

**Translation in the Service of Advocacy:  
narrating Palestine and Palestinian women in translations by the  
Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI)**

Souhad S. H. Al Sharif

Centre for Translation and Intercultural Studies

University of Manchester

suhadhijazi(a)yahoo.com

**ABSTRACT**

In the wake of wars and conflicts that have spilled into the 21st century, and at this critical juncture in history, translation continues to play a crucial role in revealing the power that one culture can exert over another. In this context of ongoing conflict, translation participates in shaping the struggle between rival ideologies. Translations may be manipulated and reframed by rival parties to circulate and legitimize their own narratives, with each side attempting to frame the same event in a different way that strengthens its own narratives and serves its own interests.

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is widely recognized as central to world security and as exercising a major influence on American foreign policy. A large number of web-based advocacy groups that focus on this conflict have emerged in recent years. This study examines one of the most influential of these groups, the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), and its translation programme. MEMRI extracts material from a large range of mainly Arab and Iranian sources, translates them into a range of languages, and circulates them widely among politicians, journalists, academics, and various other parties, mostly free of charge. Drawing on narrative theory, as elaborated in Somers (1997), Somers and Gibson (1994) and Baker (2006), and on the notion of framing as defined and elaborated by Goffman (1974, 1984), the study investigates the mechanisms by which this organization, which is aligned to dominant narratives and invests in embedding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict within the metanarrative of a global 'war on terror', systematically elaborates dehumanising narratives of Palestinians in general as deranged terrorists and Palestinian women as heartless mothers who rejoice at seeing their children martyred.

**KEYWORDS:** framing, media and translation, narratives, translation and conflict.

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