Unreliability> [accessed 20 September 2014]

Smith, Anthony D., *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005 [1986])

———, *National Identity* (London: Penguin, 1991)

———, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998)

———, *Ethno-Symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (London: Routledge, 2009)

Smith, Michael W., *Understanding Unreliable Narrators* (Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1991)

Snowden, Edward, interviewed by Peter Maass, 13 August 2013, <http://www.petermaass.com/blog/the_snowden_interview/> [accessed 29 November 2013]

Spiegelman, Art, *The Complete Maus* (London: Penguin, 2003 [1986-1992])

———, *MetaMaus: A Look inside A Modern Classic: Maus* (London: Viking, 2011)

Stafford, Richard Todd, 'Towards an Epistemological Theory of Comics Journalism: Case Studies in Joe Sacco's War Reportage', *Public Knowledge Journal* 3.1 (2011) <http://pkjournal.org/?page_id=1490> [accessed 26 August 2014]

Stanlet, Marni, 'Where Do You Draw the (Front) Line: Women's War Comics from the Middle East', *International Journal of Comics Art*, 15. 2 (2013), pp. 77-93

Stephens, Mitchell, 'Journalism and News: Untangling Their Histories', in *Beyond News*, 13 March 2011 <http://journalism.nyu.edu/publishing/beyondnews/2011/03/13/journalism-and-news-untangling-their-histories/> [accessed 3 October 2011]

Tan, Shaun, *The Arrival* (New York: Scholastic, 2007)

Tamada, and Rash, *Chroniques du proche étranger: En Tchétchénie* (Paris: Vertige Graphic, 2007)

Tellan, Bülent, 'Kemal Gökhan Gürses: "Arzum Güncel Bir Hikayeyi Günü Gününe Çizebilmek..."', *Serüven: Çizgiroman Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 7 (2006)

Terry, Fiona, 'Feeding the Dictator', The Guardian, 6 August, 2001 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/aug/06/famine.comment> [accessed 31 March 2014]

Thompson, Lorenzo, 'Guy Delisle's Burma Chronicles shows life in military controlled Myanmar through cartoons', *Comments Enabled*, 13 January 2008 <http://commentsenabled.ca/arts-culture/books/item/9-guy-delisle-s-burma-chronicles-shows-life-in-military-controlled-myanmar-through-cartoons/9-guy-delisle-s-burma-chronicles-shows-life-in-military-controlled-myanmar-through-cartoons> [accessed 27 March 2014]

Todorov, Tzvetan, 'The Journey and Its Narratives', in *The Morals of History*, trans. by Alyson Waters (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995)

Twain, Mark, 'Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog' *The Saturday Press*, 18 November 1865, pp. 248-52 <http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/cdm4/nysp_viewer.php?DMTHUMB=1&search=&ptr=605&CISOPTR=595> [accessed 3 October 2011]

Ulus, Özgür Mutlu, *The Army and the Radical Left in Turkey: Military Coups, Socialist Revolution and Kemalism* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011)

Vagnes, Oyvind, 'The Unmaking of the World: Trauma and Testimony in Two Stories by Joe Sacco', *Afterimage: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism* 39. 1&2 (2012), pp. 60-62

Versaci, Rocco, *This Book Contains Graphic Language: Comics as Literature* (New York: Continuum Books, 2007)

Viereck, George Sylvester, 'What Life Means to Einstein', *The Saturday Evening Post*, 26 October 1929

Walker, Tristram, 'Graphic Wounds: The Comics Journalism of Joe Sacco', *Journeys* 11.1 (2010), pp. 69-88

Warner, Andy, and Jeff Severns Guntzel, 'Invisible Injury: Beyond PTSD', in *Publicinsightnetwork.org* <https://www.publicinsightnetwork.org/2013/06/21/invisible-injury-beyond-ptsd-illustrated-story/> [accessed 31 August 2014]

White, David Manning, 'The "Gatekeeper": A Case Study in the Selection of News', *Journalism Quarterly* 2 (1950), pp. 383–91; reprinted in *People, Society and Mass Communications*, ed. by Lewis Anthony Dexter and David Manning White (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1964), pp. 160-72

Williams, Jeff, 'Joyce Brabner and the New Journalism in Comics' in *Academia.edu* <https://www.academia.edu/4826100/JOYCE_BRABNER_AND_THE_NEW_JOURNALISM_IN_COMICS> [accessed 22 September 2014]

Williams, Kristian, 'The Case for Comics Journalism', in *Alter.net* <http://www.alternet.org/story/21520/the_case_for_comics> [accessed 18 December 2013]

Williams, Raymond, *Keywords* (London: Flamingo, 1983)

Wolfe, Tom, and E. W. Johnson, eds, *The New Journalism* (London: Picador, 1975)

Woo, Benjamin, 'Reconsidering Comics Journalism: Information and Experience in Joe Sacco's Palestine', in *The Rise and Reason of Comics and Graphic Literature:*

Critical Essays on the Form, ed. by. Joyce Goggin and Dan Hassler-Forest (North Carolina: McFarland, 2010), pp. 166-177

Wordsworth, William, *The Complete Poetical Works of William Wordsworth: Student's Cambridge Edition* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1904)

Yüksel, Edip, *Manifesto for Islamic Reform* ([n.p]: Brainbow Press, 2007)

Zelizer, Barbie, *Taking Journalism Seriously: News and the Academy* (London: Sage Publications, 2004)

Ziade, Lamia, *Bye Bye Babylon: Beirut 1975-197*9 (London: Jonathan Cape, 2011)

Žižek, Slavoj, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (New York: Picador, 2008)