



**RECONTEXTUALIZING THE PALESTINIAN HISTORY
IN SAIF'S THE DRONE EATS WITH ME: A GAZA
DIARY: A NEW HISTORICIST STUDY**

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Abstract

The study examines the subjugation and recontextualization of Palestinian cultural identity in the theoretical lens of New Historicism. The article highlights the socio-political challenges and power structures of Israel against Palestine. It also examines the chaotic experiences and the collective life of Palestinians during the circumstances of war and how the brutalities of Israelis exploit the Palestinians. The Drone Eats with Me: A Gaza Dairy is the autobiographical novel which portrays the Israeli- Palestinian conflict in 2014 which he and his family managed to survive. It also depicts how the Palestinians resist against the brutality of Israel. The theoretical perspectives of New Historicism by Stephan Blatt have been applied on this novel in order to expose the Israeli narrative and proliferate the diplomatic nature of Palestinians. New Historicism emphasizes the importance of historical, political and cultural background for the understanding of the literary work. The main aim of this research is to analyses the close relationship between fiction and history. It explores the historical cultural identity of Palestinians and their rich Arabic civilization. Furthermore, it unfolds the manipulative power structures of hegemonic forces that make the Palestinians as subaltern in front of the world.

Keywords: *Historical Context, Israel, Mission Protective Edge, New Historicism, Palestine, Power, Stephan Greenblatt.*

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1. Introduction

Literature is a way to challenge the dominant narrative, humanize the Other and foster a sense of collective consciousness through integrating the historical fiction. In the wake of continuous war and displacement, Palestinian communities have endured decades of tribulation. Palestinian families persecuted by the cruel caprices of conflict between Israel and Palestine, which made them to suffer for several years. The way they face the challenges is the metaphor of their resistance and resilience to heal their deep wounds imposed by their brutal enemy. They are following the paradigm of firm belief “from the ruins, we will build a new world” (Darwesh) which epitomize their belief in the resistance of human spirit. *The Drone Eats with Me, A Gaza Diary*, is a remarkable book by Atef Abu Saif, a Palestinian novelist. It depicts the tragedies of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip during the Israeli military operation in 2014. The book offers an eyewitness narrative of the writer’s experiences and observation during a time of extreme dispute and privation. Barkat portrays the powerful reconstruction of Palestinian narrative, challenging the established historical accounts and giving voice to the silenced experiences of her people *Balcony on the Moon*. By depicting her own life experiences as the core of her narrative, she counters the dominant Zionist perspective to revive the Palestinian narrative, striving to arouse their ongoing struggles and rich cultural heritage (Aleem & Munim, 2023). In order to apply the New Historicism, the novel entails into the historical, social, and political factors that elaborated the events in the book. This theory draws attention to the power dynamics, cultural norms and ideological struggles that shaped the lives of the people in Gaza during the Israeli military operation. New Historicism deals on the authors personal experiences which are influenced by historical circumstances. It illustrates how the Israeli occupation, the influence media and the consequences of warfare affect Palestinians day to day lives and communities.

The narrator Atef Abu Saif born in 1973 in Jabalia refugee camp. He made his debut in the late 1990s. He was chosen for the 2015 Arabic Booker Prize for his novel *A Splendid Life* (2014). The following literary collections *Shadows in the memory* (1997), *Tale of the Harvest Night* (1998), *The Snow Ball* (2000), *The Salty Grape of Paradise* (2003), and *Running in Place* (2019) are translated into different languages. The Israeli-

Palestine conflict (2014) provokes a shared consciousness in him to write his remarkable work *The Drone Eats with Me: A Gaza Diary*.

The Drone Eats with Me portrays the ordeal that his family experienced in Gaza in the wake of 2014 Operation Protective Edge. On July 8, 2014, Israel launched the operation. The reason of these attacks was to kidnap and kill the three teenagers from Hamas. Hundreds of missiles fell on Gaza and this operation continued for next 51 days. Sixty-six Israeli soldiers were killed and eighty-seven were injured. In contrast, more than 2,300 Gazans, mostly civilians, were killed and more than 10,000 were injured. Israelis have been engaged in dispossessing Palestinians. The exodus of Palestinians indicates that the international community know their rights violations but brutally being ignored. The research looks at the way Penny Green and Amelia Smith in their study exposed this crime by documenting the main methods used by Israel state to achieve their aim of demolishing the Palestinians- their villages, homes, walls, and peace. The study is based on exploration of increasing control of Jewish people over the governance and integration of Palestinian territories (Green & Smith, 2016). *The Drone Eats with Me* depicts the everyday experiences of Gazans during war. The crucial aspect of 2014 war was the invention of drones. The ubiquity and hissing sound of drones made the Gazans to realise that drones are everywhere, including in their beds and at supper. On the other hand, Israeli security forces were operating drones from computer screens, as if the whole thing were a new movie game which caused the sense of rage in author. However, the spirit of life began to return in Gaza in the middle of air strikes. Fresh fruits and vegetable began to reappear in markets while author's children were eager to return to their schools. Saif, somehow, paid the heavy cost to preserve the innocence of his children.

1.1. Research Objectives

- To highlight how Atef challenges the socio-political and power structures of Israel against Palestine.
- To examine the ways Atef's autobiographical narrative builds the nexus between history and fiction portrays Palestinian narrative through shared turbulent experiences during war.

1.2. Research Questions

- How does Saif resist against the chaotic Israeli warfare manoeuvres and meaning making strategies in *The Drone eats with me: A Gaza dairy*?
- How does Saif's narrative blur the boundaries between history and fiction to reclaim the lost Palestinian narrative?

2. Literature Review:

Harpham (1991) in his study unfolds the contrasting viewpoints of critics regarding the connection between culture and history. One perspective argues that culture is the driving force behind historical events, while the other perspective posits that history shapes and influences culture. People are always desiring for better future, Milan Kundera quoted in his book, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, The future is always uncertain and can never fully satisfy us. It is the past that holds so much life and power. It can make us laugh, anger and even inspire us to recreate past glories. In this sense, historical research also include the desire for innovation and freedom. This problem, controlling the uncontrollable, does not arise in New Historicism.

Orwell argues that in order to preserve memory, historians might interpret the discourse text by looking for a common meaning that would enable everyone to make their own judgments. Two traditions identify as historicism. The first, which is one that new historicism accepts, makes the case that all human cognition and behavior are contextual. It makes no pretense of being an unbiased historical perspective when evaluating such ideas or actions. Rather, there are shifting, culturally- specific conceptions of worth. The tradition dates back to Germany in nineteenth century and shares many similarities with anthropological idea of cultural relativism. The second tradition of historicism which Karl Popper harshly criticized in *The Poverty of Historicism* is that historical influence on text in impossible to resist (Hoover, 1992).

Stephan Greenblatt coined the term Cultural Poetics for the literary theory New Historicism. He maintained that unlike many schools and traditional interpretations which tended to treat history and literature quite autonomously, cultural poetics showed the relationship between text and its context within the history. He argued that text does not only influence and shape history but is also important for social processes that shape individuals' identity and events in history. In his many books, Greenblatt described different aspects of culture such as circulation of social power and process of self-fashioning (Veenstra, 1995).

New Historicism was a big deal for almost 20 years in literature and culture. In "A New Historical Practice," Gallagher and Greenblatt discussed five important things about New Historicism. It pays attention to how stories can be used again and again, how we understand different types of representation, fascinating view of history and skeptical examination of ideology. They argued new historicism is all about analyzing narratives from alternative perspectives. They even analyze paintings of Joos Van Gent and Paolo

Uccello, as well as works like Hamlet and Great Expectations. By studying the Renaissance and the 19th century, they find similarities and differences between the two periods (Gallagher & Greenblatt, 2000).

Gökçen (2020) analyzed *Half a Yellow Sun*, to examine how Adichi represents the postcolonial Nigeria and offers a New Historical perspective to the novel and depicts the colonizer and colonized from different angles.

Liu & Zhou (2020) in his study interpreted different texts in the light of new historicism. Notably, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, there are two conflicting thoughts such as anti-colonialism and Euro-centrism. Anti-colonial ideas exposed the hypocrisy of white people while Euro-centrism depicted the condition of blacks and portray them as wild and animal. Conrad solidifies the hegemonic narrative of Europe through this perspective.

Muhibbuddin (2021) in his study analyzed Chudori's "*The Sea Speaks His Name*" to expose the concept of structural violence and the socio-political disorder in Indonesia. It highlights the linkages between the events in the novel and the actual historical facts of Indonesia.

Nazeer et al (2022) explored the gaps and complexities of Afghan history within historical and political context in Hosseini's novels "*Kite Runner*" (2003) and "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*" (2007) through the new historicist approach. They unfolded the true historical struggle of Afghans against superpowers such as USSR and USA and how they faced their existential dilemma (Hayat et al., 2022). In the mountains Echoed, Khalid Hosseini attempts to depict the social, political and historical context of various cultures while highlighting the central concerns that are concurrent with Afghanistan's situation. These challenges include social unrest, political instability, fears of foreign invasion, the rise of Taliban, and Afghanistan's position following 9/11. The study has investigated Hosseini's parallel tales of different cultures, including Paris, America and Greece while monitoring Afghan culture.

Brown (2022)'s study of *The Drone Eats with me: A Gaza Diary*, highlights that Saif's artistic choices reflect his identity as a Palestinian author sharing his experiences with a Palestinian as well as non-Palestinian audience. The text, written in English, aims to convey the challenges of living under the drone surveillance and the ongoing subjugation of Palestinians, particularly in Gaza. It explores the importance of promoting Palestinian narratives to English-speaking readers and highlights how Palestine's unique

historical and socio-cultural context shapes its portrayal of drone warfare, aligning with other works of Palestinian literature.

3. Theoretical Framework

This article sharply examines the close relationship between history, culture, and literature by using Greenblatt's significant thoughts about new historicism that how authors webbed together history and culture-like tissues of body in a fictional narrative. Apparently, these seem different domains, but these are interconnected in a literary text. Essentially, it emphasizes the importance of understanding a literary work within its historical context. By examining the historical backdrops against which a piece of literature is composed, we can gain valuable insights into its meanings and intentions. Moreover, analysing a work of literature in new historicist perspective provides valuable information about the events and ideas of the time period in which it was written. He wanted to differentiate New Historicism from the more traditional approaches to studying literature, like the one used by the New Critics. He saw historical criticism as too focused on linear, evidence-based analysis. Instead, he proposed that New Historicism brings together seemingly unrelated phenomena and incidents from different time periods to gain a deeper understanding of the event being examined. By pushing the boundaries of historical inquiry, new historicism redefines how we approach and interpret literary works.

New Historicism, as Greenblatt explains in *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance*, is a literary theory that recognizes the deep connection between literature and its cultural contexts. According to this theory, literature cannot be separated from its social and cultural backgrounds. He emphasizes that a text is influenced by external factors, such as the author's interactions with society and the world. In other words, an author's consciousness is shaped by the social and cultural responses of his time which he delineates in his works.

Greenblatt's ideas on New Historicism intersect with Marxist concepts like historical materialism. While he emphasises the deepening understanding of literary works by connecting them to historical contexts, he diverges from Marxist dogma by employing more nuanced and intriguing expressions. In his book, he explores the Zuni rite, arguing that its elements were not fully integrated, challenging the notion of a unified whole. His works delve into the connection between texts and the context historical. He believes that texts serve as a medium to understand history and provoke questions and ideas about societal issues. He examines different opinions in the context of renaissance, mainly focused on Shakespeare works. By analyzing the cultural materialism and New Historicism approaches, he sheds light on how these theories can provide valuable insights

into the relationship between literature and the broader socio-historical context. The critical analysis of Renaissance period has spurred discussions over whether the text itself promotes or inhibits judgment (Greenblatt, 2015).

Greenblatt outlined the main features of new historicism in his work *Renaissance Self-fashioning* (1980). It lays forth how distinct cultural identities and history are related. With the goal to investigate the nature of identity in the literature, Greenblatt (1980) used this to look specifically at the structure of autonomy. New Historicist believes that the construction of cultural identity and formation of culture is a socio-political and historical process. New Historicists view that there is no autonomous objectivity. According to the new historicists, meanings and effects comes from the culture and history. Any critic who is examining a piece is influenced by the time period, similarly to how a writer is.

New historicism promotes nuance because the entire context of history needs to be taken into account. The idea also takes into account how history is dynamic. Cultures are social practices, discourses, customs, norms, traditions, persons and rituals. So, text is a mirror of the world; it has an active and productive role in the world. Literary text presents the social, historical, and political context. Thus, new historicism abandoned the formalist conception of independent art and the interests of society. A literary text is a kind of social condition that is produced by society. It is not separate from society. New historicists examine in detail how the text describes the constructive pattern of culture and the reshaping of culture. They believe that there is no meaning to text beyond the social condition. This type of text is a product of complex social exchanges.

According to Greenblatt, the only way to learn about history is through texts, and the distinction between texts that are literary. It blurs the standard of historicity and textuality in history. According to Greenblatt, "it is important to take its historical setting into account. The time period of the writer's life has a significant impact on the piece of writing they generate. Identical to how a critic's time period influences their analysis and interpretation of a text. The New Historicism movement encourages complexity in analysis and an understanding of how history is constantly evolving. He argues that literature is always historical. According to Geertz, "Thick description" refers to the distinctive types of signaling structures that make up a culture. Using a thick description approach, the new historicists interpret the event and reinterpret it to highlight behavioral norms that govern society as a whole and logical conclusion. Writing is a result of and an invaluable part of political and social development, according to new historicism. Texts from literature are often interpreted as tangible results of certain historical circumstances by new historicists.

The text yielded broad interpretations, particularly in relation to a linked historical reality (Geertz, 1973).

Reaction to the “text only” approach of formalism, new historicists believe history is subjective and polyphony. History is shaped by the people who lived it. Emphasizes the interaction between historic context of the work and modern reader’s understanding and interpretation. New Historicists consider both the cultural and social forces that influenced the creation of a text and are revealed through a text. Views a text as culture in action, blurs the distinction between an artistic production and any other kind of social production or event. New historicists assume that works of literature both influence and are influenced by historical reality, and they share a belief that literature both refers to and is referred to by things outside itself.

Julia Kristeva first used the term "intertextuality" in 1966 to describe how literary texts are interdependent with each other and with their predecessors. She argued that any piece of writing is an incorporation and alteration of another, and that a work of literature is not a single event. It suggests that, in that specific socio-cultural context, literary works are similar to literature from other fields of research. In response, "intertextuality" highlights alternative definitions of "con-text," suggesting that for New Historicists, there is no distinction between literary and historical texts since "in this way, the no-literary text becomes not a con-text rather a co-text, in addition to literary works." A meticulously reviewed non-literary book serves as the basis for the literary production (Cuddon, 2012). The fundamental idea of New Historicists is to draw attention to the subversive powers of socially marginalized groups, such as women, the bourgeoisie, and ethnic minorities of non-European descent. Since New Historicism seeks to understand the conflict between the oppressed and the dominant, such as that between the capitalist and the proletariat, it is reasonable to conclude that it adheres to the same principles as Marxism.

4. Analysis:

This article explores how Palestinians stateless writers have reclaimed the lost glory of Arab civilization. Palestinian fictional writers contend that fiction rejuvenates the greatest foundation of civilization which influences people’s customs, values, and morals since this shape their cultural identity and national consciousness (Tamari, 2008). Saif’s *Drone Eats with me: A Gaza Dairy* is a nonfiction book which offers a personal account of daily life in Gaza during the 2014 Israeli military operation known as Operation Protective Edge. By applying a new historicist lens to this novel, this article explores the historical and cultural representation in the memoir. The book documents the experiences of people living in Gaza during troubled times of conflict and politics. It shows the reality

of Palestinian life under Israeli blockade and the impact of military operations on their daily lives. By analyzing the text within its historical context, the new historical text determines how the author's experiences and observations on social and political issues shape the text. It explores the dynamic and ideological struggle between the Israeli army and the Palestinian people, and how these changes are represented in the text. Saif integrated historical references to expose Israel's cruel policies of segregation and inhuman acts. New Historical analysis also explores the subjectivity in the text because it challenges the objective and absolute truth. The meaning of the author's experience and perspective has been realized by showing how his or her own history and culture influences the portrayal of events and characters in the text. So, it illuminates the ways in which individual narratives intersect with meta-narratives of Palestinian history and, develop a new native narrative.

5. History as a Fiction

The notion that cultures and literature are never impartial or neutral but are constantly involved in power conflicts and relations is one of the central tenets of New Historicism. "New Historical thinking includes an alternating interpretation or overlay of the literary and the non-literary text of a single historical period," as Renu Paul Ukkan correctly points out (Ukkan, 2004). The novel *The Drone Eats with me: A Gaza Dairy* explores the interconnectedness of historical narratives and political discourses about Palestine- Israel conflict. Saif's narration blurs the boundaries between history and fiction rather integrate both while he has been presenting the painful case of Palestinians in front of the world. He projects his personal experiences during 2014's Israeli military operation and how Palestinians have been endeavoured and how the hegemonic discourse presents them. Palestinians were considered as terrorists and rebellious guerrillas. Palestinians cultural and historical identity have been lost due to Israeli aggression. That is, how Israel occupies Palestine how they are constantly being attacked and killed irrespective of any authentic reason. This perspective provides the better understanding to readers as author's experience unfolds.

With new historicist approach, intertextuality is a literary technique which allows the text to amplify the voices and experiences of people. Writers coalesce the historical events to present the subjective nature of the whole socio-political system in which peripheries would be represented. According to Sartre, writing is a method to express your need for Independence; once you start, you can't stop abruptly.

Atef's personal diary contains collective stories of Abu Atef Grandmother (Aisha) which explores the ways how their ancestor's generation used to cope war situations and

tried to keep their lives stable. Saif regards his own mother (Aminah), the symbol of resilience and indefatigability. This expansion of voices helps to convey the message of unity and determination in Palestinians. “Our lives are dictated by the rhythm of war and truce, war and truce; it’s like a dance, you have to follow it.” (Saif, 2015, p. 162)

Through intertextuality, the diary challenges dominant narratives and discourses that perpetuate the marginalisation and dehumanisation of Palestinians. By reclaiming and offering alternative perspectives, the diary confronts the prevailing narratives that often justify the ongoing oppression faced by Palestinians. The war was the result of killing three teenagers and Israel government find this reason enough to sabotage and kill thousands of Palestinians in which most of them were innocent children. The novel depicts many such incidents of destructions in Gaza. The incident in Beit-e-Hanon where four young boys were playing football, and the drone operator tore their game into pieces. “A series of missiles from a warship mile out to sea tore their games into shreds.” (Saif, 2015, p.49) Saif portrays the Israeli Palestinian conflict from Palestinian perspective. The novel captures the experiences of Atef Abu Saif, his family and Gazans living under blockade in Gaza. “Gaza was a theater for endless wars” (Saif, 2015, p. 173).

He discusses multiple war experiences of Palestinians such as 1956, 1967, the 1970s national residence, the First Intifada in 1987-1993, the Second Intifada in 2000-2005, the 2008-2009 war Operation Cast Lead, 2012 Pillar of Defense, 2014 Protective Edge. The conflict reflects the late 19th and early 20th century when Zionist Jews looked up to establish a homeland in Palestine, which was under the Ottoman Empire. The tensions between Arabs and Jewish Immigrants led to periodic violence. The establishment of Israeli state in 1948 led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, this event known as Nakba that continues to be a significant source of injustice, hardship and a central issue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

After the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, Gaza came under Egyptian administration. Ilan Pappé in his book, “*The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*” (2006) criticized the Israeli policies. He focused on 1948 Arab-Israeli war that relocate hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. He claimed that Israeli army engaged in ethnic cleansing and deliberately forced Palestinians to leave their homes and villages. It caused the dispossession of over 750,000 Palestinians, destruction of 531 villages and 11 urban areas. (Ilan Pappé *Journal of Palestine studies*, 2006)

However, Israel seized Gaza during the 1967 Six Days War and the region has been under military occupation ever since. 1967 saw the Six Day War break out between Jordan, Syria and Egypt. It started when Israel attacked and destroyed the air forces of

Syria and Egypt in retaliation for their Arab neighbors' mobilization. Israel ruled Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza strip at the end of the conflict.

Operation Edge took place in the summer of 2014 and was a 50 days conflict between Israel and Hamas; the militant group governing the Gaza Strip. It was a period of intense airstrikes and rocket fire, which unfortunately resulted in significant civilian casualties and widespread destruction. During the conflict, Israel imposed a siege on Gaza, which had a profound impact on the daily lives of Gazans. The siege severely restricted the movement of goods and people across the territory. It led to limited access of essential services, high unemployment rates, and inadequate infrastructure.

He depicts the harsh realities of Palestinian society. *"The Drone Eats with me"* sheds light on the bitter realities of conflict between Israel and Palestine. The tragedy of life in Gaza is characterized by notable sufferings of Gazans. The use of vivid imagery, such as fear of death, feelings of hopelessness and attacks of drones on every corner of the street indicate how they are facing cataclysmic experiences. He states that: "We are ok in Gaza, but it's a lie; we are never ok" (Saif, 2015, p. 140). Saif in his diary illustrates several heart-breaking incidents about his personal life and the sufferings of Gazans. When he was a kid, he got shot twice during the First Intifada while throwing stones at Israeli soldiers. His brother Naeem joined militia group during Second Intifada and was assassinated by Israeli soldiers. "Inside this fact, hundreds of other facts reside. You might die." (Saif, 2015, p .137). He is the representative of subjugated Palestinians. The whole life experiences of Saif bring forth the dreadful conditions of them.

New historicism explores the ways a writer depicts his personal life to unfold the collective consciousness of natives. He witnessed a lot of tragedies and portrays in the text. His portrayal of a female indicates how much difficult to survive being a Palestinian women who lost their lives for preserving their culture, family and land. During this operation, he saw a woman who was killed when the bomb hit her home. She was carrying both her children in each arm; it seemed like she was trying to protect them. Thousands of people went through the same existential crisis. Some of them have lost their lives while most of the people lost their houses. Two dimensions are usually associated with the concept of "home." One is the concrete dimension, which is limited to structure of a house, but another such dimension is associated with the how Palestinians are emotionally connected with their land, home, and belongings. In the same way, Ghassan Kanafani is his novel *"The Men in the Sun"* (1963) argues that Palestinians went through the dislocation of their houses many times in their lifetime and leave their houses to save their lives. They had to live in refugee camps during the wartime. Sometimes they even had to

leave their state due to Israelis oppression on Palestinians. Refugee camps would never fulfil their attachment with their homes until the proper settlement of political crisis (Shamallakh et al., 2021).

Furthermore, Eyad (narrator's friend) told him that one of the nine years old girl vanished completely when a rocket hit her body. They found no sign of her existence. "They found no signs of her body. No bones, no arms, no legs." (Saif, 2015 P.76). A British Palestinian, Naseem Wahida who just came back from London to see his mother. A F16 destroyed his family house completely. His mother was killed and her daughters were injured. He also got injuries in his arm and neck. There are a lot of tragedies like Naseem. "Everything is turned into numbers. Their stories are hidden, disguised, lost behind these numbers." (Saif, 2015, p.77). People of Gaza faced many problems, there was no electricity, people were living in the refugee camps, there was shortage of water and food, people had to queue to use bathroom or to receive food. "Will there be a truce?" (Saif, 2015, p.106). (Anna Bernard, 2017) in his study highlights the same painful experience of Mourid Barghouti which he portrayed in his novel *I saw Ramallah* (1997), the narrator after 30 years of exile permitted to visit his homeland, Palestine. He remembered his childhood on watching the trees in Garden of Budapest. He tells his readers that many of the fig trees are replaced by apple trees in time span of 30 years. Children used to climb and play on fig trees. Author symbolises the fig trees with life and growth of Palestinians. On his return of his state, he noticed the dispersion of population and maintained that fig trees used to bear children.

6. Deconstruction of Official Narrative

New historicism challenges the monophonic, objective, linear and diachronic narrative. It promotes the multiplicity of the narrative. It deconstructs the hegemonic narrative of representation through bringing historical factors and fictional stories side by side. Saif crosses the line between history and fiction when he writes about something that is based on history but uses imaginary characters that were conjured up in his mind to represent and reflect that specific period of time that has past. He questions the Israeli policies through which they apartheid the Palestinians. He argues that it the not fate of Palestinians rather they are peace-loving people who consider their land as pious due to the arrival of holy prophets of God. Israel made this territory a battlefield since 1948. In 2014, Israeli blockade employs the destructive outcomes on the lives of Palestinians. Physical injuries, psychological trauma, displacement crisis and destruction of infrastructure of Gaza are the aftermaths that the innocent people witnessed. People of all age groups went through psychologically trauma due to ongoing conditions of war. Parents

were worried and uncertain about the lives of their children while some of them were watching their children getting killed in front of their eyes. Thousands of people were losing their houses and intended to live in rubbles, refugee camps and schools. Parents were forced to imprison their children in the houses to keep them safe from the attacks but at the end of war there almost 573 children got killed by Israel. Similarly, elders and adults were also consumed by the sound of explosions, hiss of drones and sights of blood and destructions. “Within every list, there are sub-lists: a list of destroyed buildings, divided into list of destroyed residences, destroyed office, destroyed hospitals, destroyed colleges and university buildings” (Saif, 2015, p.63). It shows the way he distorts Israeli policies of destruction, and it illustrates how Palestine's cultural identity has been fragmented by Israel.

The war destroys every aspect of life and the death casualty spreads over every corner of Gaza and the sight of these destructions is even more disturbing for survivors. Thousands of people displaced and fled from their houses to live in refugee camps. There were almost forty thousand displaced people only in the Jabalia camp, leaving their houses to keep themselves safe. As Ghassan Kanafani in his novel, *Returning to Haifa* (1969) presents his own ethical and social viewpoints. He captures the painful memories of Palestinian refugees and portrays a powerful inclination to reconstruct a dynamic and transformative memory for these traumatised people. Palestinians who had lived as refugees in Lebanon suffered a lot from Israeli injustices. Palestinian villages had been replaced by Israeli townships, their friends had died or departed, and their homes had been demolished to make a space for Israeli factories.

(Harlow, 1986) Dreadful circumstances of war also affect the psychological state of children and made them to ask numerous questions from their parents. As in novel, Naeem and Mostafa (Atef's Children) were having the random conversation in the morning “When we die, do we wake up in the morning?” (Saif, 2015 p.172)

The virtuous minds of children consider the war, an event that can end in time span of night like the normal fever. War was shifting their point of discussions, namely from discussing the rules of games to discussing the ongoing situation of war. They ask tons of questions from their parents because they too were watching the brutality of war and knew that death is stalking every street. Mostafa at the age of five ask his father: “Are we going to die?” (Saif, 2015, p.172). There are a lot of heart wrenching incidents in the novel which depicts the helplessness in the streets of Gaza. Saif demonstrates the dreadful incident of Mostafa's brutal death and his father's condition “head he is carrying is that of

his son, the brain is outside the head.... The father cries out, begging his boy to wake up to see some toys he has bought” (Saif, 2015, p.36).

The situation in Gaza during those 51 days was incredibly challenging. The continuous attacks and destruction have turned Gaza into the rubble. The shortage of electricity, food, and medical supplies made it even more difficult for the people to survive. Even at the best times, Gaza suffers from shortage of proper equipment and medicines. At the times of war, doctors were going through extreme pressure, and they had to conduct five to six different surgeries of different patients at a time. Hospitals were not staffed and there was no proper arrangement for transporting the materials and medicines during bombardment. Israel was demolishing every historical building in Palestine. The situation in Gaza is characterized by notable struggles and power dynamics. The struggle is basically between two main factions; Hamas and the Palestinian authority which is dominated by Fatah. Both of these factions have different ideologies and strategies. “Political quarrels between Ramallah and Gaza only add insult to injury.” (Saif, 2015, p.237). People in the Gaza have no interest in politics, they don’t care about who is right or wrong. They only need assistance, hope and peace in their lives.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has played a crucial role in lives of Gazans against the power dynamics in Gaza. Israel blockade on Gaza restricts the movement of goods and people across the territory. The blockade has a deleterious impacts on the economy, employment rate, infrastructure and daily lives of Gazans. The civilians of Gaza bears the brunt of struggle and power dominancy. “The only real worry you have, after so many weeks, is the nagging feeling that this war is never going to end” (Saif, 2015, p.137). The air attacks and inland attacks symbolize the power of Israeli authorities and drone operators. The author perceives the drone operator as a fictional character who sees Gaza as a video game and people here as just characters in it. Similarly, the tank driver considers that their tanks are toys which can be operated according to their will. He needs to understand that the people he sees behind his armored walls are not cartoon characters. The Israeli authorities need to recognize that those Al-Nada Towers they ordered to be destroyed are not merely Lego bricks but homes for hundreds of people. Palestinians adapt to the ongoing war ,conflict, and suffering ,but they have not been taught how to truly endure it. Their resilience allows them to navigate daily challenges, yet the continuous violence makes it difficult to find lasting peace or stability.

7. Conclusion

Harlow states that resistance literature seeks to redefine the cultural images that underwrite the collective actions, narrative reconstructs and analyses the past contextually

and symbolically to open up possibilities for the future. This article examines Abu Saif's unique depiction on Israeli Palestinian conflict in *The Drone Eats with Me: A Gaza Diary* through the theoretical ideas of Greenblatt's New Historicism. As a new historicist approach, the memoir has been a historical relic that records the existential realities of war affected people. This study also explores Saif's approach to challenge the power dynamics, injustices, and violent policies of Israel. It highlights the psychological and emotional sufferings of the individuals living under the threats of drones and bombing. By foregrounding the intimate stories of his family and neighbours, Saif disrupts the reductive portrayal of Palestinians as mere causalities or statistics. Instead, it offers an indelible portrait of vibrant cultural community struggling to maintain normalcy and humanity in the face of state-sanctioned violence. Abu Saif portrayed his personal history in order to develop the collective consciousness. His personal narrative reflects the daily struggles, fears, sufferings, and persistency of Palestinians. In this memoir, he intersects literature, history, and human experiences in times of turbulence through blurring the boundaries between history and fiction.

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