Dwelling-in-Displacement: Etel Adnan’s Multilayered Meaning-making Practice in her Life Writing In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country

Nadia Abdulridha Sakran AlEsi

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Dwelling-in-Displacement: Etel Adnan’s Multilayered Meaning-making Practice in her Life Writing In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country

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Supervisors

Prof. Anne Collett & Dr. Alison Moore

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Abstract

This thesis explores Etel Adnan’s life writing In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country (2005). Adnan’s life writing is an example of testimonial discourse and a pursuit of social justice. Adnan’s pursuit of social justice takes the form of a dialogue – although tangled and complex – which through the production of dynamic, interactive testimony establishes a distinctive cosmopolitan consciousness and acts to challenge the boundaries, limits and possibilities of socio-political change. The thesis shows that this dialogue is enabled in the memoir through the use of a genre of life writing and the English language. It argues that Adnan’s work depicts and enacts a particular type of cosmopolitanism. In order to understand what type of cosmopolitan disposition Adnan creates and how it is enacted in her work, the thesis adopts a combination of functional linguistic and literary approaches. This methodology is used to investigate Adnan’s writing style in terms of the different aspects of meaning Adnan’s work generates and what themes these aspects construe.

Using Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics and Hasan’s model of symbolic articulation and literary criticism and life writing theories, the thesis focuses, in particular, on Adnan’s patterns of language in the final chapter of the memoir “To be in a Time of War”. This final chapter is a critique of the 2003 war against Iraq. The thesis shows that Adnan uses a novel way of approaching the theme of war and other major themes in the chapter. The thesis undergoes a close textual analysis using both methods in order to unpack Adnan’s multilayered practice of meaning-making. The textual analysis aims to describe how these patterns construe experiential, logical and interpersonal meanings and how these meanings are deployed in the analysed text across multiple systems in the grammar. Looking at transitivity choices of process types and participant roles which construe inner and outer experiences of the world; ergative choices which construe human and nonhuman agency and responsibility; interdependency choices which construe in/dependency of human and nonhuman entities; and mood and modality choices which construe interpersonal relations between social actors, together with observing a multitude of lexical choices, the thesis reveals how these choices are constructed in an unusual way, why they generate unsettling effects, and how they offer challenging tasks of interpretation for readers.
Through this revelation the thesis provides a deeper understanding of not only how Adnan’s construal is distinctive and challenging but also how it contributes to Adnan’s whole project of establishing a cosmopolitan stance in her life writing and highlights the role of the reader as an active creator of meaning. The thesis shows that Adnan’s manipulation of language resources gives readers the opportunity to participate in the act of writing itself. Thus readers are modelled as social actors and are prompted to share Adnan’s alternative ways of perceiving, framing and responding to heightened socio-political issues, which aim to foster socio-political agency and transformation. Thus, the analysis of Adnan’s layers of textual production undertaken by the present thesis demonstrates how Adnan engages in the symbolic articulation of her themes. It consolidates the idea that themes are not just stated explicitly in literature but are symbolically articulated on many levels through language features across multiple grammatical systems.

The significance of the present thesis lies in undertaking interdisciplinary research which explores the indeterminate boundaries of literary and linguistic disciplines and draws a bigger circle of connection between the two disciplines to achieve a deeper understanding of Adnan’s writing techniques. The thesis contributes to stylistic and literary studies, and calls for future researchers to consider SFL analytical approaches as enabling means for literature studies. It gives the general public profound insights into how a literary work such as Adnan’s enables a glocal engagement in non-violent ethics of resistance and peace activism.
Acknowledgments

I would like to express my immense gratitude for the help and support provided by my supervisors Prof. Anne Collett and Dr. Alison Moore. Thank you for having been so enthusiastic for my research and for the invaluable guidance and insights, for the depth and breadth of their knowledge, and for warmth and passion which all have been an unfailing source of inspiration, reassurance, and progress.

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I would like to thank Etel Adnan for composing a work that has been, for me, as heavy as a shelling in a time of war, as haunting as the memories of loss and suffering, but whose words and sentences have been powerfully evocative, lyrical, and hopeful.

I would like to acknowledge the Dharawal people the traditional custodians of this land, on which the University of Wollongong is established, and my project is launched. I would like to pay my respects to Elders past and present.

Finally, I would like to dedicate my thesis to my Father and Mother, whose souls have been always present, and to the hundreds of thousands of victims of the wars against Iraq.
Certification

I, Nadia Abdulridha AlEsi, declare that this thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the conferral of the degree Doctor of Philosophy, from the University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Nadia Abdulridha AlEsi
31st January 2022
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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis examines Etel Adnan’s life writing In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country (2005) as an example of contemporary Arab Anglophone life writing composed by an Arab and American woman writer/artist in diaspora. Adnan’s memoir is marked by the employment of a range of new and distinctive literary and linguistic techniques that formalize the transnational and cross-cultural character of the linguistic medium, through which she can “escape from the implicit body of assumptions to which English was attached, its aesthetic and social values, the formal and historically limited constraints of genre, and the oppressive political and cultural assertion of metropolitan dominance, of centre over margin” (Ashcroft et al. 2002, p.10). This use of writing as an act of transnationality reflects the changing logics of nation states and belonging, enabling the autobiographical “I” to act as a “transnational subject” who “does not identify with a single nation-state because her … national identity is located at the site of global social [and political] and economic flows” (Smith & Watson 2009, pp.16-17).

In The Heart of the Heart of Another Country is a piece of multilayered prose work, both poetic and lyrical. It features Adnan’s autobiographical accounts which represent a social subject’s journey through the 20th and the 21st centuries. This autobiographical subject has been “consciously present” (Jensen 2006, p.1) for the most prominent of the historical disasters and preoccupations of that period as well as its numerous experimental literary movements, all of which have impacted the writer’s literary and artistic output. The memoir is fashioned into seven chapters in which the author explores identity, history, displacement, and war from an Arab-American perspective. It may be seen as a life narrative taking the shape of a dialogue that engages with what Butler (2004) calls “precarious lives” across multiple sites of suffering. Thus, it can be described, in Whitlock’s terms, as “testimonial discourse” that involves “cross-cultural transactions” in “pursuit of social justice”, and in its dialogic form is “dynamic and interactive” and involves “an appeal to an addressee, a text in search of a witness, a desire to invoke witnessing publics” (Whitlock 2015, p.8). It might also be read as a representation of the disruption and fragmentation manifest in traumatic experiences of war and diaspora that
shatter the sense of self, and can be understood as a work expressing “multiple difficulties that arise in trying to articulate [the experience of trauma]” (Gilmore 2001, p.6).

The subtleties of Adnan’s memoir will be investigated in terms of the relationship between the testimonial experience of trauma and its representation in English language. The title of Adnan’s book corresponds to William Gass’s 1968 collection of stories about America In the Heart of the Heart of the Country. While Adnan makes her regard for Gass’s book known in her introduction, it seems that she also employs the title of the story as a point of dispute: “So you are in America, and I am here; you may think that you’re in trouble, or that there’s trouble in your country, but come here and see for yourself the mire into which we’re sinking” (Adnan 2005, p. xiii). This point of dispute can be seen as an outcome of the historically long struggle between the global and the local that haunts Adnan. Her experience of war has made her a contemplative writer who is preoccupied with the new world order and with ongoing apocalypses. This experience is represented compellingly and movingly in her choice of literary form and distinctive use of English language. Her contemplative eye focuses always on “the narrow and the long road that leads the world to the slaughterhouse” (Adnan 2005, p.116), a phrase with which Adnan closes her memoir. I argue that the linguistic and the literary configuration of this point of dispute generates a cosmopolitan stance/ethos which is rooted in Adnan’s ethical and socio-political preoccupations with precariousness. The distinctness of Adnan’s writing style lies in the idiosyncrasies of her textual and clausal structure and in how she constructs the autobiographical subject. My thesis focuses on Adnan’s linguistic and literary experimentation that gives rise to these idiosyncrasies.

In my thesis I aim to probe the indeterminate boundaries of literary and linguistic disciplines by unpacking Adnan’s writing techniques. This unpacking can offer a deeper understanding of how Adnan’s politics of genre and language meet to produce a cosmopolitan stance/ethos whose main focus is the relationship between the self and the other, the personal and the global. There are a number of ways in which this experimentation is displayed in Adnan’s life writing. Among these ways is Adnan’s configuration of time in relation to a time of war as a recurrent event in history, and a distinct but related concern is her troubled sense of space. The cosmopolitan stance/ethos created by this configuration offers alternative ways of perceiving, framing and
responding to heightened socio-political issues, and aims to foster socio-political agency and transformation.

I see that Adnan’s life writing is cosmopolitan in stance. In order to scrutinize what Adnan does to English language and genre conventions, and how and why she takes this approach in relation to that stance, I re-claim the concept of cosmopolitanism and Adnan’s position as a cosmopolitan writer. The ethos of cosmopolitanism has been criticized for being apolitical and only typical of elite and privileged discourse (e.g. Homi Bhabha; Mitchell Cohen; Pheng Cheah; Ulf Hannerz). However, I will show in my thesis that in Adnan’s case this criticism cannot be sustained. My study is grounded on the premise that Adnan – as a cosmopolitan writer, born out of colonization, exile, migration, diaspora, and war, and coming from a multicultural/multilingual background – articulates her cosmopolitan consciousness in her life writing so as to offer some insights into how we should live as compassionate citizens of the world and the planet. Her discourse involves an opposition to the discourse of the elite and privileged, in that it asserts the obligation to react to suffering caused by politics whenever it occurs. I argue that Adnan’s discourse is closely linked to the writer’s experience of violence, exile and displacement. Thus my thesis has two main concerns: first, what Adnan’s cosmopolitan consciousness consists of; and second, how it is enacted in her life writing.

Adnan’s cosmopolitan consciousness unfolds into a number of possible and broader perspectives and aspects. First, it displays an acute ethical responsibility and commitment towards the ways a cosmopolitan self is cultivated, and how a critical, linguistic and literary agency might be built. Second, it exhibits the writer’s personal and emotional attachment to the English language in which she is deeply rooted but which she also transcends. Third, despite diaspora, it recognizes the need to ground a cosmopolitan ethical stance in the local and the personal thus involving a dual process of grounding-in and displacement. Fourth, following from this grounding in both the local and the personal, Adnan’s cosmopolitanism evokes the notion of “glocal” to emphasise a deeper understanding of socio-political issues as glocally affecting people. The term “glocal” is a blend of the words “global” and “local”, popularised by the sociologist Roland Robertson who attributed it to Japanese economists who coined it to explain Japanese global marketing strategies. According to Robertson (1995, p.34) “it makes no good sense to define the global as if the global excludes the local”. Thus, the term points to how “the local is fundamentally shaped by the global, but the opposite is also true” (Blatter 2013,
The term’s use for post-colonial studies has principally been “in its foregrounding of local agency against a seemingly relentless global culture. Globalization is itself always local and while globalization operates according to “flows”, the agency of the local ensures that the flow is very often reciprocal” (Ashcroft et al. 2007, pp.104-5). This concept of “glocality” or “glocalization” enhances the reader’s capacity to rethink how action within a community can be framed by making it possible for them to experience the global locally or through local lenses. In this thesis the notion of “glocal” is addressed as a value, obligation or stance that is taken by Adnan and a crucial aspect of her cosmopolitan ethos. Fifth, and again following from the previous point, Adnan’s cosmopolitanism is configured in the form of a displaced subject who is stateless but whose preoccupation with exploring violence is grounded in the practice of a non-violent ethics of narration. This is achieved through investing her writing with the notion and conditions of precariousness and vulnerability. Sixth, this cosmopolitan consciousness calls for the instigation of a dialogue with one’s self and community based on an immediate consideration of a historical moment and space connected concurrently to self-identification. Such a dialogue should generate a cosmopolitan disposition that prompts us as readers towards an “ongoing dialogue” both within ourselves and with distancediated others.

These aspects of Adnan’s cosmopolitan consciousness are revealed in novel ways of considering, responding to and perceiving the impact of a recurrent political turmoil that is produced by the neo-colonial present yet is closely connected to the colonial past, giving readers new ways to envision the trauma and violence engendered by that past and this present. These ways of thinking are manifested in Adnan’s innovative mode of weaving her lived experience of trauma and exile (displacement) from familiar landscapes – her Lebanon in particular – into the grammar of the English language and the genre of life writing, where in both cases conventions are disrupted. The disruption of conventions can be seen as manifested through a process of displacement. This process illustrates a “deteritorialized” movement across multiple literary and linguistic territories and between different worlds to make the life narrative an on-going breaking off of textual as well as territorial boundaries, demonstrated at the levels of literary genre conventions and the rules of the English language. The movement constructs a stateless, displaced autobiographical subject that undertakes, consequently,
the process of displacement itself and thereby so does the reader. In Adnan’s mode of life writing, while witnessing and reflecting on events in adverse situations the autobiographical subject (or the self) is always on the threshold, in the liminal space, or in the space between. This space suggests the space of potential action where the subject and, potentially, the reader challenge the past and present social structures and politics. Thus, Adnan’s work can be seen as occupying a significant position in a larger context of notions of dwelling and displacement of land and self – although her work might be seen as liminal, detached and fragmented, this work can at the same time be seen as active, mobile and dynamic – enabled by a transformative act of writing.

I argue that Adnan uses this mode of experimental writing to mobilise her ethical spirit which illuminates the many dimensions and layers of her political stance/ethos. Adnan is committed to extensively explore not only the personal but also the global dimensions of violence practised by people against the other and how we should respond to it. Her mode of life writing displays the entangled and embodied nature of language that enables us to symbolically articulate our experience of and concerns about the world in a great variety of linguistic and literary forms. Adnan’s use of “symbolic articulation” (Hasan 1985) lays the foundation for a new linguistic and literary (symbolic) practice of life writing.

In Adnan’s mode of life writing, the process of displacement has two main dimensions/layers of reality: temporality (time) and spatiality (space). Taken together, these two dimensions/layers display a distinct unfolding of a political event and social situation and are instantiated by various literary and linguistic choices. These literary and linguistic choices produce a sense of continuing movement and mobility where the construal of temporality (time) and spatiality (space) can be seen in terms of Deleuze and Guattari’s (1984) theory of displacement but it is also distinct from it. I will use the term ‘displacement’, in combination with the terms ‘dwelling’ and ‘commuting’, to refer to the movement that marks the construal of time and of space. However, although the spatial and temporal dimensions of Adnan’s cosmopolitan discourse are characterized by mobility and displacement, they are also rooted in a specific geographic location or in a linear progression of past, present, and future.

The most developed use of spatial and temporal dimensions in Adnan’s life narrative is found in the final chapter of the memoir titled “To be in a Time of War.” This chapter has been chosen as the focal text for close textual analysis in this thesis. The memoir concludes with “To be in a Time of War”, written in 2003 (through 2005) as the United
States invaded and occupied Iraq (the so-called 2003 “Iraq War”). The book’s final chapter portrays mainly Adnan’s response to and critique of the US invasion and occupation of Iraq in the spring of 2003. Linguistically speaking, the chapter is written almost entirely in the infinitive form (“to-” plus base verb) which together with other linguistic choices “evokes the sorrows of the particular experience and functions as an illustration of universal grief that captures Adnan’s profound sense of statelessness” (Countryman 2006, p.75). However, “Iraq” is not Adnan’s sole focus but her point of departure from which she puts forward some other personal negotiations of events and disturbances that have occurred in other places/spaces at different points of time, including her own homeland, Beirut. These events and disturbances are a result of war and violence described by Adnan as “unbearable tensions” (Adnan 2005, p.115) witnessed again and again throughout history. This final chapter is an expression of antiwar and antiviolence sentiments that not only challenge the limits/constraints of the English language and the life writing genre, but also the limits/constraints of the social and the political.

I argue that the linguistic features used in Adnan’s final chapter create a particular version of the autobiographical subject and a particular version of events. This particularity manifests itself in the creation of a narrative about the terror of a war launched by imperialist power systems in the Middle East that resonates with other worldwide terrors to which Adnan also responds from a distance. She mixes this response with moments of beauty and a deep sense of sadness, detachment, alienation and apprehension. Small daily happenings at home are coupled with a flow of uninterrupted movement across the geographies of Lebanon, France, and United States which she used to inhabit. My thesis explores this particular tangled and complex construal of events and feelings in the final chapter through Adnan’s use of a range of formal qualities both of literary and linguistic. The infinitive form is the most persistent and consistent linguistic feature. However, it is the integration of this dominant choice of the infinitive with a number of other linguistic selections that produces the particular representation of events and autobiographical subjectivity that are of interest. These linguistic and literary features are related and they interact to produce semantic and literary tropes which are the center of attention in my thesis.

We shall see that the breaking off of linguistic conventions in Adnan’s life writing is found in the distinct formulation of the English language itself in this final chapter. This
formulation is linked in a broader sense to notions of place and time, and war and politics which are portrayed in complex and multilayered linguistic patterns. There are a multitude of linguistic choices by which this distinct formulation is construed. In this thesis, I will examine some of them, employing text-analytic techniques from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which is concerned with how language is shaped and organised in relation to three functions, or metafunctions: the ideational (experiential and logical), the interpersonal, and the textual functions of language. The particular linguistic choices to be discussed are:

1. the construal of outer and inner experiences in the world (by examining process types and participant configurations within transitivity analysis);
2. the construal of the capacity for agency (by examining the grammatical system of agency and/or causation through transitivity and ergativity patterns) and other clause-level features that construe causation;
3. the construal of interdependency in how events in the narrative are related (by examining choices in how clauses are bound together including their status as dependent or independent clauses);
and
4. the construal of interpersonal relations (by looking at the text as a form of writer/reader interaction) – in terms of choices in Subject, Finite (especially tense), and modality.

This thesis gives me the opportunity to examine in detail how Adnan deploys these linguistic features and their effects to demonstrate her cosmopolitan stance/ethos. The linguistic examination of the above mentioned linguistic features or options along with literary criticism will be developed in four chapters of close textual analysis of Adnan’s selected work. More broadly, my methodology for studying Adnan’s work is multifaceted and mixed. The critical framework of my thesis is rooted in the combination of literature and linguistics, which is often known as “stylistics”. This combination in the methodology involves grammatical analysis drawing on SFL (e.g. Halliday, Halliday and Matthiessen, Hasan, Thompson) and literary criticism drawn from various theories of life writing (e.g. Whitlock, Smith and Watson, Gilmore). The nuances of grammar that mould Adnan’s (experimental) linguistic practice encode significant indications of the writer’s cosmopolitan position. This functional approach to an examination of one of Adnan’s
literary works builds on previous applications of SFL to literary studies, providing the first close grammatical analysis of a memoir. This analysis scrutinizes the relation between Adnan’s themes and her mode of articulating these themes, thereby achieving understanding of the text at a granular/micro level that enhances a macro level appreciation of the work itself and the value of such an interdisciplinary approach.

1.2 Scholarly discussion on Etel Adnan’s work and significance of the present thesis

Although Etel Adnan is described as “arguably the most celebrated and accomplished Arab American author writing today” by MELUS\(^1\) and understood to play an important role in feminist and postcolonial literature, there is only a small body of literary criticism and research on Adnan’s work, mostly published in the late 1990s and 2000s. And although she occupies a central role in Arab American writing, this is a branch of American ethnic literature which has yet to receive its full share of attention in the present multicultural environment. Indeed, most of the body of research published on Adnan is mainly on her (feminist) novel on the Lebanese Civil War, *Sitt Marie Rose*, and on some selections of her poetry, *The Arab Apocalypse* in particular.

This section does not attempt to outline in detail the entire body of literary criticism and research on Adnan’s work. Rather, here I will first talk about what scholarly discussions on Adnan’s work are available and why these discussions are few and limited in literary and linguistic perspectives, and second I will relate this to the significance and contribution of the present thesis.

Recent views and criticism by a number of Arab and Western scholars include one full biography, two edited collections of essays on her fiction and poetry, one edited collection of her journalism, several edited books that compile selected texts from Adnan’s prose and poetry, a few edited art books on her visual art, and a number of additional essays, reviews and shorter literary biographies many of which are authored by prominent scholars and are variously located in collections, encyclopaedias and/or literary journals and magazines. In addition, there has been, surprisingly, a recent surge of interviews with Adnan published on-line, many of which are about her visual art. Further, there is one official website (http://www.eteladnan.com) about Adnan, initiated and managed by Adnan and her partner, Simone Fattal. Further, Adnan’s profile and artworks appear on a

\(^1\) Founded in 1973, MELUS (Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States) is a “prestigious and rigorous journal in the field of multi-ethnic literature of the United States”; it is published quarterly; and has been an important resource for scholarship and teaching for many years.
number of international art and gallery websites where announcements on her group/solo exhibitions (1961-2021) are made, and from which a number of monographs are published. However, to date, only a small body of research comprising a few reviews and research papers in literary journals or in on-line magazines/websites has been published on Adnan’s life writing *In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country*. Most of the body of literary criticism and research on Adnan’s fiction, non-fiction and poetry (as well as visual art) is of recent origin despite the longevity and magnitude of Adnan’s artistic and literary output. In their Preface to *Etel Adnan: Critical Essays on the Arab-American Writer and Artist* “Situating Etel Adnan in a Literary Context”, Majaj and Amireh (2002, pp.1-2) point out that “Adnan’s body of work remains understudied, and her own stature as a writer and artist remains under-recognized in a wider sphere” and that “on the level of published criticism her work has nonetheless been, with some significant exceptions, in large part overlooked”. They add that “despite her growing prominence in the English-speaking context, there is little critical assessment of Adnan’s artistic and literary oeuvre, and almost no discussion of the role of her work in the context of American and European literature and art,” and that

within the Arab world her work is often overlooked because she writes in English and French, and as a result tends to be excluded from discussions about Arabic literature. This occurs despite the fact that Adnan considers herself an Arab, is attuned to political and cultural events in the Middle East, and writes about topics of crucial importance to the Arab world (Majaj & Amireh 2002, p.2).

Given the significance of Adnan’s work to a growing number of contemporary writers, artists, and intellectuals, the increasing inclusion of her books in university curricula, and her stature as a widely exhibited artist, this lack of critical attention is striking. And yet Adnan has achieved fame late in life. Her international renown might be said to begin as late as 2012, when she was 87, in dOCUMENTA13, the signature art-world event held every five years in the German town of Kassel (although she started painting in 1959). From that point, invitations began to stream in daily for exhibitions, collaborations and symposia, of which Adnan says, “It’s ironic, isn’t it, at a time when I can’t really use the money.”

As Ludescher observes, this “paucity of critical analysis is particularly serious given the current political environment which nurtures persistent negative stereotypes vis-a-vis Arabs in general and Arab women in particular” (Ludescher 2003, p.230). So too, Majaj
and Amireh (2002, p.3) point out this lack of critical work is “particularly dangerous because Arab women writers are often taught in a context rife with stereotypes” about “the lived reality of Arab women – a reality assumed to be marked by unmitigated and ahistorical oppression, exploitation, and violation by Arab men”. This context of reception affects “how these works are read. Instead of being considered as works of art emerging from and rooted in specific historical and cultural contexts”, they are used, all too often, as examples of “how all Arab women are oppressed by their misogynistic societies” (Majaj & Amireh 2002, p.3).

In addition, it is not only Adnan’s career in art and literature that has been under-recognized. Adnan’s intellectual and political intervention and activism has not gained recognition and critical focus either. Adnan’s activism in anti-war movements which demonstrates that she is an important actor in the context of past and current political events whether in the Middle East or elsewhere has been ignored. In this section I enquire into the reason(s) why most of the recognition of Adnan’s work from reviewers, commentators, prize committees and even academics, Arab and international, has been gained late in her lifetime, given the extraordinary longevity of her art and writing.

Adnan herself considers the issue of neglect and lack of recognition – she says, “I always had a few people who liked what I did, and that was enough. I do think I’ve kept my innocence” (Azimi 2015, p.6). Here, Adnan seems to suggest that she is more willing to preserve the integrity of her message, “Change the world or go home,” through her rebellious forms of expression in art and writing than seek public recognition. And yet Obrist claims that “Etel is one of the most influential artists of the 21st century” (Azimi 2015, p.4). “Her work is the opposite of cynicism,” writes Obrist (2015, p.4), “it is pure oxygen in a world full of wars”.

It can be said that in addition to her being an exilic writer, given other aspects of Adnan’s marginality – woman, Arab, Middle Eastern, lesbian – it may be that the taboo subjects of Adnan’s work, allied with its relentless political agenda are reasons for her late international recognition. Adnan says,

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against the Vietnam War, I joined the movement by writing against the war, spontaneously (Adnan 2009, p.2).

It may also be that work composed to challenge the conventions of writing and rules of the market offers another reason for the lack of commercial success and international renown.

The above outline on the available body of criticism and scholarly studies on Adnan’s work indicates the degree to which her work has been under-investigated or neglected, particularly in terms of academic practice. There are few comprehensive and scholarly discussions of Adnan’s work in general and of her distinctive styles and approaches to writing in English in particular. Although Adnan’s contribution to the canon of English literature has been lately recognized as important it has not been explored thoroughly. Being the first interdisciplinary study of Adnan’s work, the significance of the present thesis lies partly in the contribution of this research to the scholarly appreciation of Adnan’s writing.

The significance of this study is two-fold. First, the thesis investigates the wider social significance of a literary text such as Adnan’s life writing and its effects on and interactions with the wider public. Second, the specific contribution made by the present thesis is to produce an interdisciplinary practice that combines detailed linguistic analysis and literary criticism in the context of life writing. The general aim of this study is to contribute knowledge and research to the fields of interdisciplinary studies where literary studies and linguistic studies – systemic functional linguistic studies in particular – engage.

The thesis is also significant not only in applying linguistic systems of analysis to literary texts but also in its exploration of concepts that similarly occur in life writing as well as in SFL linguistics – such as agency, intersubjectivity or interdependency relations, inner and outer experience, and social or interpersonal relationships. But limited by word length and time, the thesis can only undertake a detailed close textual analysis of one chapter of Adnan’s memoir and will only look at select aspects of SFL.

1.3 Background to the thesis: Intersections between the course of Adnan’s life and her literary work and approach

Etel Adnan is an Arab Anglophone (and Francophone) woman writer, originally from the Middle East but living most of her life in the diaspora. Adnan is known as one of the most
complex cultural figures of contemporary culture, and one of the most important representatives of the “Arab diaspora.” She is described as a dissident and pacifist Arab American writer and artist who has been a powerful voice for compassion and empowerment in feminist and anti-war movements. Her feminist stance could be described as “feminism glocal,” that is “always contingent on the conjunction of the local and global” and represents part of “the Global Feminisms project” that, according to Smith and Watson, “houses an archive documenting heterogeneous feminist subjects in conversation with their pasts, their national locations and imaginaries, and their counterparts elsewhere in the world” (Smith & Watson 2009, p.19). I identify Adnan as a transnational diasporic subject whose concerns with socio-political issues in the world are linked to her literary experimentation with a lifewriting, and in so doing, she destabilises “the fixed meanings of being and belonging”.2

This section introduces some of Etel Adnan’s biographical details. These details are important to mention because they set a background to the thesis’s focus and display the many complexities of the subject as multicultural, multilingual, and multidisciplinary. These complexities are entangled and embodied, offering a multitude of perspectives on Adnan’s work and approach in art and literature.

1.3.1 Adnan’s multi-lingual/ multi-ethnic background

Adnan was born in 1925 and raised in Beirut, Lebanon. She has a multi-ethnic parentage. Her mother was a Christian Greek from Smyrna, and her father was a Muslim Syrian Arab and a high ranking Ottoman officer born in Damascus during a time when the Ottoman Empire controlled the Arab world. Adnan was raised in a society which was divided by ethnic and religious factions. Early in her life, she was made “crucially conscious of the problem of writing in a ‘foreign’ language, wherein later attempts to translate her first poem into Arabic ‘presented difficulties’” (Kareem 2017, p.2). This creates for Adnan a struggle relating to the choice of a language which, although “at odds with her Arab identity”, it is deeply rooted in her, which became “a life-long focus” for her (Majaj & Amireh 2002, p.14).

Adnan is a multilingual figure, speaking Greek and Turkish at home, and Arabic (local Arabic) at streets; French at schools when Beirut was then under French rule. Adnan did

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2 Elsewhere, Adnan is described as a transnational subject in relation to her The Arab Apocalypse (1989) (Abdulrahim 2013, p.76).
not learn formal Arabic because it was forbidden in schools. French was Adnan’s primary language; however, it was itself a remnant of the colonial era. In 1947 she moved to Paris to study philosophy at the Sorbonne, and began her earliest writing and career in journalism in the French language. However, in solidarity with the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962), she gave up writing in French, choosing rather to write in English. She would return to composing poetry and prose in French later in life.

Adnan settled into the English language. In 1955 she went to the United States to pursue post-graduate studies in philosophy. From 1958 to 1972, she taught philosophy and lectured at many universities throughout the United States. While in the USA Adnan found in English “a new language” and “a new beginning” of which she writes:

> Something happened, though, which determined my life: I fell in love with the American language. Listening to [this language] was like entering secret worlds. I knew, in American, things I could not tell in any of the languages I knew, because my experiences in those languages were limited, or seemed limited, or were too familiar to keep for me a sense of discovery. Speaking in America was like going up the Amazon River, full of dangers, full of wonders (Adnan 1996, p.4).

Believing that poets “fought against the war through poetry” (Adnan 1996) Adnan’s first writing in English was an anti-war poem (1965), the publication of which made Adnan “an American poet” and led her to “integrate within the American literary scene” and create “a network of poets and artists across the United States” (Adnan 2004, pp.57-8). This suggests that by 1965 “war” had become one of the important recurring themes of Adnan’s writing. In an interview with Aftim Saba in 1998, Adnan indicates that “war” “becomes the substance of one’s writing… [because]… there is a combination of the outer apocalypse and the inner apocalypse and my work reflects that along with issues of exile.” In Adnan’s work in English on war, through a combination of the personal and the political she explores the chaos war causes and how it affects the social being. This poetry has made Adnan one of the most important “female voices” contributing to the body of war literature in the Middle East, and internationally, according to critics Miriam Cooke (1988) and Evelyn Accad (1990) (Abdulrahim 2013, p.82).

3 Adnan’s political writing in journalism caused her exile, bringing her pain, displacement and the termination of her journalistic career in Beirut because she received death threats, then she left the country.
In 1972 Adnan left the USA and returned to Lebanon. Witness to the persecution and suffering of the Civil War at its outbreak in Lebanon in 1975, she left Beirut in 1976 to live in France and the United States. In 1977, Adnan re-established herself in California, making Sausalito (the Bay Area of San Francisco) her home, with frequent stays in Paris, and after thirty years abroad, she finally decided to take U.S. citizenship but she now resides in Paris, France.

The intersections and the interactions between these places, languages, and the witnessing of a whole range of historical and cultural events have impacted not only Adnan’s life experience and literary approach and concerns but also her choice of language for her literary expression, thereby becoming “a constant point of reference within Adnan’s work” (O’Rourke 2017, p.27).

1.3.2 Adnan’s multidisciplinary literary/artistic practice

Adnan’s literary and artistic practice is multidimensional. It falls under headings of war, exile, apocalypse, elegy, cosmos and nature. Adnan is a ‘multivoiced’ poet, essayist, novelist, journalist, playwright and visual artist. She has published many collections of poetry, fiction and non-fiction prose particularly in French and English and thus is a representative of both Francophone and Arab Anglophobe (American) literature.

Adnan’s poem *The Arab Apocalypse* (1989) and fictional novel *Sitt Marie Rose* (1982) are the most well-known and internationally celebrated of Adnan’s writings, both are examples of Adnan’s contestation of conventional forms of literary expression, and for which some critics have labelled Adnan “one of the world’s most important political writers, as well as a key protagonist of the peace movement” (Obrist 2015, p.104). Adnan’s collection of essays *Journey to Mount Tamalpais* (1986) is considered “one of the major works of and a new outlook on the ‘spirit of place’ in contemporary literature” (Berry, 2021), thus it is an indicative example of Adnan’s interaction with the nonhuman which is an important aspect of her cosmopolitan disposition that is also deeply asserted by Adnan in her life writing. Place, politics and war are for Adnan motifs to launch an experimental literary language that destabilises our sense of the social self, its relation to the other and its role in the world.

Besides her literary output, Adnan produces visual works in a variety of media which have been exhibited at galleries across the world. In a 2016 interview Adnan reveals that “Painting is a thought”, but this thought “is not intended to be translated”. She explains
that “a painting must be experienced by its spectator”, and that “everyone will therefore have a different feeling and interpretation” (Adnan 2016). Adnan’s reflection on painting as lending itself to multiple feelings and interpretations also holds true of her writing practice as we shall see later. In contrast with her writings about the turmoils the artist has witnessed, Adnan’s paintings of landscapes or abstract compositions are described as “joyful and serene, tinged with a deep attachment to the many places where she has lived” which “provides warmth and joy that transcends heartache and woe” (Nobili 2017, p.2). However, Adnan represents landscapes without the shadow of a human figure.

It is useful here to offer some insights on the trajectory of Adnan’s philosophy because Adnan’s oeuvre can be characterized as philosophical in the sense that it takes a metaphysical perspective. In a 2009 interview Adnan asserted that “existentialism” as a philosophy is a significant influence on (or aspect of) her work given her time in Paris as a student in 1950 of this philosophical approach, represented by philosopher writers like Heidegger, Sartre, and Nietzsche. In particular, Adnan remarks,

[Sartre’s] philosophy changed my life. Its second idea was about responsibility, and that is empowerment. I didn’t have the word or concept then, but it’s what existentialism offered people. … By saying you are responsible, you are your decisions – I think that’s liberation. It’s not, “Obey and shut up” (Adnan 2009, p.2).

Adnan’s literary and philosophical trajectory makes of her a philosopher writer/artist who always “seek[s] new connections” (Adnan 2009, p.3). Adnan’s pursuit of “new connections” is manifest in the radical approach of writing/art she has developed over many years. These approaches are often linked to the writer/artist’s reflections on the relationship between the personal and the universal, in terms of the social self and other, time and space. Adnan’s literary and artistic output is associated with a deep sense of being a person who “react[s] to what is happening in the world” or to the place where she is (Adnan 2012, p.2).

The work I focus on in the present research is Adnan’s life writing In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country (2005). Composed as non-fictional, the book exemplifies Adnan’s radical approach to writing. The style of the book shows how the writer

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4 Adnan is also influenced by the Sufi mysticism and Ibn ‘Arabî, an Arab Andalusian Muslim scholar and mystic poet who is ranked as the greatest of all Muslim philosophers.
transcends generic and linguistic boundaries in particular ways that creates complexity. Within this complexity the book raises challenging questions about national belonging and the relationship between self and other, along with reflections on the experience of shifting geographies, exile and displacement, and provocative socio-political viewpoints combined with philosophical insights.

1.4 Organization of Thesis Chapters

The thesis is divided into two parts. The first part gives a detailed background knowledge of Adnan relevant to her biography, practice of writing, a review of the literary criticism of Adnan’s work, and an outline of the theoretical background for the study from the point of view of literary criticism – that being in main theories of life writing – and linguistic methods. The second part presents the textual analysis of linguistic options made by Adnan in her selected work. Below is an overview of each chapter.

Chapter One, “Introduction”, presents a general introduction to the thesis’s focus, its key arguments and briefly sheds light on the major aspects of linguistic analysis the research undertakes. The chapter discusses the body of literary criticism and research on Adnan’s work and the relevance of that to her life writing and its significance and contribution to the present thesis. It sheds light on Etel Adnan’s life and trajectory as an Arab American woman author and artist. It also provides an overview of the organization of the thesis.

Chapter Two, “Across the Threshold: The Politics of Cosmopolitanism as a common thread in Adnan’s life writing”, explains notions of cosmopolitanism, nomadism and exile which are essential to Adnan’s politics and the formation of her life writing. It discusses how Adnan’s cosmopolitanism and its enactment is linked to, rooted in, and impacted by notions of nomadism and exile which are themselves key aspects of Adnan’s life and work. The discussion is linked to Adnan’s choice of English as a major mode of writing, choice of a life writing genre, and her distinctive writing practice as the expression of the self and the other.

Chapter Three, “Literary Criticism Approach: Theory and Application”, presents the literary approach this thesis incorporates in terms of the most relevant literary criticism of life writing and theories of (postcolonial) life writing, the debate over using English by postcolonial (life) writers as a form of expression, and the relevance of the theories and debate to Adnan’s formation of her life writing. Using the lens of this
theoretical background, this chapter then offers an overview of Adnan’s particular formation of the life writing genre in her memoir.

Chapter Four, “Text Analysis Approach and Methods”, describes the linguistic functional approaches employed in this study to investigate the research material and data, including the approach of “symbolic articulation” in a verbal art work. It gives an overview of some systemic and stylistic studies relevant to the thesis. The methods are outlined and illustrated with examples of typical English as opposed to some of the distinct and unusual patterns drawn from the research material to understand how and why Adnan’s selected work is considered to be ‘atypical’ at the levels of wording, semantics and generic structure.

Chapter Five, “The Construal of Inner and Outer Events in Adnan’s Text”, explains the notion of “experience” in literary and linguistic terms. It examines transitivity patterns of experiential relations in terms of the way Adnan manipulates the grammar to portray an unusual juxtaposition between outer and inner experiences in her selected work. Specific grammatical choices are observed in her selection of Process type and Participant role configurations. In addition, the chapter investigates how Adnan’s text is oriented towards interaction, being dialogic or monologic, through the use of patterns of verbal processes.

Chapter Six, “The Construal of Agency in Adnan’s Text”, explains the concept of “agency” in life writing and literary criticism, then presents it as a linguistic concept as outlined in the ergative model of agency from SFL. Through a combination of the ergative analyses of process, participant and clause types (‘middle’ and ‘effective’) and the model of Hasan’s “Cline of Dynamism” (1985), the chapter investigates how events and actions in the external world are portrayed in Adnan’s selected work. A key focus is on how choices in the ‘ergative’ grammatical system are a crucial resource for depicting responsibility, and how such patterns can sometimes be manipulated to confuse the sense of who is taking responsibility for actions, which is arguably the case in Adnan’s text.

Chapter Seven, “The Construal of Interdependency of Events in Adnan’s Text”, discusses the notion of “interdependency” and “belonging” in theories of life writing. The chapter clarifies how in Adnan’s text interdependency – as a principle of belonging – is connected to a specific configuration of the social self. This is achieved in the text at clause complex level through Adnan’s patterns of taxis and logico-semantic relations.
across clauses. These patterns show how the flow of events is organised and interconnected based on the degree of interdependency and complexing of clauses.

**Chapter Eight, “The Construal of Interpersonal Relations in Adnan’s Text”**, is dedicated to the linguistic examination of aspects of writer/reader interpersonal exchange in terms of how they are construed through patterns in the Mood element of the clause, including choices of Subject, Finite (especially tense), and Modality. These patterns are linked in the chapter to the concept of “interpersonal relationships” as theorised in literary criticism of life writing. The chapter explores how these patterns in the text ambiguously/affect the form of exchange between the writer and the reader, but at the same time offer the reader choices in what role in the exchange they can take.

**Chapter Nine, “Concluding Discussion”**, draws together the findings from each of these chapters and examines their implications for the understanding of how and why Adnan’s wide range and strange choices of grammatical patterns in her life writing relate to the writer’s negotiation of ideas and interaction with readers and the social world, and establish a distinct cosmopolitan consciousness through the practice of writing itself.

1.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has introduced my thesis’s focus, its key arguments and significance as an interdisciplinary practice and contribution to the fields of literature and linguistics. Given Adnan’s sizable contribution to different canons of literature, the chapter clarifies that although the small body of discussion/criticism on Adnan’s writing is useful and important, no study has been done to date that looks at Adnan’s writing in depth across her oeuvre. So, the linguistic and the literary investigation of Adnan’s life writing is one of the original ways in which this thesis can prove significant in broadening our understanding of Adnan’s work. In addition, through outlining the course of Adnan’s personal and professional life, the chapter offers an important context for the analysis to follow. The next chapter, Chapter Two, will discuss Adnan’s politics of cosmopolitanism – a cosmopolitanism that is entangled with nomadism and exile. The discussion of nomadism and exile as notions of movement is essential to this thesis to understand how these notions are enacted as metaphors in Adnan’s life writing through genre and language selection.
Chapter 2

Across the Threshold: The Politics of Cosmopolitanism in Adnan’s life writing

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I examine Adnan’s politics of cosmopolitanism and its relevant aspects. Adnan is a cosmopolitan writer and activist who uses her work to focus on specific questions of human rights and engagement, maintaining an ethos that to be a “citizen of the universe”, for Adnan, is not to be achieved through rootlessness or universal agreement on human rights issues, but through imagining the precariousness of others as our own that we might transcend blind ties of nationalism. I argue that Adnan’s politics of cosmopolitanism is a common thread in her writing. In this writing, Adnan addresses the socio-political issues in the contemporary world from a diasporic cosmopolitan perspective that draws on her distinctive multifarious background. Relevant aspects of her background include a multilingual and multicultural coexistence, the legacies of colonialism and the complexities of post/neo-colonialism. I argue that these and other aspects are entangled and have impacted Adnan’s writing. I will unpack these aspects and discuss them separately to understand how Adnan’s work is cosmopolitan and link this idea to notions of nomadism and exile.

In her memoir, Adnan sets out a cosmopolitan perspective in relation to various national and international socio-political issues as integral to her search for justice and peace. Thus, Adnan’s writing transcends the dividing line or binaries between centre and margin created by hegemonic structures and ideologies. She offers a cosmopolitan ethic in her writing that entails a particular postcolonial form of moral and political consciousness of perceiving, understanding, and exploring others’ suffering and the political and personal dimensions of violence and indifference. This is linked to Adnan’s experience of and worldview about displacement and dislocation from not only the actual landscapes and many places she has loved, embraced and responded to, but also from her sociable community. Adnan’s worldview, combined with a vision that community need not be nationally bounded, incorporates aspects of mobility such as nomadism and exile. Accordingly, in this chapter I will discuss Adnan’s sense of herself as cosmopolitan, and how we might understand Adnan’s cosmopolitanism in light of nomadism and exile. Among the strategies Adnan uses to achieve cosmopolitanism is through experimentation
with the genre of life writing and with the English language. In later chapters, this experimentation will be examined in detail using theories of life writing (discussed in Chapter 3) and SFL functional approaches for textual analysis (discussed in Chapter 4).

2.2 Adnan a nomadic writer

In this section, I will present some conceptions and theories on the notion of nomadism, and then I will talk about Adnan’s experience of nomadism and elucidate her specific conceptualization of nomadism. In addition, I will explain how a sense of nomadism is enacted and constructed in Adnan’s life writing in terms of its transnational poetics and within her use of English language.

2.2.1 The notion of ‘nomadism’

Etymologically, the term “nomad” stems from the Greek nomos, meaning “an occupied space without limits” (Kraidy 2005, p.139). Nomadism as a notion of mobility means “a rootless way of life and human existence” (Pauls 2016, p.1). It is based on “temporary habitation sites” whose stability depends on the availability of resources spread across wide territories (Pauls 2016, p.165). Nonetheless, the contemporary global nomads, “unlike migrants and expatriates who long for a home and relationships they left behind” are seen as “liberated from emotional, social, and physical obligations” (Bardhi et al. 2012, p.525).

Postcolonial literary theories have addressed the concept of nomadism but those proposed by Rosi Braidotti and Caren Kaplan in the field of women’s and transnational feminist studies are particularly relevant to this study. Braidotti and Kaplan’s insights are useful for bettering our understanding of Adnan’s experience of nomadism and figuration as a “nomadic subject”. They differentiate nomadism from notions of exile, diaspora, migration and travel.

Braidotti (1994) defines “nomadism” as the “vertiginous progression toward deconstructing identity, the self”. Braidotti sees the nomad as a subject who “does not stand for homelessness, or compulsive displacement, it is rather a figuration for the kind of the subject who has relinquished all idea, desire or nostalgia for fixity” (1994, p.22). For Braidotti (1994, p.2), the “nomadic subjectivity” is the site where “various axes of differentiation intersect and interact with each other in the constitution of subjectivity”.

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Braidotti distinguishes between the nomad, the exile and the migrant in terms of differing tenses, literary styles and genres. For Braidotti, exilic style is marked by loss, separation, memory, a sense of overwhelming foreignness; migrant literature is a genre “between an impossible present and a burdensome past”; while the “nomadic tense”, Braidotti suggests, “is the present imperfect: it is active, continuous” and the nomadic style is about “transitions and passages without predetermined destinations or lost homelands” (1994, pp.23-25). Braidotti notes (1994, p.5) that “nomadic becoming” is “neither reproduction nor just imitation”, but rather “a creative sort of becoming; a performative metaphor that allows for otherwise unlikely encounters and unsuspected sources of interaction of experience and of knowledge” (Braidotti 1994, p.6). Thus, nomadism refers primarily to individuals who have “the kind of critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behaviour” (Braidotti 1994, p.5). Here we see a connection between Braidotti’s nomadic philosophy and Adnan’s work. Although Adnan is a nomad by birth (diverse and conflating cultures, ethnicities, religions, languages) lifestyle and identity (nomadic travel, education, career – but not that of an elite nomad) her sense of nomadism is more usefully attributed to the nomadic style of her work. It is nomadic because, by breaking up boundaries of genre and language, it moves from one point of experimentation to another. Adnan might be defined as a nomadic writer because she is in constant search for home and this home she finds, as she says herself, in “the books I write”. Adnan’s work incorporates creative forms of literary and linguistic expression which are dynamic – marked by continuous variation, and unbounded by conventions.

Kaplan (1996, pp.89-91) sees the nomad as “resistant to the strictures of the power of the state, art, settlement”. Kaplan criticizes Euro-American articulations of nomadism seen in the Deleuzian and Guattari model of “nomadology” (1988) and displacement because, the concepts as developed by Deleuze and Guattari participate in the deployment of colonial discourses by recycling orientalist tropes through their metaphors. She suggests that their notion of the nomad shows that theoretical nomadism associated with postmodern deterrioralization is often “apolitically deployed” and that their theory “privileges exile and solitude and celebrates specific locations associated with the nomads” and constitutes the margin as a “linguistic or critical vacation, a new poetics of the exotic” (Kaplan 1987, pp.90-93). Kaplan thus reveals how the various tropes of displacement, including nomadism, in contemporary postmodernist criticism are linked to, rather than strictly breaking away from, the colonial discourses of modernisms and
that this criticism ignores the “political implications” inherent in these different modes of movement. Thus, Kaplan refuses to tie the figure of nomad to a representation of “a subject position that offers an idealized model of movement based on perpetual displacement” (Kaplan 1996, p.66). Aaccording to Karen, this model can complicate “the limits and possibilities of representations of nomadism as one form of large-scale displacement”, and thereby affects “our theories of subjectivity, our tactics of intervention, and our discourses against injustice” (Kaplan 1987, p.4). Kaplan recognizes that many of us now “have locations in the plural” (Kaplan 1987, p.7). Kaplan’s criticism fits with Adnan’s rejection of this understanding of nomadism and Adnan’s sense of nomadism as an act of intervention achieved through the practice of writing. Her practice posits the need to engage the political and social “urgency of postmodernity”, which Kaplan describes as “a set of economic and cultural relationships that produce specified discourses of space, time and subjectivity in a particular time period and in relation to multiple locations” (Kaplan 1987, p.11).

Thus, the points put by Braidotti and Kaplan about the nomadic subject are relevant to Adnan’s experience and consciousness of nomadism and conceptualization of the self as nomadic in terms of not only resisting a fixed location or status but of destabilizing notions of race, gender, genre, language, and subjectivity and stressing the importance of awareness and responsibility for one’s place as non-static or exclusive. Adnan advocates the need to change deeply embedded ideas or habits of belonging and being in our imagination and social realities.

2.2.2 Adnan’s sense of nomadism

Adnan is often described as a nomadic subject (Fitch 2017; Keyrouz 2020) and is also said to have a nomadic existence due to her multicultural and multilingual background and to the nature of her work which “traverses cultures and disciplines, drawing its inspiration from a deep engagement with the world” (Fitch 2017, p.1). In addition, this description of Adnan’s existence as nomadic is mainly assigned to her because of the focus on one dimension of her life experience – a life of frequent mobility and travel which provides her with privileged access to a realm of metropolitan cultures and openness towards divergent experiences from different nations. However, I argue that all the above mentioned points of view that define Adnan as a ‘nomad’ writer do not offer a different perspective to define her as such other than relying on her multifaceted
background and mobility that characterizes her lifestyle. In fact, the nature of Adnan’s multilayered personality suggests that there are other direct and indirect ways of becoming or being a nomad individual and writer than those that pertain to personal background. Before elucidating some of these ways, for the purpose of the present research it is important to draw attention to how Adnan herself thinks of nomadism.

In her essay “The Nomadization of Culture and the Electronic Page”, Adnan (2000, p.2) sees that “nomadization” links the past and the present and that the nomadic world has two essential elements: mobility and impermanence. Adnan says that nomadism of the old times was significant in establishing “genuine lines of communication,” transmitting cultural ideas or ideology among nomadic lands whose nomads were not “outside civilizations” but rather “the mediators of them” (Adnan 2017). “Today”, Adnan notes, “we live in nomadic society” and that this nomadism can be represented in the phenomenon of contemporary movements of populations – influx of refugees and migrants. Crucially, Adnan sees nomadism not only as a physical movement for economic and political factors. She relates the concept of “nomadization” to a troubled sense of social self and other. She notes that apart from the voluntary or involuntary mobility of people, the human being is “naturally both nomadic and sedentary”, which causes, however, “worldwide feeling of uncertainty” towards others and breaks down a common “cultural space” where people can engage. She observes that:

This *mondialisation* [a world without borders] of practically everything creates its antidote: the world is breaking down (in a most fluid way), into ‘groups,’ ‘cultural organizations,’ ‘communities,’ which are not linked by cultural space but by a common ‘network.’ All the groups, to which we increasingly belong, become tribes of a new kind which gather periodically and disperse, each member joining other tribes, and this ad infinitum. (Adnan 2000, p.2) (Emphasis is original)

Adnan notes that although nomadism brings feelings of uncertainty and alienation towards the other, this phenomenon of extensive mobility can engender instead a sense of urgency to create a wider cultural space for developing social connections/relationships between social self and other. Adnan suggests that nomadism has the potential to create a new world with a transnational foundation. This world is based not only on ad infinitum movement without virtual or real borders but also on breaking down boundaries of social
self, nation, genre, or language and allowing the growth of an imagined nomadic self that extends beyond these boundaries.

Adnan understands nomadism not only as an existential activity but also as a strategy through which she achieves a cosmopolitan stance by escaping hegemonic structures, seen for example in her use of English. For Adnan, to be a nomad is not only to write in English but to escape or challenge conventions of language and genre. By this means the individual becomes a vital actor and agent rather than a passive witness. Rushdie identifies the value of this position in his book *Imaginary Homelands*, saying “Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, we fall between two stools. But however ambiguous and shifting this ground may be, it is not an infertile territory for a writer to occupy” (Rushdie 1991, p.15). Thus, in this sense for Adnan a genre or language can become “an agent for writers, a fertile land for the nomads to write from the margins to the centre” and that English language “opens the gate to a world of nomadism” (Simsek 2013, pp.211-12). This can occur when a writer not only writes in a language other than their so-called “mother tongue” but escapes the conventions of that adopted language, thus becoming a nomad by ‘profiting’ from language resources. However, this does not mean that Adnan’s nomadism encourages rootlessness. According to Zilling (2012, p.2), Adnan is “not a super-flexible global jetsetter: rather she’s loyal to the locations [and roots] that have a place in her heart”. This suggests that Adnan’s sense of nomadism is not only positive but, paradoxically, rooted.

In her essay “To Write in a Foreign Language” (1996) Adnan sees herself as an “explorer” in the English language (Adnan 1996, p.7). She challenges the view that a language belongs to one “homeland” or fixed territory for writing and argues that language can become acts of nomadism each time a writer creates a new world of literary expression. Adnan is a nomad not only because she moves between different cultures and languages but by symbolically “dwelling” in language space and at the same time going back and forth between different dimensions of time and other spaces. Adnan’s nomadic subjectivity sits at the ‘threshold’, a territory between ‘here’ and ‘there’, a space of liminality and in-betweenness, a ‘third space’. Not being “inside” or “outside” or belonging to “centre” or “margin”, the threshold, Shafak (2008, p.13) notes, “is a lonely place. It has to be. It belongs to neither ‘us’ nor ‘them’”. However, although being a place
of estrangement and alienation, the threshold is “fruitful” because it provides Adnan a
territory to achieve an intervention in socio-political spheres. Thus, by writing through
and with a nomadic subjectivity Adnan disrupts binaries and shifts boundaries but in a
different way to the postcolonial writers who employ English as a medium of expression
to create a counter discourse resisting the imperial and colonial background of the English
language (I will discuss this further in Chapter 3).

In addition, when asked in a 2017 interview about what the term “nomadism” – which is
linked by the interviewer to a life that takes place between “poles of socially determined
destiny and eloquent self-direction” – mean to her, Adnan explains that for her nomadism
is a “rather nostalgic term”, but also indicating that beyond the romantic sense of the term
there can be benefits in leading a nomadic lifestyle. She observes:

we are mobile. Some of us are uprooted. In my case, I grew up largely as an
outsider. I will call all that an alienation. So I moved between different worlds
…Was I an Arab, a French, then became an American? I seldom worried about
these questions – that was my own answer. I can’t say that it was hard to go
through that kind of a life. It was rather a blessing. Today we are aware of massive
migrations, massive displacements [that] create a new phenomenon for which I
will not use the name of nomadism [in its romanticized sense] (Adnan 2017, p.4).

Although acknowledging that nomadism may entail a negative sentiment, Adnan asserts
that being a nomad is “a blessing” because it develops a deep consciousness of the
contemporary construction of the moral and social world with a sense of self in search of
new beginnings while being part of and sensitive to the local and global world. This search
permits wider engagement with and obligations towards the (social) (foreign) (human or
nonhuman) other.5 Consequently, as Adnan suggests, we can enact nomadism to the
extent that we reject local origins, local group membership or national identification, thus
limiting our perception of the other. Or we can understand nomadism as a productive
opportunity that enables us to invent ourselves anew – political and social displacement
can allow for the creation of new connections/relationships to others. This enactment of

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5 Adnan’s perception of ‘the other’ often shows a wider perspective involving the human and the nonhuman:
“a planet crisscrossed by billions of dots made of objects, people, animals, plants, boats, lights, all mixed
together and all moving uninterruptedly, as if trapped aimlessly on a given surface turning in a void” (Anan
2017, p.9).
nomadism by Adnan, seen in Adnan’s life writing project, displays a capacity to incorporate nomadism in a productive way which involves the local and the global at the same time.

I argue that Adnan’s sense of nomadism in her life writing is politicized, dialogical and is not associated with cultural privilege, aestheticism, or elitism that are sometimes linked to nomadism or mobility. For this nomadism is not only engendered by physical mobility, but by mobility of consciousness that cultivates a wider sense of socio-political commitment, responsibility and willingness to engage with the social realities of the other. Because it is tied to a history of colonization that causes, in addition to mobility and displacement, trauma and loss, Adnan’s nomadism places importance on dialogue both within the self and with distanciated other. This dialogue is grounded in the recognition of a shared sense of precariousness and vulnerability evoked by her careful reflection on and consideration of “long-distance and long-term consequences of actions” of violence, warfare, or human rights’ violations. Adnan’s experience and figuration of nomadism speaks of the complexity and the contradictory nature of her becoming a “nomadic subject”, which is, in fact, enabled by the condition of exile.

2.4 Adnan an exilic writer

Adnan is regarded as one of the most important representatives of the “Arab diaspora”. Ouyang claims she belongs to a new generation of postcolonial writers who look upon exile as a “complex, dynamic phenomenon that goes beyond political alienation” and not only as “a consequence of political oppression” (Ouyang 2002, p.67). In this section, I will shed light on the concept of exile, and then examine Adnan’s experience of exile and diaspora – which strengthens and enables her sense of nomadism – and how her work is influenced by that experience.

2.4.1 The concept of exile

In literary criticism, exile is referred to as the condition that involves the idea of a “separation and distancing” from either a homeland or from a cultural and ethnic origin (Ashcroft et al. 2007, p.85), which is often produced by a colonialism that pressures colonized peoples to exile themselves from their own cultures, languages, traditions. Moreover, exile is described by Said as an “unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be
surmounted.” “True exile,” according to Said, is “a condition of terminal loss” in which “exiles are cut off from their roots,” and the achievements of exile are “permanently undermined by loss of something left behind forever” with “the stigma of being an outsider” (Said 2000, p.173). The role of exiled writers, Said contends, is to lend dignity to a condition “legislated to deny dignity” (Said 2000, p.173).

In this section I argue that although Adnan is aware of and has experienced the negative aspects of exile, her sense of exile and the expression of that sense is distinctive and multilayered. For Adnan exile is a dynamic phenomenon which should not be seen as entirely as loss, displacement or marginality.

2.4.2 Adnan’s sense of exile

In her essay “Voyage, War and Exile” (1995), Adnan admits that exile is a “complex experience.” She understands exile in relation to her experience of travel and war, asserting that war made her aware of the meaning of exile as “violent and involuntary loss,” a “dispossession with no recourse”; it acts to marginalize and exacerbate the distinction between self and other (Adnan 1995, p.8). Nonetheless, for Adnan exile can be a “blessing”. Adnan remarks that exile also brought a sharp light to bear on the whole of her life and enabled her to discover and live exile’s other profound meaning. She says that in exile she sensed “an exhilarating belonging to the world per se. I was not living an exile but a freedom which I found on my own and at my own risks” (Adnan 1995, p.6).

However, Adnan recognizes an almost metaphysical sense of exile causing a conflict “when distance is created between you and the other, between you and history” (Adnan 1995, pp.12-13).

Although Adnan enunciates the internal conflicts she suffers from because of exile, she indicates that she resolves her conflicts “in my writings, by my writings”. She says some exiled writers find in their condition a perspective on their original countries and on themselves which may not have been found before exile. Those writers sees writing as a meaningful practice which gives form and substance to “what otherwise would be a devouring chaos” (Adnan 1995, pp.14-15). Because Adnan sees that exile becomes “synonymous with the [social] human condition” she comments,

Exile is not the sad privilege of only a few individuals: it has become synonymous with the human condition, but with (slight) difference that some of us are eaten by this illness in ways evident and definitive while all the others are not yet
conscious of what they already are suffering from. As contemporaries of this day and age, we are all very close to each other, but very few of us share this knowledge (Adnan 1995, p.16).

Here Adnan’s quote resonates with some of Said’s ideas where he indicates that “we have become accustomed to thinking of the modern period itself as spiritually orphaned and alienated, the age of anxiety and estrangement” (Said 1994, p.137). Said continues to suggest that “the exile knows that in a secular and contingent world, homes are always provisional. Borders and barriers, which enclose us with the safety of familiar territory, can also become prisons … Exiles cross borders, break barriers of thought and experience” (Said 1994, pp.146-7). More readily evident here is the useful application of Said’s notion of “contrapuntal juxtaposition” – a musical term meaning “[to employ] combined or contrasting themes, structures” (Said 1994, p.148) – to Adnan’s work.

Through a range of dialectical perspectives Adnan develops throughout her life writing we can see how the notion of “contrapuntal juxtapositions” bears on these perspectives. These perspectives are associated with exile and belonging, as well as language and genre, past, present and future, human and nonhuman relationships, in the context of memory, war and daily life, as we shall see in her work. Adnan remarks: “My memory, as well as my daily life, is woven with war” (Adnan 1995, p.11). Thus, exploring Adnan’s experience of exile as representing a ‘contrapuntal’ voice/perspective can be useful in understanding more aspects of her poetics of liminality and displacement, offering a less limiting perspective on exile and displaying the many intersecting layers and contexts that describes Adnan’s work, be they literary, linguistic, or political.

Adnan’s sense of exile provides a plurality of vision. She comments that this sense “goes back so far [and] … has lasted so long, that it became my own nature….I am both a stranger and a native to the same land, to the same mother tongue” (Adnan 1996, p.7). This suggests that Adnan’s sense of exile makes of her an insider and, concurrently, an outsider. In some of Adnan’s work exile emerges as “a multilayered experience, one located in her reality as a postcolonial subject living in the postmodern era, and in her own understanding and expression of her exile” (Ouyang 2002, p.67). Significantly, this sense of exile “and yet rootedness, presence and distance, of constant motion and simultaneous immersion into the present moment, informs all of her work” (Majaj & Amireh 2002, p.21). This suggests that Adnan’s experience of exile informs her work in a sophisticated and distinctive manner. This is particularly amplified in her life writing in
terms of the choice of language and genre used for the textual construct of the social self. She says in a 1998 interview “I do not consider myself a desperate exile like other people. Personally, to be in exile is not my major concern. There are exiles in one’s own country” (Adnan 1998, p.2).

Adnan affirms that for her exile is not a “terrible fate” – causing a “discontinuous state of being” and because the ties to our roots of land and past are cut – as Said often argues (Said 2000, p.177). For Adnan, exile is not only territorial. Exile can be recognized in social relationships among human beings. Adnan’s perspective on exile involves a cosmopolitan ethos built on the importance of social engagement with and justice for the other. In addition, although exile creates for her territorial as well as social alienation, it makes of her a ‘controversial’ subject. Adnan’s exile is shaped into a form of “unsociable sociability”. However, while achieving freedom from dominant affiliations and loyalties, Adnan simultaneously works out attachments to her native place – Beirut – or to her home in US – California – emphasizing thus the writer’s bond with a place she belongs to. In the next chapters, many of these aspects of Adnan’s sense of exile discussed above will be explored to see how they are realized in her text by means of linguistic options and a distinctive genre formation.

2.3 Adnan’s politics of cosmopolitanism

Having discussed notions of nomadism and exile and how they are configured by Adnan, in this section I will discuss Adnan’s experience of cosmopolitanism. I will distinguish between the kind of cosmopolitanism towards which Adnan leans and the ways in which she enacts that cosmopolitanism. To do so, first, I will discuss some general formulations of cosmopolitanism relevant to the context of the present research. Second, I will explain Adnan’s experience of cosmopolitanism and interrogate the critique of Adnan as a cosmopolitan individual and writer in order to understand how and why Adnan achieves a distinctive cosmopolitan ethos in her life writing.

2.3.1 The concept of cosmopolitanism

In one of its forms, cosmopolitanism is associated strongly with the elite and privileged pleasures of travel and benefits of continuous mobility. Some are privileged to become

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6 In this context Adnan refers to the Native Americans, some black people, and the Palestinians who, according to her, are “in exile on their own lands”, “who have little rights”. 

cosmopolitan or “citizens of the world”, while others are made to be subject. In addition, cosmopolitanism may refer to an ideology taken by Universalists which considers all humans as a single community: to be a “citizen of the universe” is to be rootless or to have universal agreement on everything. However, the contemporary literature on cosmopolitanism reflects many different perspectives on the concept.

One of the influential commentaries on cosmopolitanism is Appiah’s (2006, p. xv). He defines cosmopolitanism as the “practices” of a shared community which recognizes a profound obligation to others and enacts an ‘intercultural exchange’ in which ‘difference’ is celebrated (Appiah 2006, p.xix). Accordingly, the cosmopolitan practice is not only an ethical abstraction but a deeply felt imperative and responsibility to the individual and collective suffering of “strangers”; it is incorporated through developing “habits of coexistence” (Appiah 2006, p.xix). Appiah’s model for ‘coexistence’ is to employ ‘conversation’ which is used as a metaphor of engagement with the experience and the ideas of others across borders and cultures, stressing “the role of the imagination” (Appiah 2006, p.85). This conversation is not meant to achieve a full agreement on everything, but it can begin with “the sort of imaginative engagement” we get when we attend to a work of literature or art that “speaks from some place other than your own”. So, cosmopolitanism is viewed here as “rooted” which means to feel connected to a home and homeland, while also feeling ‘obligations’ to humanity at large. I will utilize Appiah’s notion of “rooted” and “conversational” cosmopolitanism in the discussion of Adnan’s experience as cosmopolitan because Appiah’s definition is most apt for an identification of Adnan’s cosmopolitanism.

In addition, cosmopolitanism is defined by Guardado (2012, p.155) as a practice of “valuing and recognizing” different cultures and identities, being local or distant, and of opening the self to “imaginative alternative ways within and between” different cultures as Beck notes (2006, pp.78-79). This notion of “individual responsibility” can be seen through the lens of what Judith Butler calls the “precariousness of life in self and other” with reference to the “proximity of what is similar”, the familiar and the unfamiliar Other:

[We] have to ask about the conditions under which a grievable life is established and maintained, and through what logic of exclusion, what practice of effacement

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7 According to Online Merriam Webster Dictionary, the term subject as noun refers to “one that is placed under authority or control; one in a subservient or subordinate position”. See https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/subject
and denominalization. … [t]he proximity of difference that makes me work to forge new ties of identification and to reimagine what it is to belong to a human community in which common epistemological and cultural grounds cannot always be assumed (Butler 2004, p.38).

Butler (2004, p.38) asks “But at what cost do I establish the familiar as the criterion by which a human life is grievable?”, or, according to Butler, what are the consequences of valuing the familiar more than the stranger or the foreign Other? This stresses the idea that being a cosmopolitan is to engage with and reimagine the social, political or ethical, yet crucially under conditions of both difference and similarity.

In addition, cosmopolitanism is seen as dialogical and interactive: a “practice of mutual collaboration” (Canagarajah 2013, p.196). This sense of cosmopolitanism as dialogical pertains to Adnan’s use of English through which she intervenes to foster a possible dialogical engagement associated with how she understands cosmopolitanism.

Further, a notion described as a “new cosmopolitanism” is associated with the “turbulence” (Papastergiadis 2000, p. iv) in of contemporary intensification of global migration and human mobility – refugees, asylum seekers, exiles, people of the diaspora – which is said to “represent the spirit of the cosmopolitical community” (Pollock et al. 2000, p.582). Derrida (2001, p.4) argues that the “new cosmopolitanism” has created a “sense of urgency,” the political and economic necessity to create “new cities of refuge” that welcome the “immigrant, the exiled, the deported, the stateless or the displaced person” in the spirit of hospitality.

However, according to these and many other formulations of cosmopolitanism, cosmopolitanism is usually situated as apolitical in scope and practice. Many theories of cosmopolitanism question the national belonging and citizenship beyond the state, but they do not formulate the kind of cosmopolitanism that serves transnational socio-political efforts advocated by writers seeking for global justice and human and non-human rights. The politicization of cosmopolitanism is key to my thesis’s argument about Adnan’s sense of cosmopolitanism where politicization is achieved in a particular way in her life writing.
2.3.2 Adnan’s sense of cosmopolitanism

The formulations of the practice of cosmopolitanism discussed above are useful to understand some important dimensions of Adnan’s experience of cosmopolitanism, especially in the context of ‘rootedness’, ‘interactivity’ and diaspora or exile, but they are not the only ones. Adnan’s ethos of cosmopolitanism has been prompted by “a sense of urgency”. In this section, I will explain how Adnan herself thinks of cosmopolitanism and how that thinking enables an interrogation of the critique of her as a cosmopolitan individual and writer. I will also discuss how this is enacted in her work.

Adnan’s experience of cosmopolitanism is somehow ‘rooted’ in that she retains some important ties to her culture of origin. Hers is a ‘situated’ cosmopolitanism which affirms the continuing importance of the nation – Adnan’s Beirut and the Arab world – in a globalized world, but celebrates rather than censures “the circulation of people among different localities” as a result of diaspora or exile particularly when it “flows from the free decisions of individuals” (Appiah 1997, p.22).

In order to understand what the notion of “rooted cosmopolitanism” means in relation to Adnan’s experience, it is worth mentioning Adnan’s attitude to “nationalism”. Adnan chooses to be an Arab, often defining herself as an Arab in spite of the fact that Arabic was not the language spoken in her family. “If the Arab world,” Adnan says, “weren’t forever at war, and so much under attack, maybe I wouldn’t have been Arab”. Being an Arab is politicized by Adnan, and for her it is a sign of resistance, the adoption of a refused and despised identity which she relates to the issue of not learning, speaking or writing Arabic for the reasons mentioned earlier. This does not mean that Adnan is an Arab nationalist, understood in the sense of pan-Arab ideologies spread across the Arab world – although in her youth she sympathized with those ideas. Rather, in a 2018 interview with Judith Benhamou-Huet, Adnan says that “nationalism is a mythology”, since “each person is a synthesis of many things”. Here she defined herself as a “pioneer of the globalized world” that we know today, having grown up and lived in so many different cultures. As Mejcher-Atassi (2010, p.313) observes, “the notion of ‘home’ has acquired a transnational and transcultural meaning for Adnan”.

Crucially, Adnan’s experience of cosmopolitanism can be seen through the lens of Clifford’s homonym “roots and routes” to suggest that diasporic consciousness is a “cosmopolitan” form of “dwelling-in-displacement” that encourages “multi-locale
attachments, dwelling, and traveling within and across nations” (Clifford 1997, p.306). Accordingly, unlike exile with its “frequently individualistic focus”, diaspora involves a dwelling in communities, the maintenance of collective homes away from home, and it enables the articulation of or bending together of “both roots and routes” to construct “alternate public spheres” – “forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference” (Clifford 1997, p.308).

On this point of diaspora as dwelling, I argue that in diaspora Adnan takes on a practice of “dwelling” in displacement that can be seen as “an ambivalent refusal or indefinite deferral of return, and as a positive transnationalism” (Clifford 1994, p.322). I also argue that for Adnan “dwelling-in-displacement” is her infinite way to transform and seek new beginnings and affiliations rather than to perform national solidarity. Adnan’s practice bears on the empowering paradox of diaspora where “dwelling here assumes a solidarity and connection there. But there is not necessarily a single place or an exclusivist nation” (Clifford 1997, p.322). Also, for Adnan – although impacted by the traumas of separation and displacement caused by exile – diasporas are “the sites of hope and new beginnings” (Brah 1996, p.193). Adnan’s stance on cosmopolitanism does not agree with Friedman’s notion that “what remains consistent through various kinds of diasporic migration, however, is an ongoing identification with a communal identity based in the culture of origin, even in cases of multiple or circular migrations” (2018, p.199). Rather, Adana’s experience of cosmopolitanism is spatial. It is rooted but not static. Also, although it is associated with an cute sense of dislocation, it is enacted in the context of diaspora as a site of hope, so it enables the blending together of both local roots and transnational routes to construct “alternate spheres” of consciousness.

2.3.3. Critique of Adnan as cosmopolitan writer

Having explained some crucial points about Adnan’s sense of cosmopolitanism, I interrogate the critique of Adnan as a cosmopolitan individual and writer. Adnan is often introduced as a “cosmopolitan” (Kern 2012; Zillig 2012; Asthoff 2017; Wilson-Goldie 2018; Berrada 2020) woman writer and artist by curators, reviewers, interviewers, and critics. In a 2012 interview, Adnan is introduced as “the epitome of cosmopolitanism” (Kern 2012). This view of Adnan is associated with aspects of Adnan’s life including her multiethic, multicultural and multilingual background; experience of exile and mobility while deciding to live in the diaspora for personal and political reasons; and the pleasure
of moving frequently from and into metropolitan cities which provides her a privileged access to a realm of metropolitan cultures – Beirut, Paris, San Francisco Bay Area – with openness towards divergent experiences from different nations. All these aspects of Adnan’s background are said to make up the complexity of her identity and feature the cosmopolitan nature of her experience “to illuminate the many layers and dimensions of her paintings [and writings] and their progress over several crucial decades” (Wilson-Goldie 2018, p. 66).

I argue however that Adnan’s experience of cosmopolitanism emerges not only from her background or shifting localities, but is engendered from a legacy and history of colonialism – causing mobility or displacement – and then cultivated ethically in a wider sense of socio-political commitment, responsibility and willingness to engage the self with other. In fact, the “cosmopolitan milieu” where Adnan grew up places her understanding of “the diversity of people and the world” (2017, p.77) in a wider perspective and influences her work. Therefore, it is not fully associated with the cultural privilege, delight, aestheticism, and elitism that are so often linked to cosmopolitanism. Adnan’s mobility prompts a construction of self in constant movement enacted by Adnan in literary and linguistic innovations. When asked in the 2012 interview how her cosmopolitan consciousness influences her work, Adnan (2012, p.4) noted:

personally, I don't ask myself too many questions about national belonging [or] identity. Beirut becomes my home when it has problems. It is not my only home. I have spent more time in California than in Beirut. I am pretty much American. And I grew up in French schools. To be honest, I feel alright in the world.

Adnan’s perspective on cosmopolitanism asserts a sense of self as fluid and an awareness of the subject’s belonging to the world as continuous. Thus, critics understand her background to be as an important dimension of her experience as a cosmopolitan writer, but no one who has examined Adnan as cosmopolitan writer has looked at her work as cosmopolitan with sufficient breadth to take in her engagement with socio-political glocal issues. I argue that Adnan’s perspective on cosmopolitanism is exemplified by her political nature that sets up integral relationship between the local and global and the human and the nonhuman. Also, although many critics see that most of these aspects of Adnan’s life are the main reasons why Adnan is described as the ‘epitome of cosmopolitanism’ when talking about her writing and art, I argue that these aspects are related but are not the only ones. There are other layers and dimensions especially seen
in Adnan’s life writing that give it a specific construction of a cosmopolitan spirit and sense of self. I will talk about some of these layers and dimensions below.

Adnan’s cosmopolitan trajectory and consciousness indicates that “the sheer increase in mobility that the globalization process produces is not in itself sufficient to engender a cosmopolitan disposition” (Tomlinson 1999, p.186). Her cosmopolitan attitude appears to depict to a large extent what Tomlinson (1999, p.195) postulates as the capacity of living – ethically and culturally – “in both the global and the local at the same time”, thinking “beyond the local to the long-distance and long-term consequences of actions”, and entering into “a dialogue with others” (Tomlinson 1999, p.195).

Being on the move between the local and the global, I argue that Adnan’s ethic of cosmopolitanism is politicized and prompts us towards an “ongoing dialogue” both within ourselves and with culturally distanced others. The dialogue promotes a deep shared sense of precariousness and vulnerability evoked by her careful reflection on and consideration of long-distance and long-term consequences of violence, war and human rights’ violations. It is politicized because Adnan holds a “politically non-violent” position, as she herself asserts, which shows a deep awareness and understanding of the fact that although human life involves an immensity of being, it is so very easily annulled. Her political writings show a cosmopolitan disposition that denounces and criticizes the mischiefs of social, religious and political powers against the other whether these powers are exercised in the Arab world (her Lebanon in particular) or in the West (United States in particular). For Adnan, instead of showing a disaffection to cosmopolitanism as is the case with many postcolonial perspectives, she shows through her work a displaced subject whose sense of the self becomes infinitely “reproducible in the cosmopolitan space”, in the sense that when displacement constitutes identity, it would be “the identity of the ever-shifting” (Chow 2003, p.338).

The idea of linking the global and local is sometimes explicitly addressed by Adnan. Asked in the 2021 interview about how she thinks of her “cosmopolitanism consciousness” and if she actually sees herself as a “global citizen” – as critics have described her based on a life of commuting between continents, cultures, languages, and different disciplines – Adnan (2012, p.2) comments,

I don’t know. Global citizenship is coming. But everything you do has a price; it’s good in one way. But I am afraid of this global citizenship. Look at art: it is more
and more international. If they didn’t tell you that I am from Lebanon and even California and you saw my paintings, would you know where they come from? Whatever we gain, we lose something else. And globalization is both good and dangerous.

Here it is apparent that Adnan wants to correct a mistaken assumption. She asserts that a sense of self as cosmopolitan or a “global citizen” in exile can be produced without a clear reference to one’s national belonging or ethnicity, even if that seems not always possible for others. However, Adnan is aware that nationalism or “global citizenship” implies pitfalls, gains and losses, in the sense that if a non-linear orientation that rejects identification with ready-made forms would be assigned to her sense of self and work, she might face the risk of losing some aspects of identity.

Comments by Adnan on her sense of cosmopolitanism indicate that the different periods and backgrounds of Adnan’s life have “offer[ed] a limited space to explore her particular conception of cosmopolitanism based on the notion of ‘defeat’ – or loss – which has the strength of a principle” (Kurjakovic, 2016, p.1) I argue that Adnan’s particular conception of cosmopolitanism is not only politicized, making her sense of cosmopolitanism a particular one, but also achieved through distinctive approaches to the genre of life writing and its expression in the English language. Adnan develops new ways with language which incorporates “the energizing feature of a [linguistic] displacement” into her life writing which has the “capacity to interrogate and subvert the imperial cultural formations” (Ashcroft et al. 2002, p.11). Adnan’s life writing shows a cosmopolitan understanding of suffering whenever suffering occurs, and acts as a form of resistance even if it merely documents how it feels to be “numb with apprehension” (Adnan 2005, p. xvi) in exile.

Adnan’s cosmopolitan understanding of crises triggers creativity. Her “art-making process” is interwoven with her consciousness to shape a writer whose creativity is generated once she reacts “to what is happening in the world or to the place where I am. I don’t decide ahead of time what my subject is. I haven't decided about any of my works ahead of time. They always happen by chance” (Adnan 2012, p.3).
2.5 Adnan’s enactment of multifaceted sense of nomadism, exile and cosmopolitanism in her life writing

Having discussed Adnan’s experience as nomad, exile, and cosmopolitan and how that experience offers distinctive meanings, in this section I will explain how Adnan’s multifaceted experience is practically enacted in her life writing to generate a distinctive sense of autobiographical self. I will explain this by looking at: the writer’s experimentation with conventions of genre of life writing; her choice of English as a main medium of literary expression of the autobiographical self; and experimentation with linguistics to construct an atypical narrative of life writing. This discussion will elucidate the value of choosing to write in English and what Adnan does with English and the value/use of choosing a lifewriting genre and what Adnan does with that genre.

2.5.1 Adnan’s choice of English ‘to write in a foreign language’

In her essay “To Write in a Foreign Language”, Adnan discusses the history of her personal involvement with various languages and how they have affected her own poetry and prose. She insightfully views her childhood as the root of her openness to language in general. However, being multilingual has presented a dilemma for Adnan (see Chapter One, section 1.3) and she has been unsure of what language to write in. Adnan explains how writing in English becomes a form of resistance, pleasure and transcendence.

On the ‘pleasure’ of writing in, and transcending, English Adnan explains that English for her is a diasporic voice (as opposed to French – the language of the oppressor – and familial languages) that frees her “from the ghosts of the past, and made her feel like an explorer, as if every word was just being born”:

the expressions were creations, the adverbs endlessly endless, the verbs were shooting arrows, one simple proposition like ‘in’ or ‘out’ was a whole new adventure! The writing seemed like a sport, the sentences like horses, opened up roads ahead of them with their power and it was so good to ride! (Adnan 1996, p.7).

Here Adnan indicates that although she begins to write in English for a political reason as mentioned earlier, she develops a special relationship with English. Adnan does not choose to write in English only for purposes of resistance or to solve a language issue. In a 2016 interview Adnan asserts that she has developed a special relationship with English because it offers her a new form of expression and a sense of comfort; she states:
It was not necessary to belong to one culture, marked by its language, but I could dedicate myself to a new form of expression. My spirit grew … proceeded towards many directions … moved towards many dimensions simultaneously. I could move not only on certain levels, but inside a spiritual world. In time, as I taught in English, I felt all the more comfortable in this language. This particular language I did not use anymore, but I lived it (Adnan, 2016, pp.28-29).  

Adnan’s words suggest the writer’s attitude towards English is associated with a dynamic sense of a self inhabiting and imagining multiple territories. English is given a sentimental value in Adnan’s life and trajectory because it offers her linguistic multiplicity and expansiveness, to merge different worlds “into a tapestry of her imagination. Her elucidations evoked a hybrid being – a creolized subject, persistently developing a sense of home in foreign lands” (Kholeif 2016, p.2). By incorporating a considerable range of features from English as the result of contact between language communities Adnan develops a home in a “foreign land”. This home that English symbolises is linked to a sense of self. She uses English to compensate for the loss of what she describes as “a simple and clear identity” (Lebovici 2015, p.1). Thus choosing to write in English offers Adnan a new sense of self identification as she becomes an ‘American poet’. Asked about her choice to write in English in a 2014 interview, Adnan (2014, p.102) says:

I wrote my first two [anti-Vietnam war] poems in English. So I thought, Well, I am an American poet … That’s how I started writing in English. I was exhilarated…this was a new language, a new life, a new world. I was very aware that [America]’d had very dark periods, but when you love something, it does not mean you cannot see what’s tragic in its history.

Adnan’s quote suggests a juxtaposition between the exhilaration of writing in English and the tragedy of war. English offers Adnan a capacity for creativity and experimentation associated with how she envisions her condition of exile: it became “Do I feel exiled? Yes, I do. But it became my own nature, and I can’t say I suffer too often from it. There are moments when I am even happy about it” (Adnan 1996, p.8). This juxtaposition of language and the conditions of war and exile illustrates an aspect of a person who has “always been a part of the here and now,” “a person of the perpetual present” who stays.

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8 In this context, Adnan speaks from Paris, France where she resides now and where she uses French most often to communicate.
“outside” as both “a stranger and a native to the same land, to the same mother tongue. This century told us too many times to stay alone, to cut all ties, never to look back, to go and conquer the moon: and this is what I did. This is what I do” (Adnan 1996, p.6). Here Adnan’s outsideness can be understood as symbolic: she is “outside” sites of language and ties but at the same time she is innovative inside these sites, and the persona she develops in her writing might be seen nomadic, liminal and in-between.

English enables Adnan: it stimulates her to generate new ties and discover new connections within entangled realities of the past and the present. Therefore, I argue that unlike some postcolonial writers who compose in English (see Chapter 3, section 3.6), Adnan’s commitment to use English – not as an “imperial” language or as a reminder of Western colonisation – empowers the achievement of transnational ties thus giving it a cosmopolitan character. This use of English enables her to exercise the power of literary and linguistic form against the power of authority and conventions. Here the writer is so deeply embedded in the language that she transcends its conventions and linguistic rules.

In particular, the value of Adnan’s composition of her life writing in English enables her to achieve a process of displacement. This process of displacement – in contrast to the original metaphor suggesting a displacement of conventions among multiple languages – is achieved within the language itself through an escape or liberation from linguistic conventions to re-situate language and thereby allow the language to serve a new function. English is liberated from its function as an instrument of globalization or imperialism to be situated in the territory of the oppressed other. Here it bears witness to precariousness. English thus enables Adnan to compose a distinctive autobiographical self that moves beyond disconnections and borders. This linguistic coding reterritorializes the language, destabilising cultural and social affiliations. It becomes a provocative political expression, a fluid subjectivity, or an illustration of the hopeless experience of dislocation which all may constitute an incoherent sense of the self. Yet it can also offer for us a hopeful opportunity for change and the potential of a widened perspective and consciousness of the world. The value of the choice of English in Adnan’s life writing does not only exemplify or liberate the writer’s sense of place and time in the world, it also liberates us/her readers. Self and other are accorded agency.

Adnan’s articulation in English indicates that English is a good example of language’s capacity for fluidity. Adnan’s linguistic experimentation with English in her life writing attests to the idea that language is “subject to disarticulation and rearticulation” (Slack &
Wise 2005, p.128). Articulations are “not fixed for all time; they do not remain permanently in place. They can and do change over time. But, here too, the speed and direction of change is contingent. Some articulations remain tenacious”; others are “more easily broken and thus subject to disarticulation and rearticulation” (Slack & Wise 2005, p.128). Adnan’s process of re-articulating English “incorporate[s] a new power” – she employs/deploys English to “speak truth to power” (Said 1994, p. x).

English enables Adnan to generate a discursive intervention and to practice the intellectual role of the writer which, as Said describes, is “dialectically, oppositionally to uncover and elucidate the contest to challenge and defeat both an imposed silence and the normalized quiet of unseen power wherever and whenever possible” (Said 2005, p.24). Adnan’s involvement in different socio-political movements of a global society through her writing in English shows a politically engaged activism and makes of her a dissident and pacifist writer. Adnan’s boldly political writing in English is dedicated to principles of justice and truth and she practices the public role of the intellectual “as outsider, “amateur”, and “disturber of the status quo” (Said 1994, p. x).

English enables Adnan’s pacifist voice to express self and other as a polyphony. The voice of Adnan that “speaks truth to power” from a place of exile gives that experience a public identity. It establishes a link between the subject’s experience as a witness to persecution and suffering and an incisive description of grief, evil and horror caused to others by social and political systems. The voice also answers the question of how a people living and working in one culture can relate to other cultures. This question reveals how Adnan’s life writing, produced in the contexts of diaspora and exile, relates to other cultures and how that relation is enabled by the use of the resources of English to speak truth to power and against oppressive and coercive systems, asserting the writer’s polyphony of voices within the world.

However, I argue that Adnan’s engaged reflections on “otherness” and “difference” in her life writing relates more to Chomsky’s view of “speaking truth to power” than to Said’s. For her the role of an intellectual writer is to “join with people and try to find the truth, so you listen to them and tell them what you think and so on, and you try to encourage people to think for themselves”, so as to develop the sort of engagement that demonstrates and enacts her concern with “the victims, not the powerful, so the slogan ought to be to engage with the powerless and help them and help yourself to find the truth” (Chomsky 2010, p.9).
Ultimately, Adnan’s life writing is a radical project of intervention that can be understood as “an engaged pacifism”: “What is consistent throughout her work, her writing and painting,” explains Wilson-Goldie, “is that you can acknowledge the beauty and horror of the world. You can face the fact that violence is happening, see it within us and insist on being non-violent in your writing and your work. I think this is what sets her apart.” One illustration of Adnan’s discursive intervention in politics using English language can be seen in the textual formation of her life writing *In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country* (2005), which is the focus of my study.

### 2.5.2 Adnan’s choice of a lifewriting genre

Adnan is noted as “arguably the most celebrated and accomplished Arab American author writing today” (Ludescher 2003, p. 229). The argument around Adnan as a ‘controversial’ poet, essayist, artist, novelist, and memoirist relates to the writer’s experimentation with English and also to her choice of radical approaches to writing (and art). These approaches are often linked to Adnan’s life experience of dislocation or displacement. Adnan’s writing reflects on the relationship between the self and other (human and nonhuman), the personal and the universal and is linked to various catastrophic events causing intense personal and socio-political turmoil in the Arab world and the world more broadly. This relationship is stressed and is expressed in a radicalized approach to life writing that challenges conventional parameters of the genre. However, this radicalized approach in Adnan’s life writing and in many of her other writings have not been studied extensively.

The lifewriting genre offers Adnan an open form of expression to articulate her philosophical thoughts, visions and critiques. Adnan writes against the limitations of strict prose conventions. Her book explores the different possible routes of her chosen literary form. She does this by using the genre of life writing to symbolize a social reality – a reality which is complicated by an entangled expression of self and other, and an acute sense of dislocation, displacement and alienation. Therefore, in order to understand the complications developed by Adnan’s experimentation with the genre to transform reality into metaphor in her *In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country* (2005) I argue that it is useful to look at Adnan’s practice of writing as a transformative act. The transformative act of life writing allows Adnan to disrupt what would be simply a picture of statelessness,

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9 Adnan wrote about many political events such as the Algerian War of Independence, the Lebanese Civil War, the ongoing Palestinian conflict, the Vietnam War, the Iraq War, Indian American struggle.
detachment and powerlessness. It becomes an act that has hope and contains some sense of strategy and agency. Though this work is a narration of discontinuity, rupture, disjointedness, this act of writing is a key aspect of Adnan’s creative genius that refuses to reduce the expression of the self and other to limited or pre-defined modes of literary and linguistic formation.

*In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country* is a narrative whose radical literary formation and experimental approach might intimidate a reader. One of the main reasons why Adnan’s book, and especially the final chapter of the book my thesis investigates, is challenging for readers is that the autobiographical “I” is rendered ambiguous and shifting. Thus, one aspect of Adnan’s radical approach in her life writing is the complex formation of the autobiographical “I” and the multiplicity of temporal and spatial dimensions. In this sense, Adnan adopts “a movement of language that is against simplicity – the forced coherency of temporal forms, the policed institution of insides and outsides” (Sacks 2018, p.1311). Adnan does not employ a first-person speaker. Because of the absence of “I”, the persona’s self does not explicitly identify as any particular specific gender, or even as human or another species.

2.6 Chapter conclusion

The discussion of nomadism, exile and cosmopolitanism in relation to Adnan’s choice of a lifewriting genre and English language is crucial to understanding and unpacking the different strands of meanings, narrative styles, and linguistic approaches in Adnan’s life writing. That unpacking is useful to the thesis’s interrogation of how Adnan positions herself and her writing with regard to contemporary socio-political issues.

The next chapter, Chapter Three, will discuss the theoretical framework of the thesis in terms of the selection of literacy approaches and theories of life writing to combine the close textual analysis of language features and themes in the text selected from Adnan’s her life writing.
Chapter 3

Literary Criticism Approach: Theory and Application

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents some literary theories of (postcolonial) life writing and explains why these theories have been chosen to complement the SFL approaches (Chapter 4) for the textual analysis of the research material. The chapter first provides a theoretical framework for this research by discussing the most relevant literary criticism of life writing, its limits and conventions, focusing in particular on women’s life writing in order to understand where Adnan fits in that discipline and explain how and why Adnan’s life writing is distinctive. Second, the chapter sheds light on the debate over the use of the English language in postcolonial life writing in order to explain Adnan’s position in this debate. Using the lens of this theoretical background, this chapter then offers a brief overview of Adnan’s memoir as a whole, how it is formulated and the context of this formulation. This overview will help us understand how the writer achieves the breaking off of literary conventions in her memoir by looking at the formulation of the literary genre of this life writing itself. This formulation, which I argue is idiosyncratic, can be seen through the lens of the process of displacement which is meant to destabilize and resists any categorization corresponding to a specific form of autobiographical writing. In other words, although the book is meant to be autobiographical, it does not fit into the traditional structure of autobiography. This is done by Adnan in a number of ways which operate across a range of literary features. These features are found not only in the final chapter of the memoir – which is the focus of the textual analysis – but also throughout the book. However, I will not explore these features in detail in my thesis but I will briefly overview some aspects that pertaining to the structure of Adnan’s memoir. The selected text excerpt from the memoir (final chapter) and its key arguments and themes along with the linguistic approaches used to analyse it will be discussed in the next chapter, Chapter 4.

It is worth noting that this chapter is neither a complete survey of critical theories of life writing, nor a particular study of one critical literary approach. Rather, it is an outline of some of the conditions and limits of life narrative as understood by theorists and critics, and of how not all these canonical theories are applicable to contemporary postcolonial (and neo-colonial) women’s autobiographical writing in general or to Adnan’s
autobiography in particular. This outline will help further understand Adnan’s text as not only challenging the conventions of a genre of lifewriting and the autobiographical “I” – which has been an “I” with a historical attitude – a sign of the (Enlightenment) unified, rational, coherent, and autonomous subject – but also as creating a new “horizon of expectation” for readers.  

3.2 Conventions of life writing

In this section I will explain some of the limits and conventions of the genre of life writing in order to highlight what a ‘typical’ piece of lifewriting (or autobiography) may look like according to both traditional and contemporary scholars and critics and how Adnan’s life writing is innovative (atypical) in terms of these limits and conventions.

Autobiography is considered by some critics to be the “slipperiest of literary genres” (Eakin 1999, p.2) and autobiographies “do not fit a clear-cut genre” being situated “somewhere between fiction and history” (Gilmore 1994, p.6). However, the very “pervasiveness and slipperiness” of autobiography has created a felt need to contain and control it within disciplinary boundaries” (Anderson 2001, pp.1-2). The genre of autobiography is defined by those boundaries. A typical autobiography is described by Shumaker as “a summing up, a review of the whole life or an important segment of it” (Shumaker 1954, p.103). Further, autobiography is described as “a metaphor of the self at the summary moment of composition”, and is not a separate artifact that can be understood apart from the author, but rather as a “monument of the self” that without the “I,” stated or implied, the work “would collapse into mere insignificance and it is only through reference to the ‘I’ on the page, the self exists” (Olney 1980, pp.20-24). This point by Only does not fit Adnan’s life writing. Adnan’s self is not referenced by the “I” on the page because Adnan’s “I” is not always textually present across her book. The absence of the “I” in Adnan’s book bears a particular significance to the book.

The genre of autobiography is also seen to be “limited in time and space” and to celebrate “individualism” or “the singularity of one’s individual life” (Gusdorf 1980, pp.35). It is

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10 The term is founded by the German Romance scholar Hans Robert Jauss, sought originally to recuperate literary history and indeed literary value in terms of readers’ receptions of texts. Successive generations of readers are seen to read a text against a ‘horizon of expectation’ (1977); and where lesser works merely satisfy expectations, a significant work breaks through the existing horizon and a truly classic work contributes to the establishment of a new one. The notion of ‘horizon of expectation’ (Erwartungshorizont) characterizes the status quo in literature and suggests that readers respond most favourably to works whose novelty (which he defines in terms very similar to ostranenie) challenges that status quo and thereby creates a new horizon of expectation. See Silk (2012) and Buchanan (2018).
understood by Gusdorf to have the capacity to reshape the self into “a unified being” through “a comprehensive sketch”. This self strains toward “a complete and coherent expression of [the author’s] entire destiny”, a destiny which is perfected and brought to “a successful conclusion” (Gusdorf 1980, pp.35-48). Seen in light of Gusdorf’s ideas, Adnan’s book does not bring its structural parts into a single, coherent whole because the self understood to be and thus composed as non-unified, unlimited in time and space – made up of structural fragments that do not come to a conclusion.

In addition, one of the determining consideration of autobiography “proper” is the “autobiographical intention”. According to Shumaker (1954, pp.105-7) the achievement of autobiographical intention is determined only through setting down “the autobiographical form”. The “achievement of autobiographical form” is made possible through: ascertaining a “chronological arrangement (beginning, middle, end)”; organizing “a point of view, even a critical evaluation”; concentrating on one phase or aspect of development, thematic analysis, and analysis of character; and juxtaposing at least “two temporal planes to be placed side by side, that of the period being described and that of the moment of writing” (Shumaker 1954, pp.101-141). Reading the expression of self in Adnan’s life writing it is obvious that this expression is set as unbounded according to Shumaker’s autobiographical “intention” or “achievement of form” because instead of comprising a continuity of narrative, a chronological order, or a single point of view, it articulates a multitude of conflicting points of view juxtaposed at many different temporal and special planes.

According to Lejeune’s (1989) theory of the “Autobiographical Pact”, any text that fulfils the following conditions is an “autobiography” – the form of language (narrative; in prose); the subject treated (individual life, story of a personality); the situation of the author (the author and the narrator are identical); the position of the narrator (the narrator and the principal character are identical); a retrospective point of view and a differentiation made between “the different grammatical persons used, and that of the identity of the individuals (author, narrator, protagonist) to whom the aspects of the grammatical person refer” (Lejeune 1989, p.4). Here, in light of Lejeune’s theory of the “Autobiographical Pact”, Adnan’s life writing might not be identified as an autobiography given expectations associated with the prose form of narrative, position of the narrator, the use of the past tense, or the grammatical person. These conventions are challenged by Adnan whose experiments produces a distinctive form of life writing. For
example, Adnan’s life narrative is composed in prose as well as poetic/lyrical form which takes a prospective look at the past, present and future. Besides, its voice of storytelling is not in the first person singular ‘I’ so that the identity of the author, narrator, and protagonist do not prove identical.

In addition, autobiographical writing is conditioned by some classifications of form. These classifications are defined as stages in the development of the genre of autobiography. According to Spengemann, an autobiography can be classified as: a “historical autobiography” (a kind of self-knowledge based upon a true and stable account of the past); a “philosophical autobiography” (a changing self determined by a mixture of present and past circumstance); or a “poetic autobiography” (the self can be represented only through the performance of symbolic action) (Spengemann 1980, p.xiii). Yet, Smith and Watson (2001, p.185) offer a glossary of fifty-two selected forms of life narrative, among these generic modes are: memoir, relational autobiography, life writing, poetic autobiography, survivor narrative, trauma narrative, witnessing, and testimonial, to mention a few. It is apparent that Adnan’s mode of address in her life writing does not fit one of the above because her book is a site where different modes of autobiographical writing intersect: the philosophical, the historical, the poetic, the testimonial, the traumatic, the witnessing and the relational.

3.3 Criticism of the conventions of life writing

With the theories/views mentioned above about some of the conventions and classifications that govern the writing of autobiography comes a criticism of the strictness of those conventions and classifications of a genre in general and of autobiographical writing in particular. Some critics challenge the idea that each text contains the mark of a genre. Derrida (1980, p.56) asks the question, “Can one identify … a work of discursive art, if it does not bear the mark of a genre …?” Derrida discusses the idea that genre imposes “norms” on literary and cultural practices. In Derrida’s view, genre functions more to “exclude forms of literary practice” than to elucidate them: “as soon as a genre announces itself, one must respect a norm, one must cross a line of demarcation, one must not risk impurity, anomaly, or monstrosity” (Derrida 1980, p.57). Thus, a law of genre may exclude “heterogeneity”, “transgressiveness” (Anderson 2001, p.11), and hegemonize meanings of a text through offering formal features that identify where a text belongs, and that organize and regulate its meanings for the reader.
Some critics argue that instead of observing a genre in accord with conventions, a genre can be determined by the social action it performs. Miller (1984, p.152) argues that genre is determined by “the action it is used to accomplish” by the individuals – (cf Halliday’s *Language as a Social Semiotic* (1978) and Martin and Rose’s *Working with Discourse* (2003)) – using that particular genre, and that seeing genre as a social action offers the “keys to understanding how to participate in the actions of a community”. Adnan draws our attention to her text’s potential to be agentive and allows readers to participate in that social agency.

On his part, Eakin (2008, pp.4, 34) contends that autobiographical narrative is “a constituent part of the self” – in that “we are not entirely free to discourse on ourselves in any way we wish” because self-narration is governed by social and cultural ‘rules’ system”. These “rules”, Eakin remarks, often pertain to the subject’s ability to “structure a narratively coherent life story” (Eakin 2008, p.30), so that these social conventions train us how to write about ourselves so we become “products of determining forces” – social, political, cultural, economic – which condition our sense of self. For, in the process of writing autobiography, Eakin argues, we are “doing self, doing consciousness” since telling is both product and producer of consciousness. However, he remarks that there is a “dynamic and dialogic relation between the social structures within which we write our lives and the liberty to invent our selves” (Eakin 2008, p.30). Here, Adnan fits not only in the act of re-producing the dialogic relations occurring in social community (writers and readers/institutions) but also in relation to the distant other.

In addition, Gilmore asks the question what if “the mark of autobiography” – figured by the “I” that designates “the autonomous self” or “the signature of selfrepresentation” – is not possible? (Gilmore 1994, pp.6-7). For Gilmore the mark of autobiography indicates “a disruption in genre, an eruption or interruption of self-representation in genres in which it has not been previously legitimated”. The mark of autobiography, according to Gilmore (1994, pp.7-8), is a discursive effect – “an effect of reading in relation to certain discourses defined through the simultaneous assembling and disassembling of other discourses and genres”. The mark of autobiography, then, is “the discursive signature of the subject and signifies agency in selfrepresentation” (Gilmore 1994, p.14).

We can recognize the mark of autobiography in Adnan’s life writing as characterized by “heterogeneity” and “transgressiveness” – features that the genre’s conventions exclude. Adnan’s memoir comprises a variety of self-representational texts marked by artistic
experimentation. The act of writing mirrors an environment where socio-political forces determine the composition of our sense of self as well as the relationship between this self and the distant other. It also enables the performance of a social intervention glocally. Thus, although seen as a “rule-breaker”, to use Eakin’s term, Adnan’s life writing produces a dialogue oriented towards the glocal and rooted in cosmopolitan obligations. Here, Adnan’s ‘self’ fits at the intersection of the local and the global through language and genre.

3.4 Theories and properties of women’s life writing

Having discussed the general conventions of life writing, this section explains some theories of women’s life writing for the purpose of investigating the construction of women’s autobiography as a separate category that operates on its own conventions or sometimes on no conventions and how we might understand this in relation to Adnan’s life writing. However, this section does not intend to give a detailed account of these theories. Rather, the section illuminates some politics of life writing set by (feminist) critics for the reading and evaluation of women’s life writing. Autobiographical writings by women in general and by women from minority groups in particular have received little attention from traditional or mainstream criticism of autobiography. Most of the critics who have established conventions and limits of autobiography discussed in the previous section draw on a male tradition of autobiographical writing (Smith and Watson and Gilmore being the exceptions).

To start with, as they have sought a coherence of thematic and formal features among women’s autobiographies, many critics of women’s autobiography claim that women represent the self by representing “others”, that is, they do not represent the self as an “isolate being” because that is not how women know and experience their identity. Mason (1980, p.210) emphasizes that a familiar characteristic of women’s autobiographies is that they do not merely reflect the individual: they employ “alterity” – the act of defining themselves in relation to the other – and depict a split female self, wavering between “public” and “private” worlds and finding it difficult to inhabit both. This suggests that a woman’s identity-formation is quite often seen as rooted in the “collective identity” as defined by the dominant group (Mason 1980, p.210). Similarly, critics Brodzki and Schenck assert that by “replacing singularity with alterity” women as individuals and as groups, “in vastly different circumstances, have asserted their place as active subjects challenging the oppressive representation and actions of powerful hierarchies” and that
they provide “a mode of resisting reification and essentialism” which permits “more radical experimentation in autobiographical form” (Brodzki & Schenck 1988, p.11).

In the same vein, based on a relational model of female selfhood to autobiographical texts Friedman (1988, pp.72-3) notes that women’s narratives are characterized by “relationality” and assert “a sense of shared identity with other women, an aspect of identification that exist in tension with a sense of their own uniqueness” and that they do so across “fluid boundaries” between self and “an Other” or others. Against the autonomous individual model posited by Gusdorf, Friedman (1988, pp.72-3) argues that women’s selves are not so much “de-centered” as existing in relation to others; and that women tend to develop “relational identities” combined with a sense of self “exists within a context of a deep awareness of others” (Friedman 1988, pp.34-35).

We can say that Adnan’s life writing is compatible with some of the above mentioned features characterizing women’s life writing such as the incorporation of “alterity” – identifying the self in relation to the other. However, Adnan’s politics is still different in this regard as she refuses a definition of self by a “dominant group” or community; instead, Adnan sets the social self within a wider perspective which allows a negotiation with the self itself in relation to a foreign distant other. She does so by setting up a model of radical experimentation in autobiographical form and English language that challenges “the oppressive representation and actions of powerful hierarchies”, to use Brodzki and Schenck’s (1988, p.11) words.

Some critics claim distinctive characteristics for women’s autobiography in terms of “narrative form” and the “fragmentation of the self”. Jelinek (1980, pp.15-17) observes that texts by women writers are characterized by “irregularity”. In other words, their texts have “a disconnected, fragmentary pattern of diffusion and diversity” recognized in discontinuous forms because of “the multidimensionality of women’s socially conditioned roles”. Benstock (1988, p.20) recognizes that in women’s autobiographical writing “the self that would reside at the centre of the text is decentered” and language is “both internal and external”. He observes that “I” can stand for the self and also for “an other” and that to the autobiographer language is “the symbolic system that both constructs and is constructed by the writing subject” (Benstock 1988, p.50). Lionnet (1989, p.xi) views women’s autobiographical writing as a multi-voiced act, arguing that
“as historically silenced subjects, women and colonized peoples create ‘braided’ texts of many voices that speak their cultural locations dialogically”. Chandorkar (1999, p.16) argues that coherence within women’s autobiographical practice is sometimes not possible due to various functions and forms employed by a woman life writer, and that her linguistic expression is “dominated by socio-cultural limitations and by gender limits and boundaries placed on women writers”.

Gilmore (1994, p.42) argues autobiographies that are positioned within discourses that construct truth, identity, and power by provocative writers who have engaged in “guerrilla autobiographics,” are concerned with “interruptions and eruptions, with resistance and contradiction as strategies of self-representation”. Therefore, the distinction between “self-representation as a political discourse and self-representation as an artistic practice is less important than their simultaneity of function in a particular culture and for specific audiences” (Gilmore 1994, p.xiv). Kaplan (1992, p.115) explores “out-law” or resistance genres through which women negotiate and reform traditional generic modes, arguing that hybrid autobiographical forms constitute strategic political moves for women, ethnic, and immigrant authors who do not wish to write their lives according to “culturally available scripts” so they “mix two conventionally ‘unmixable’ elements – criticism of autobiography and autobiography as thing itself”.

Looking at the above features identified as characteristic of women’s autobiography, we can say that the structure of Adnan’s life writing is marked by some of these features. Adnan’s book lacks an apparent coherent sequence and a sense of wholeness which affect the linearity and unity of the book and renders it discontinuous and fragmented. In addition, the book is marked by conflations and shifts in the subject position, displayed in the indeterminant autobiographical “I” which enhances destabilization and produces a multivocal text. This work is also marked by an absence of a sense of closure in the sense that the memoir ends with a chapter that seemingly offers no concluding statements. However, Adnan’s employment of this structure helps us envisage the fragmentation of the social world as a multitude of local/global unresolved realities. It is also a crucial way to free her work from some of the “socio-cultural limitations” and “boundaries placed on women writers”. This “out-law” genre, in Kaplan’s words, is an engagement in
“guerrilla autobiographies”, to use Gilmore’s term, that allows her to reframe issues of agency and ideology, as an exilic Arab-American writer.

3.5 Theories and properties of postcolonial life writing

Having outlined the conventions of life writing and the criticism of them along with a discussion of the theories of women’s autobiographical practice and Adnan’s position within it, in this section, I will discuss some of the relevant properties of postcolonial life writing, particularly in terms of the debate over the choice of English by postcolonial (life) writers as a medium of self-representation and what attitudes, problems and possibilities this choice has entailed. This explanation is important because it helps us understand Adnan’s position within this scholarship in terms of how and why Adnan’s life writing is distinguished from this most widely shared practice among other postcolonial (life) writers.

Postcolonial life writing composed in English\textsuperscript{11} is concerned mainly with issues of self-representation in two senses of the word: the artistic (genre form and English language use) and the political. Writers from the former colonies, at home or in diaspora, aim to speak for themselves, to tell their own stories of the colonial encounter and its consequences, and so “to create the psychological base and historical understanding which will encourage wise choices in self-government” (Innes 2007, p.5). The experience of colonization and the challenges of a post-colonial world have produced diverse and powerful (life) writings in English. These written productions have established a specific practice of (neo-)post-colonial writing in various cultures and have challenged both the traditional canon of autobiography and dominant views of literature, language and culture (Ashcroft et al. 2002).

Postcolonial life writing has distinctive properties. One of these is a “double consciousness”,\textsuperscript{12} that arises with the need to live within and between two cultures and two perspectives (and sometimes more), and is foregrounded in the life writing of the postcolonial, multilingual, and multicultural writer (Innes 2007, p.5). This “double

\textsuperscript{11} This subgenre of life writing is classified under the general heading of postcolonial literatures, including texts produced in colonies, metropolitan centres, postcolonies and nations that are still marked by various forms of internal colonialism.

\textsuperscript{12} One of the ramifications of the colonial encounter noticed by some postcolonial critics is what the African American writer W. E. B. Dubois describes as “a double consciousness” – coined with reference to African American “double consciousness” See Gilroy (1993).
consciousness” may operate with the choice made by a postcolonial life writer of the kind(s) of English used to maintain literary and cultural distinctiveness from a (western or sometimes national) tradition of life writing. This “double consciousness” is evident in the various ways that identity, self and experience are represented by postcolonial life writers.

In addition, postcolonial life writing has been increasingly recognized as a “powerful counter-hegemonic practice; implicating the politics and the aesthetics of the self-narrative, and of re-membering lives” (Smith & Watson 1992, p.1). According to Huddart (2008, p.22), the act of writing the self involves “an engagement with the various cultural resources available, forms which are recognizable to institutions, publishers and audiences. Such conventions do not repress the potential text of the ‘self’ but constitute its possibilities” (Huddart 2008, p.22). Postcolonial autobiography, according to Assia Djebar, concerns “trying out different selves in a process of repeated self-critical emplacement and displacement”, “decentering and recentering of the self” in relation to questions of agency, cultural memory and ethics (quoted in Boehmer 2000, p.758).

Central to the construction of postcolonial life writing is the engagement with issues of (dis)location portrayed in themes of place and displacement. Ashcroft et al. (2002, pp. 8-9) argue that postcolonial literature is distinguished by “its degree of engagement with issues of (dis)location” which are “contested by generic experimentation”. This generic experimentation celebrates “fragmentation, discontinuity, hybridity and multiplicity of styles.” This suggests that issues of style characterised by experimentation are typically central to “the issue of distinctiveness” of postcolonial life writing (Moore-Gilbert 2009, p.69).

In addition, postcolonial life writing has tended to focus on testimonial life narratives that Whitlock (2007, p.8) defines as “performative direct speech-acts that demand a reader’s recognition, advocacy, responsibility, and accountability”. Including voices from varied cultures, Whitlock asserts that different life narratives, widely separated in time and location, are “embedded in global networks of traumatic memory and witness” (Whitlock 2015, p.65). These narratives are also engaged in “literary sociality” which confers “a socially binding relationship between the readers, texts and the meanings on the issues of violence, social suffering, oppression and human rights violation” so that these narratives
“campaign for social justice” (Whitlock 2015, p.70). Whitlock asserts that for a testimonial discourse to occur, that is, for social change to take shape, testimonies need readers who are willing to bear witness to “the transformative agency of testimony” (Whitlock 2015, p.69). This testimonial discourse is considered dynamic, interactive, and dialogic because it engenders “an appeal to an addressee, a text in search of a witness, a desire to invoke witnessing publics”: “We speak of *bearing* witness to indicate the weight of responsibility and affect that follows this transfer” (Whitlock 2015, p.8).

Seen through the lens of postcolonial life writing, Adnan’s book features a “double consciousness” which is evident in the different ways Adnan uses the genre of life writing and the English language to depict multifaceted self and experience. Her act of remembering a postcolonial legacy is made possible through incorporating politics and the process of “emplacement and displacement” in the composition of the self, using various cultural resources available. Adnan’s work is a testimonial discourse which raises crucial ethical, political, linguistic and generic questions set in various socio-geo-historical locations and different temporal dimensions, that appeals to readers to bear witness.

### 3.6 The debate over the use of English in postcolonial life writing and Adnan’s position in this debate

Having discussed some of the most relevant theories and properties of postcolonial life writing, this section discusses the issue of English language for the composition of postcolonial literature in general, and life writing in particular. This discussion is important because it relates to Adnan’s use of English in her life writing.

The use of English to compose (neo-)post-colonial (life) narratives is one of the most hotly debated topics among postcolonial (life) writers, critics and readers. The debate has to do with the question of whether in some nations postcolonial literature should use an imposed language of the colonizer – in this case English – or whether writers should use their native language or mother tongue, while in other nations the debate is more to do with “the kind of English” that writers should use.13 The debate has also to do with how language use interrelates with the social and political arena in postcolonial writing projects.

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13 The “kinds of English” may refer to the Standard English as spoken in the metropolitan country or the English spoken by those who live in the new nation (see Innes 2007).
Some postcolonial (life) writers have faced a struggle when composing the self using English because the English language is associated with colonisation and imperialism. As such it creates conflicts of feelings, consciousness, self-perception and self-representation for the colonized. However, for some writers the use of English is an act of “appropriation” to suit a particular purpose or emphasise a particular vision and role as a postcolonial writer. This use of English implies “writ[ing] back”. The concept of “writing back” is developed by Ashcroft et al. (2002) in *The Empire Writes Back* to refer to postcolonial writers’ use of English to write an alternative history of the self that challenges colonial histories or narratives. The binary between “margins” and “centre” is thereby destabilised because of the imperial and colonial background of the English language. Ashcroft et al. (2002, p.33) observe that this writing back to the centre of Empire is a way of writing “not only through nationalist assertion, proclaiming itself central and self-determining, but even more radically by questioning the bases of European and British metaphysics, challenging the world-view that can polarize centre and periphery in the first place”. This suggests that postcolonial writers in English hold an attitude that a European language “carries the bias of its inventors and users” (Innes 2007, p.98).

Adnan’s use of English demonstrates that Adnan does not hold a negative attitude towards the language because for Adnan English is not the language of the colonizer (for her, personally, French is the language of colonization). Unlike some postcolonial writers who “write back” or who refuse the use of English as a means of literary expression for fear of “abject assimilation to the norms and values of the standard forms of metropolitan culture” (Moore-Gilbert 2007, p.110) because English for them symbolizes the colonial other, Adnan uses English with “exhilaration” and finds in it “a new beginning” so she does not use it to emphasize the binary between “margins” and “centre” (See Chapter 2, section 2.5 for more discussion on Adnan’s attitude about/use of English). However, although English is not a colonizing tool that needs to be sorted out by Adnan – she is not/has not been colonized by it – we can consider the perspective that Adnan also sees affiliation with that colonization because she is cosmopolitan – that is, she is affected by other and because English has become so dominant globally. In other words, for Adnan English is a western European language like the actual language of her colonisation, French, so at a more general level English is the language of an ‘oppressor’.
For many postcolonial writers English is associated with a postcolonial debate that considers English as primarily a social institution embedded in colonial and imperialist ideologies and structures. Yet, they “have all rewritten particular works from the English ‘canon’ with a view to restructuring European ‘realities’ in post-colonial terms, not simply by reversing the hierarchical order, but by interrogating the philosophical assumptions on which that order was based” (Ashcroft et al. 2002, p.33). Thus, they adopted different attitudes, linguistic or literary approaches to appropriate or subvert the English language to their own purposes – seeking assimilation, compromise, resistance, or worldwide renown. For example, Aidoo thinks of English as a language that “enslaves” her (Aidoo 1977, pp.28-9) yet she uses English to share with African postcolonial writers a “commitment to change and redeem Africa”. Achebe chooses to write in English to enjoy “nationwide currency” but he believes “it will have to be a new English, and altered to suit its new African surroundings” (Achebe 2003, p.55). Soueif (2012) hybridizes English using non-English terms and atmospheres as a way of “confronting the hegemonic centres and their monologic discourse” (Ghazoul 1996, p.2). However, Ngũgĩ argues that English can limit the writer’s audience to “a tiny elite of Westernized college graduates” (1981, p.53) so he decides – after writing some works in English – to stop writing in English and to use only his mother tongue. Thus Adnan’s choice to use (appropriate) English carries less emotional and political weight to Adnan than for writers like Aidoo, Achebe or Ngũgĩ.

As for Adnan, English does not ‘enslave’ her because it has not been the language of her colonization and she does not use it as a commitment to redeem a history of colonisation. Rather, she uses English because it is an enabling language that has the capacity for fluidity. Adnan experiments with the grammar of English language to re-discover in it new forms of articulation to achieve more transnational obligations and cosmopolitan obligations that has been ignored or refused by colonisation of so many throughout the world. Adnan shares Indian writer Salman Rushdie’s views and some African Caribbean writers’ views about English. Rushdie contends that “to conquer English may be to complete the process of making ourselves free” (Rushdie 1992, p.17). For Rushdie, instead of thinking of English as “the bastard child of Empire” or “a postcolonial anomaly”, English is where he can find “a reflection of other struggles taking place in the real world, struggles between cultures and within ourselves and the influences at work within our societies”. However, he argues that “we can’t simply use the language
the way the British did … it needs remaking for our own purposes” (Rushdie 1992, p.17).

However, we can understand Adnan’s choice of English in relation to her cosmopolitanism, her critique of the ‘Iraq War’ in particular, by considering the perspective that while seeing the freeing elements of English and the excitement of using it, she also recognises its colonising effects and its use by an invading army/colonising force – so her use of English and the degree to which we can see her ‘play’ with it as a kind of ‘in sympathy’ with a wider (Arab) community, which may be also about ‘glocal’. For example, the “Arabish” of Iraqi blogger Salam Pax’s *The Baghdad Blog* (2003) – an online testimony of the invasion of Iraq by the US-led coalition in March 2003 – is one example of “submission” and “hybridization” of the English language using “a series of the ‘new Englishes’ of information technologies and pop culture, and the codes of the gay subculture” which according to Whitlock creates a “new possibility for political action” (Whitlock 2007, p.36). So this is where we might see Adnan’s relationship to a choice of English – she sees affiliation with that colonization because she is cosmopolitan – that is, she is affected by the other. Thus, to enact this cosmopolitans stance, in her life writing Adnan experiments with the conventions of the English through the linguistic choices that are innovative.

Thus, having discussed in the previous section the autobiographical self and the limits of its representation because of the genre conventions, how that autobiographical self is differently formulated in women’s life writing, and how it is appropriated by postcolonial life writers through the use of English, in the next section I will give an overview of Adnan’s life writing. This overview of *In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country* is necessary to understand what is innovative about the book, how it breaks with literary conventions of the genre of life writing and how we might understand the ethics/politics of narration in English that Adnan uses in the text under investigation, from the point of view of its context of creation.

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14 Similarly, African Caribbean writer, John Agard, chooses to use the “grammarless” English as well as a mixture of standard and dialect English (“I don't need no hammer / to mash up yu grammar”), a choice rational and distinctive in his own right.
3.7 Adnan’s life writing

In the following section, I explore Adnan’s life writing *In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country* in terms of its ethics/politics of narration, themes and structure, and how it is reviewed and received by various scholars and critics. It is worth mentioning that although my thesis is mainly concerned with the textual analysis of one chapter of Adnan’s memoir, “To be in a Time of War”, using literary theories and linguistic approaches, my exploration of Adnan’s whole memoir is important to understand Adnan’s chapter in light of the ethics/politics of narration of her entire life writing project.

*In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country* (2005) is one of Adnan’s prose writings composed in a poetic and lyrical style. The title of Adnan’s book corresponds to Gass’s *In the Heart of the Heart of the Country* (1968). Adnan’s book involves autobiographical insights into her multifarious life experience, dealing with different colonial histories and geographies that are nevertheless centred around Beirut, Lebanon. Adnan asserts that her book is dialogic in orientation since it is a response to Gass’s volume of stories. In the introduction to the book, describes how in 1971 when she started reading Gass’s work she felt a particular attraction to its structure of paragraphs, “each headed with a recurring word or phrase” (Adnan 2005, p. xi). When some years later Adnan returns to Gass’s work, Adnan enters “into a silent conversation with [Gass], his story. As I reread it, the paragraphs jumped off of the page as if addressed to me, asking for a response” (Adnan 2005, p. xiii). For her structural response Adnan uses a heading followed by a paragraph with variation. Adnan follows this structure, repeating the same headings for five chapters throughout her memoir with “a span of 25 years” between the first and second writings (Szymaszek 2006, p.1), and then she concludes with the chapter “To be in a Time of War,” written in 2003 as the United States invaded and occupied Baghdad, Iraq. So, through her life writing, *In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country*, Adnan sets out a dialogue with Gass’s work from the wider perspective of “Another Country, “taking over his headings and ‘answering’ them” (Adnan 2005, p. xiv). Thus, from Adnan’s present within the American context of and her past that is linked to the Middle Eastern Adnan frames a dialogue with Gass’s book and helps clarify the politics of her idiosyncratic use of English as experimental, transgressive, estranged and estranging.
Adnan’s “Another” can be understood as a movement into/out of a new geographical space and a movement in writing. Although it transgresses geographical and political boundaries, Adnan’s “heart of another country” gives Beirut, “another country”, as a point of reference for the book, showing a deep sense of both belonging and estrangement to Beirut. However, Adnan’s “another” does not only refer to a journey of constant shifting and redefinition of self where the autobiographical subject is oscillating between positions of being an insider and outsider, present and absent – a perpetual exile, as she later writes. I understand Adnan’s exilic sense of belonging as relating also to a sense of belonging to a genre and language but also of experiencing estrangement by breaking off conventions. Thus, Adnan’s “another” indicates a subject who goes against the grain of “the normal order of things” as Adnan (1977, p.73) writes it. “Another” indicates an intervention where generic as well as linguistic innovation and experimentation takes place in “another” territory which can be also understood as rooted in a cosmopolitan ethics and obligations that involve a wider perspective of engagement in socio-political issues. Adnan’s mobility in place, time and within conventions of writing involves infinite possibilities, as she writes with what appears to be an intensifying sense of tension between exile, placelessness and belonging.

PLACE
My place is at the center of things, I am writing from within the nucleus of an atom... My place: highways, trains, cars. One road after another, from ocean shore to ocean shore. From Beirut to the Red Sea. From Aden to Algiers. From Oregon to La Paz. I keep going, prisoner of a body, and my brain is just a radio station emitting messages to outer space. Angels, astronauts all dressed in white, I would like some strange being to take me somewhere where no disease blurs my perception. I will grow wings and fly (Adnan 2005, p.11).

Although Adnan’s memoir has attracted only a small amount of critique, it is useful here to mention some reviews. Busailah (1986, p.308) points out that Adnan’s memoir is devoted chiefly to the indictment of Beirut and Lebanese society on numerous counts such as abuses of sexuality and forms of violence. Busailah (1986, p.315) sees Adnan to be as much “the social observer and analyst as the champion of human freedom and human equality”, describes Adnan as writing “with as many styles as voices” and suggest
that for her readers “the subject matter and modes of expression are a stimulus and a
callenge”. Szymaszek (2006, p.3) postulates that in her memoir Adnan demonstrates she
is a poet of place – Beirut, the Bay Area, Paris – “all continually in focus as a singular
and complex vision of interconnection and community”. Popovich (2012, pp.118-119)
observes that Adnan’s memoir is a book of “personal essays in which the narrating ‘I’
shifts in and out of sections of impersonal narration”. El Shaikh (2013, p.95) remarks that
Adnan’s memoir is, in short, a border crossing experience that engulfs all the cultures and
education that Adnan has ever experienced. In her book, she journeys through a kind of
post-colonial “waste land”, where borders separate human beings into “isolated
fragments: Arab or American, man or woman, Muslim or Christian, rich or poor” (El
Shaikh 2013, p.95).

Alghadeer (2014, p.66) comments that Adnan’s memoir portrays “multiple variations of
transnational sites”, and preserves “the specificities of [Adnan’s] national culture,
meditating on the ruins of small towns and districts, celebrating the survivors of war, and
reviving their traumatic histories”. This transnational condition enables the generation of
various voices and the articulation of many issues that show Adnan’s “political awareness
and poetic sensibility” (Alghadeer 2014, p.66). Tan (2015, p.74) observes that Adnan’s
book displays what Nussbaum (2007, p.49) refers to as an “ethics of narration” in
“narratives that explore the cosmopolitan obligations that enhance our understanding of
suffering whenever it occurs”. According to Tan, Adnan employs the “ethics of narration”
“in a broader literary strategy of challenging dominant neoliberal discourses of the nation
and hence in renegotiating established definitions of national identity and citizenship”.
Keyrouz (2020, p.139) notes that readers of Adnan’s book can use her narration to draw
“conceptual maps” “unique to [each reader’s] interpretation by intertwining notions of
nature, women, and war and by fixing them simultaneously to locations in the present and
places from Adnan’s memories”. The reviews of Adnan’s memoir give us useful
perspectives on how to understand the intertwining and juxtaposition of different notions,
locations and temporalities in her memories. However, the reviews do not tell us how
Adnan achieves this in terms of her challenge to the limits of conventional modes of
autobiographical narrative and the rules of English language.

The themes in Adnan’s book are arranged in a critical matrix of notions of self, society,
love, home, history, language, place, displacement, time, memory, war, violence and
precariousness, from an Arab-American perspective. These themes are depicted in an innovative structure which not only displays a marked departure from the pre-determined parameters of autobiography but also suggests that the function of a genre is not limited to its conventions but to the action it hopes to generate. I argue that Adnan’s purpose goes beyond the autobiographical experience and it is only through exploring the form, structure and language of her life writing that this purpose can be made explicit for a reader.

Adnan’s ‘non-linear’ memoir is made up of seven chapters. The chapters are written in paragraphs open into “tensions of repetition” (Adnan 2005, p. xiv). Adnan’s book spans the 1970s to the present, using Gass’s structure of repeated headings. The first chapter of the collection, “In the Heart of the Heart of Another Country”, was written upon Adnan’s return to Beirut from California in 1971, at the time of the Lebanese Civil war. Twenty-five years later, Adnan has returned to these same passages with repeated headings and reflecting on the themes of the whole book she then added several more passages in the same vein. These passages create both “a sense of continuity and permutation” and encompass a variety of styles: lyrical fragments, philosophical inquiries, journalistic observations, aphoristic paradoxes, and surreal encounters (Jensen 2006, p.3). Five chapters of Adnan’s book are fragmented and structured into paragraphs with repeated identical headings. Appendix A illustrates the structure. Two chapters (IV “At Both Ends”) and (VII “To Be in a Time of War”) are structured differently – they are written in paragraphs which have no repeated headings.

The final chapter of Adnan’s life writing, “To Be in a Time of War”, which is the focus of the present thesis’s textual analysis, is written in paragraphs across 17 pages composed largely in the infinitive form. With the use of infinitives, “to live”, “to do”, “to eat”, “to hate”, and others, she questions the existence of the social self in relation to the other. In the chapter, Adnan juxtaposes the mundane yet privileged details of her life in America with occasional consciousness of a war against Iraq in 2003 and the precariousness and suffering of Iraqis. This chapter is a lamentation which appears to be nevertheless designed “to prevent the trajectory of inner defeat from reaching the center” (Adnan 2005, p.102). The chapter expresses a plurality of voices in a conversation with a self that is fractured and disoriented by a multiplicity of cultures, languages, and shifting geographies. It raises questions about belonging, cartographic and social boundaries and
borders, and – to use Edward Said’s term – the “contrapuntal” experience of exile. It shows a capacity to incorporate many opposing aspects of experience by means of juxtaposition and encourages a paradigm involving a glocal perspective on the relationship between the self and the other. I will elaborate on Adnan’s chapter under investigation in the next chapter, Chapter Four.

3.8 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has discussed some of the theories of life writing, the conventions set by these theories for the genre and how Adnan’s life writing destabilises these conventions. The chapter explains the postcolonial debate over the use of the English language where Adnan’s life writing fits in this debate. The overview on the structure of Adnan’s book presented in this chapter suggests how a literary text is given infinite possibilities to transcend principles of classification, such as the classification of the genre of lifewriting, and how readers might understand a text created against a “horizon of expectation”. The mechanics and constructions of Adnan’s use of English will be revealed through an SFL based text analysis, discussed in the next chapter. The next chapter, Chapter Four, comprises an introductory overview to the linguistic approaches and methods used in the thesis, namely Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Hasan’s linguistic approaches.
Chapter 4
Text Analysis Approach and Methods

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the linguistic approaches employed in this study to investigate the multiple layers of meaning in Adnan’s text “To be in a Time of War”. The chapter explains key theoretical and methodological aspects of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and outlines how they have been used in close textual analysis of Adnan’s text, guided by the literary concerns raised in Chapter 3. The textual analysis uses a functional approach based on the clause as the ‘unit’ of analysis.

The chapter first outlines the three dimensions of meaning in SFL (ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunctions). It then outlines Hasan’s “symbolic articulation” as an overarching theory in the thesis and explains some tools of descriptive analysis associated with this theory. Because Hasan’s approach of “symbolic articulation” refers to the “interlevel” between the theme of a literary work and its language, the application of this approach in this thesis offers a closer look at how the relationship between central literary themes and their linguistic realization in Adnan’s text is maintained and how this relates to the expression of the deepest meanings in Adnan’s work.

While outlining the principal concepts and methods used in this research, illustrative examples of typical English are provided to fully understand how SFL systems operate. Also, these examples of typical\textsuperscript{15} English will be compared in later chapters with examples of idiosyncratic English drawn from the research material to understand how and why Adnan’s selected work can be considered an atypical piece of life writing particularly at the levels of wording, semantics and generic structure. Further, the chapter reviews some pioneering and more recent studies which have combined linguistic and literary approaches to the analysis of literary texts. Finally, the chapter explains some of the characteristic features of Adnan’s life writing in preparation for presenting the full textual analysis, and outlines how the text has been prepared for the SFL analysis.

\textsuperscript{15} I use the term “typical” English to refer to example clauses showing the use of language according to conventional rules of the grammar of English, as opposed to terms like “atypical”, “idiosyncratic”, or “distinctive” which I also use to refer to examples from Adnan’s text displaying the writer’s style of writing which breaks conventional rules of grammar.
4.2 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL): a theoretical functional approach to the textual analysis of discourse

In this section I will explain Halliday’s SFL which is the theoretical framework within which my textual analysis of Adnan’s text is conducted. SFL’s approach is capable of elucidating many of the complexities and the multilayered meanings in a text that are not able to be ‘read off’ the text at a surface level. The present section aims to give readers who do not have a background in SFL a sufficient overview of the theory and tools of description to follow the overall design of this thesis and appreciate the goals of each chapter. In the chapters that follow, the theoretical concepts and descriptive tools will be applied to Adnan’s text and SFL concepts will be discussed further. In these chapters linguistic and literary explanations of the related concepts/notions are designed to show how the grammatical patterns within the selected text construe particular meanings and perspectives and constitute particular literary effects in a discourse that engages the social and the political.

4.2.1 Some basic principles of SFL

From an SFL perspective, language “is interpreted as a system of meanings” (Halliday 1994, p.xiv). These meanings are realised through a “set of interlocking options which represent what is ‘possible’, i.e., the potential under some explicitly specified conditions” (Hasan 2009, p.367). The overall system of a language is “instantiated” in the form of one text or another (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.27); a text is “created” by its context of situation – “the environment or the immediate ‘context’ in which the text develops” and unfolds (Halliday 1985, p.4); and language consists of the three strata or levels of meaning, namely semantics, lexicogrammar, and phonology or graphology.

To explore Adnan’s multiple layers of meaning in the expression of self and other, and how they are constructed and function against the backdrop of other choices that could have been chosen by the writer, Adnan’s chapter is treated in this thesis as a text that instantiates the potential systems of the English language, thereby helping to build a description of prevailing meaning potential in her text. Therefore, the present thesis focuses on the analysis of the semantics of lexicogrammatical choices in Adnan’s life writing across larger systems of meanings (metafunctions) as understood within the SFL approach.
4.2.2 Metafunctions

According to SFL, language is socially functional and all languages are organised around a small number of generalised functions, called “metafunctions” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.58-62). At the semantic stratum, these different functions cluster into three broad types of meaning: ideational meaning (comprising two subdomains of meaning: experiential and logical), interpersonal meaning, and textual meaning (Halliday 2001, p.16). The different metafunctions, illustrated in Figure 4.1 below, “are woven together into the same linguistic unit” (Hasan 2009, p.9). In other words, every clause always performs an ideational function, an interpersonal function and a textual function. In addition, these metafunctions are realized at the level of lexicogrammar through different interrelated grammatical systems of language.

![Figure 4.1 the SFL three metafunctions with subfunctions](image)

Due to limited space I shall confine my analysis in this thesis to the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions and will therefore not elaborate on the textual metafunction any further here. I focus on realizations of ideational meaning in Adnan’s text through the lexicogrammatical systems of TRANSITIVITY (Chapter 5), AGENCY (Chapter 6), and INTERDEPENDENCY (Chapter 7), and on the interpersonal systems of MOOD and MODALITY (Chapter 8), as well as on the semantic implications of these interdependent systems. A functional perspective provided by analysing each system in Adnan’s text contributes to

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16 As in the SFL conventions, hereafter, I will use small capitals for system names.
a comprehensive interpretation of the text’s meaning in context. In the next section I will describe further these functions and their key descriptive tools/systems used in this thesis.

4.2.2.1 Ideational metafunction

The ideational function construes our experience of the external world and our internal world. It is about the representation of reality of the world so it refers to language as reflection. It is further distinguished by two subtypes: the experiential and the logical.

4.2.2.1.1 Experiential metafunction

The experiential function refers to meanings about the world around us (doing, happening, being and saying) and inside us (thinking and feeling). These meanings are primarily realized by the TRANSITIVITY system and AGENCY system. I will give further details about these two descriptive systems/tools below.

4.2.2.1.1 TRANSITIVITY system

The transitivity system incorporates the use of language to depict events, the participants in events, and the circumstances involved in these events: that is, who does what to whom, in what circumstances. Halliday and Matthiessen describes transitivity as follows:

Language enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them …Our most powerful impression of experience is that it consists of ‘goings-on’ – happening, doing, sensing, meaning, and being and becoming. All these goings-on are sorted out in the grammar of the clause …The grammatical system by which this is achieved is transitivity. The TRANSITIVITY system construes the world of experience into a manageable set of PROCESS TYPES (2004, p.106).

The grammatical system of TRANSITIVITY is displayed in a taxonomy of process types which distinguishes six different types of process in English. Figure 4.2 below illustrates SFL’s taxonomy of process types:
In the transitivity system, each process type combines one or two configurations of participants whose nature varies according to process type, as Figure 4.3 illustrates below.

For example, the experience of standing on the shore, when there is a rapid movement across our line of vision can be “semanticized” and grammatically construed as a clause such as:
Birds are flying across the sea

The process ‘are flying’, the participant ‘birds’, and relevant (optional) circumstance ‘across the sea’ are a “composite phenomenon, an organic construction of functionally distinct parts” (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999, pp.512-513). However, it is the event (process type) that is central to the way we express our experience.

The following example in Figure 4.4 below illustrates how semantic categories/functions (Process, Participant, Circumstance) are realized in different grammatical forms (e.g. nominal group, verbal group) in the experiential clause:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>The woman</th>
<th>was telling</th>
<th>her friend</th>
<th>in a letter</th>
<th>that she thought the war would be over soon.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional labels</td>
<td>Participant (Sayer)</td>
<td>Process (Verbal)</td>
<td>Participant (Receiver)</td>
<td>Circumstance</td>
<td>Projected clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form/constituency label</td>
<td>nominal group</td>
<td>verbal group</td>
<td>nominal group</td>
<td>prepositional phrase</td>
<td>projection of (reported) location</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.4 Example clause with a process, participant(s) and circumstance (experiential structure)

I will further explain process types and participants roles in the experiential clause in Chapter Five which conducts a transitivity analysis of Adnan’s text.

4.2.2.1.1.2 AGENCY system

While the primary transitivity system distinguishes participant roles in the clause differently according to process type (material, mental, etc.), a complementary “ergative” model of the clause generalises across the different process types by presenting all events as either self-engendered or brought about by an external source labelled as the “Agent” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004). Events that are represented as self-engendered are labelled “middle voice” (e.g. ‘The bridge blew up’) and those that have an external source are categorised as “effective voice” (e.g. ‘The army blew up the bridge’). In the ergative model, ‘the bridge’ in both examples is the “Medium” through which the Process is actualized. A clause can be a configuration of just Medium+Process – in which case it is middle; or it can be a configuration of Agent + Medium + Process – in which case it is effective. This means that, rather than having different categories for the participants.
functioning as “Actor”, “Sayer”, “Carrier”, etc. in different process types in the transitivity system, the categories of ‘Medium’ and ‘Agent’ in the ergative model remain constant for all process types.

These options are mapped in the system of AGENCY which works closely with the system of PROCESS TYPE, as illustrated in Figure 4.5 below:

![Figure 4.5 System of Nuclear Transitivity in Matthiessen (1995, p.206)](image)

The ergative analysis allows us to examine an experience as a whole in terms of deciphering the degree of agency depicted in the text and, where relevant, who or what acts agentively in the text. The ergative analysis can illuminate whether the agent is present, hidden, or absent, and how the agent’s voice makes an impact, depending on whether the process is effective, middle, active, or passive.

I will elaborate on the system of AGENCY and different ergative participant roles in Chapter Six which uses an ergative analysis of Adnan’s text to explore the presence or absence of an external agent in the text.

### 4.2.2.1.2 Logical metafunction

The logical function construes our experience of the world “serially as chains of phenomena”. It involves those systems “which set up logical-semantic relationships between one clausal unit and another” (Halliday 2003, p.17). The main systems which come under the logical function are: TAXIS and LOGICO-SEMANTICS. These relations sequence the goings-on (clauses in combination) at the level of the grammatical unit of clause complex. Figure 4.6 below illustrates these relations:
4.2.2.1.2.1 Taxis

The system of TAXIS is concerned with the interdependency relations between grammatical units forming a complex. Tactic relations are either paratactic or hypotactic which are similar but not identical to the traditional notions of coordination (independent clauses) and subordination (dependent), respectively (Martin 1997, pp.167-68). Parataxis is a relation between two elements of equal status. In grammatical analysis paratactic clauses are labelled sequentially with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3). The boundary between two clauses is marked with double vertical lines (||) For example,

I follow the news       ||      and (I) reach an unbearable level of sadness

1                                                     2

Hypotactic clauses, on the other hand, have an interdependency relationship (i.e. have unequal status) and are labelled with Greek letters (α,β,γ), where the alpha clause is always an independent clause. For example, in the clause complex ‘you depress me, which is unexpected’ each clause has a different tactic status: ‘you depress me’ is the independent or alpha clause; ‘which is unexpected’ is the hypotactic or dependent clause.

You depress me,     ||    which is unexpected.

α                                    β
4.2.2.2 Logico-semantic

Where taxis concerns the relative status of clauses, logico-semantics concerns other aspects of their relation. Logico-semantic relations consist of two primary types: expansion and projection.

Expansion relations include whether the clauses are related through elaboration, extension, or enhancement. For example, in ‘She went outside, although it was snowing’ the enhancement relation is displayed through the conjunction ‘although’.

Projection relations comprise direct and indirect speech in the form of: a locution (quoted or reported speech) or idea (quoted or reported thought). More specifically, projection involves processes of saying and thinking, from a transitivity point of view. It usually involves a mental or verbal clause projecting its own content of sensing or saying as a separate clause. An important concern when analysing projection is whether the linguistic content is projected as an idea, at the level of meaning (semantics), e.g. ‘we think that war is crime’, or as a locution, at the level of wording (lexicogrammar), e.g. ‘she says, “the day is beautiful”’.

In Chapter 7, I will further detail the system of clause complexing in order to explore how Adnan pushes the limits of typical chains of logico-semantic relations in English.

4.2.2.2 Interpersonal metafunction

In SFL the interpersonal function refers to the role of language in enacting, maintaining and transforming our social relationships with people around us. Interpersonally, the clause is a form of exchange between people. The clause enacts a “move”. In a move, there are two fundamental types of speech role: (i) giving goods-&-services/information, and (ii) demanding goods-&-services/information. Either the speaker is giving a piece of information to the listener or s/he is demanding something from him/her. These two dimensions of an exchange “intersect” to define the basic speech functions of: statement, question, offer and command (Matthiessen et al. 2010, p.203), as shown in Figure 4.7 below. These speech functions, in turn, are matched by a set of preferred verbal or non-verbal responses: accepting an offer, carrying out a command, acknowledging a statement and answering a question, although it must be stressed that dispreferred responses also occur.
These speech roles can also involve complex notions: giving means “inviting to receive”, and demanding means “inviting to give”. In the act of speaking, the speaker/writer is not only doing something himself/herself; s/he is also requiring something of the listener/reader. Typically, therefore, an “act” of speaking/writing is something that might more appropriately be called an “interact” of speaking and listening or writing and reading (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.104). Thus, the key to a semantic understanding of dialogue, then, is Halliday’s metaphor of (symbolic) exchange among the persons taking part, which gives us the two notions of (i) the role taken on by the interactant in the exchange and (ii) the nature of the commodity being exchanged (Martin et al. 1997, p.58).

Also relevant to the description of interpersonal meaning is the distinction between “proposal” and “proposition”. When language is used to exchange information in the structure of statements and questions, the clause takes on the form of a proposition. The term “proposition” refers to an utterance that can be “argued about” – something that can be affirmed or denied, and also doubted, contradicted, insisted on, accepted with reservation, qualified, tempered, regretted and so on (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.110). The term “proposal” is used to refer to the exchange of goods-&-services as offers and commands but these “cannot be affirmed or denied” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.110).

Considering these points, it is helpful to think of Adnan’s text in terms of exchange. In Adnan’s act of writing she adopts for herself a particular speech role, and in so doing assigns to the audience (readers) a complementary role which she wishes them to adopt in their turn. Of course, readers in an audience may have many different reading positions, attitudes, and reasons for reading, so the assigned interactant roles are never completely
fixed, but there is also some consistency in how readers are positioned by the act of writing (and publishing) and the language choices made by the author within that writing.

These interpersonal meanings are realized largely through the grammatical systems of MOOD and MODALITY.

4.2.2.1 Mood

In the major SFL descriptions of English, there are three mood options: declarative, interrogative and imperative. A simplified outline of the MOOD system network is illustrated in Figure 4.8 below. As the figure shows, the selection of an option in the system of MOOD in English is realized through the presence and sequencing of the Subject and the Finite elements of the clause. To illustrate, in English a yes/no interrogative is produced by placing the Finite element before the Subject (shown as F^S in the network) – for example, ‘Didn’t (Finite) she (Subject) write the letter?’. Note that this is the reverse of the usual pattern in a declarative clause ‘She (Subject) didn’t (Finite) write the letter’.

This model is based on the idea that the clause is constituted of elements serving different functions within the clause (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004). From the point of view of interpersonal grammar, the major functions are the Subject, Finite, Predicador, Complement, and Adjunct; the Subject and Finite making up the ‘Mood Block’ of the clause, and the final three making up the ‘Residue’ (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.114).
Note that some selections within the system of mood (e.g. imperative) are typically realised by the absence of the Subject or Finite.\footnote{17}

Because Adnan often disrupts these typical patterns as we shall see, it is worth commenting further on the role of these functions. The Subject is the entity that is responsible for the validity of the clause and is typically the first noun (or a pronoun or a nominal) group, and is often located in front of the verb group, except in passive voice structures. The Finite is the verb element that holds either the primary tense (past, present, future – e.g. ‘is running’ vs ‘ran’) or the modality (the degree of obligation/probability – e.g. ‘must run’, ‘can’t run’) through which the meaning of the clause is anchored in either time or judgement.\footnote{18} There are other interpersonal elements but the Subject and Finite are understood as the most important and together form the ‘mood block’. For example, the clauses ‘The army invaded the city at dawn’, and ‘A series of aircrafts were bombing the capital city last night’ can be represented in terms of their interpersonal grammar as in Figure 4.9:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The army invaded the city at dawn.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject</strong> Finite + <strong>Predicator</strong> Complement Adjunct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mood</strong> Residue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A series of aircrafts were bombing the capital city last night.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject</strong> Finite <strong>Predicator</strong> Complement Adjunct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mood</strong> Residue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.9 Example of categories of MOOD system in SFL

\footnote{17} It is worth noting that also that elements in a clause will typically have an interpersonal function as well as an ideational function – e.g. the element ‘She’ in ‘She didn’t write the letter’ is both the Subject (an interpersonal function) and the Actor (an experiential function) within the clause in this case. Subject and Actor do not always map onto each other in this way (see Chapter 8 for more details).

\footnote{18} Interpersonal meaning is also realized by the system of POLARITY. The expression of polarity is tied to finiteness. Polarity is the opposition between positive and negative or a choice between yes and no in association with the clause as proposition or proposal (Halliday & Matthiessen 2041, p.172). All the above options can be combine with clauses being (positive) or (negative) – the negative polarity is realized by in English by the word “not” located in the neighbourhood of the verb or other negative expressions, such as ‘no’, ‘never’, ‘no one’, ‘nowhere’, ‘seldom’.

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4.2.2.2 Modality

Modality refers to the expression of indeterminacy, such as ‘sometimes’ or ‘maybe’. It is a choice of these intermediate degrees, between the positive and negative poles. What the MODALITY system does is to construe the region of uncertainty that lies between ‘yes’ and ‘no’ (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.147). It therefore allows the text producer to express more nuanced attitudes or opinions than “it is so” or “it isn’t so” (Halliday 1994, pp.88-89).

Modality can be encoded in different ways. If it is encoded by a modal verb in the Finite (e.g. may, must, should, would, can, could) the orientation is said to be subjective (e.g. ‘You ought to invite her’). If a modal Adjunct is used (e.g. maybe, definitely, usually) the orientation is objective (e.g. ‘She is usually wrong’).

Modal Adjuncts are divided into two main types: “Mood Adjunct” and “Comment Adjunct”. Mood Adjuncts are typically strongly tied to the finite – e.g. ‘she’s probably missed out on that job’. Comment adjuncts largely stand outside the events themselves and are instead an indication of the speaker’s attitude towards those events – e.g. ‘Unfortunately, the woman wasn’t given the job’.

In Chapter Eight, which focuses on analysing mood and modality choices in Adnan’s text, I will further detail the systems of MOOD and MODALITY, with particular emphasis on the meaning and significance of Subject and Finite and how this mood structure is constructed in the text.

4.3 SFL Stylistics: textual analysis and literary criticism

Having outlined the key grammatical and semantic categories put forward by SFL that are most relevant for text analysis of how events are constructed and related and how writers set up relationships with their readers, in this section I give an overview of the body of work that uses SFL concepts and tools and Hasan’s model of symbolic articulation for literary criticism. Where linguistic tools are used to produce close text analysis for the purpose of literary criticism, this is often called stylistics and I will limit my discussion to key work in this field.

SFL theory and Hasan’s model have inspired literary stylistic analyses of novels, poetry and – to a lesser extent – life writing. Although there is little research on life writing that draws together contemporary literary critical theory and close text analysis in the
systematic SFL manner, important insights have been drawn that are relevant for this thesis.

In this section, I will first outline Hasan’s theory of “symbolic articulation”, and then explain Hasan’s “cline of dynamism” and notion of “patterns of configurative rapport” as applicable tools from her theory. I will then outline a few pioneering works selected in order to highlight how language features and choices have been examined using SFL techniques and Hasan’s theory in order to better understand how these features contribute to building a specific literary theme or picture of the world, its characters and our experiences as readers. In addition, this review will highlight where the present thesis sits in relation to that work and how it differs.

4.3.1 Hasan’s model

In addition to the SFL notion of metafunctions, this thesis adopts the model of “symbolic articulation” developed by Hasan (1985) as an overarching theory for the analysis of verbal art (literary text). Hasan’s model of “symbolic articulation” explains not only the patterns of language but “the mode of their unitization” (Hasan 1985, p.94) which operate consistently to perform a multitude of functions using the same basic resources to “symbolically articulate the deepest meanings” of the literary text (Hasan 1985/1989). A range of scholars have used Hasan’s theory, indicating that symbolic articulation is a productive theoretical framework for bringing literary themes and close analysis together.

In Hasan’s (1985) theory of symbolic articulation the major concern is an account of literature as “verbal art”. Hasan’s notion of literary language as art implies that the literary text is a meaningful product of “artfulness”. This product demands a semiotic approach that provides a “top-down” analysis of the text to account for its meaning and artfulness (or literariness) through the way the language is “patterned” to convey the meaning. Hasan’s theory of verbal art uses the notion of “patterns of patterns” of verbalization to explain the distinction between verbal art and verbal non-art.19

Symbolic articulation refers to the categories of language realized in the lexico-grammer which are used to symbolize “a set of situations, events, processes, entities, etc. (as they

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19 Although in her early works Hasan a fine line between art writing and non-art writing through the sharp distinction between verbal art and verbal non-art, i.e. the difference between a literature text and a merely literary text on different strata – phonology, lexicogrammar, semantics – of that verbalization, she in her later works softened on this point.
are in the use of language in general); these situations, events, entities, etc., in their turn, are used to symbolize a theme” (Hasan 1971, p.309). Accordingly, for Hasan the symbolic articulation of theme is based on a process of “second-order semiosis”, meaning-beyond meaning, or “meta-meaning” (Hasan 1972, p.115). For Hasan the process of “second-order semiosis” by which “one order of meaning acts as metaphor for a second order of meaning” (Hasan 1985, p.100) allows novels, memoirs and other literature to be about much more than the specific episodes and characters they contain. This idea of “second-order semiosis” incorporates two layers: the symbolic articulation, and the theme. The relation runs in two directions: the verbalization or actual patterns of wording “below” and the theme or significant concerns of the work “above”. The layer of symbolic articulation creates a relation between the overall theme of a literary text that readers may have immediately discerned and the way in which the work and the theme is brought into being by specific choices of wording (and in some cases layout, images and so on). So it is a form of “double articulation”, as Figure 4.10 illustrates below.

Thus, from Hasan’s point of view literature uses the existing structural patterns of language as “the meaning potential of society” and “repatterns” them so that they can “incarnate” and manifest the theme (Hasan 1971, p.1985). The significance of the “patterning of patterns”, in Hasan’s theory, lies in the notion of “foregrounding”. For Hasan (1985, pp.94-5) “foregrounding” occurs in literary text as the result of something standing out “against an established tendency” or norm. Foregrounding can be understood as those aspects of language which are paid attention to by their high frequency of occurrence or non-occurrence, presence or absence in the text and the characters or events with which they are associated. Hasan (1985, p.94) notes that foregrounding “would be impossible without the existence of a consistent background.” Thus, what is important to
the understanding of the meanings of a literary text is not only the foregrounded elements but the contrast between these foregrounded elements and those in the background of the text.

Seen from the perspective of Hasan’s theory of “symbolic articulation”, Hasan’s (1985) notion of “cline of dynamism” is a tool of analysis incorporating different linguistic features that relate to the construal of agency and is especially useful for thinking about how agency may be foregrounded in a text. The cline of dynamism was first developed by Hasan for the stylistic study of the characterization of the eponymous ‘widower’ in Less Murray’s poem, “Widower in the Country” (1982) in her book Linguistics, Language, and Verbal Art (1985). Hasan shows how the poet’s ensemble of grammatical and lexical choices and the interplay between these choices express the theme of the poem (see the next section 4.3.2 for details).

Dynamism or “effectuality” refers to “the quality of being able to affect the world around us, and of bringing change into the surrounding environment” (Hasan 1985, p.45). Dynamism is a semantic feature that is built up out of the different grammatical roles that entities are given in a text, as these roles construe different degrees of control and dynamism in the affairs being construed (Halliday and Hasan, 1985/89). Thus, a participant who carries out a material process (e.g. run, cook) will typically be read as more dynamic than one who carries out a mental process (e.g. think, remember), for instance. Likewise, a participant who acts on an animate entity will be more dynamic than one who acts on an inanimate one. Accordingly, depending on the grammatical realization of the participants’ ability to effect change in the world around them, that is, their level of responsibility and agency, participant roles range from most passive (-ed roles) to most dynamic (-er roles).

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20 The -ed roles group in Hasan’s terms includes the roles of participants as Goal, Scope, Beneficiary, Range, Receiver, Phenomenon (when functioning as complement), Attribute and Value. They are called ‘-ed’ roles because they refer to the participant who is carried, washed, fed, convinced, etc.

21 The -er roles group referred to by Hasan corresponds to the roles of the Actor, Behaver, Sayer, Senser (in the ‘like’ type), Carrier and Token. In the ‘please’ type of a mental process, the Phenomenon would have the -er role. They are called ‘-er’ roles because they refer to the participant who is the carrier, washer, feeder, convincer, etc.
According to Hasan (1985 [1989], p.45), the semantic value of the various -er roles must be seen as “distinct.” This distinction, according to Hasan, correlates with two factors:

1. the nature of the Process configuration into which the -er role enters, i.e., what other transitivity functions there are within the same clause; and
2. the nature of the carriers of roles, other than the -er role under focus ... a human carrier of -er role appears more dynamic than a non-human animate, and the latter appears more so than an object.

In Hasan’s “cline of dynamism”, the different roles of participants are arranged in a “continuum” where the most passive (non-agentive) is that of Circumstance, and the most dynamic is that of Actor with an animate Goal, as Figure 4.11 below illustrates. A more dynamic (agentive) participant would imply a higher degree of responsibility and agency. This means that the application of Hasan’s theory to the analysis of the linguistic construction of dynamism and passivity of different participant roles in a clause and throughout a text contributes to our understanding of the text’s meanings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DYNAMIC</th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Actor + Animate Goal)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>(Actor + Inanimate Goal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(Sayer + Recipient)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>(Sayer + Target)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>(Sayer)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>(Phenomenon + Senser)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>(Senser)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>(Actor – Goal)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>(Behaver)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>(Carrier)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>(Goal/Target...)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>(Range)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>(Circumstance/...)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.11 Hasan’s cline of dynamism (from Hasan 1985, p.46)

In light of Hasan’s approach of symbolic articulation to the analysis of verbal art and Hasan’s cline of dynamism this thesis considers Adnan’s text as a whole made of
language patterns all of which contribute in different ways to the manifestation of the theme(s) of her literary work. This approach to textual verbalization builds on the assumption that because the stratum of theme is “closest to a community’s ideology”, verbal art “can never be dissociated from the community in which it was created” (Hasan 1985, p.99). Hasan’s approach will be used in this thesis as one way of co-ordinating the analysis of experiential meanings (transitivity and ergativity systems as described above) to explore agency patterns in Adnan’s text. This can be achieved through identifying lexicogrammatical choices associated with the writer’s particular life experiences, attitudes and sense of self.

4.3.2 Systemic and literary stylistic studies using SFL and Hasan’s model

A widely read and influential work in the field of literary stylistics is Leech and Short’s book *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (1981). Halliday’s functional model of language is one methodological approach used in this work to analyse passages from novels and stories by, for example, Joseph Conrad, D.H. Lawrence and Henry James. However, although the book goes deeply into the grammar and lexis of selected texts and explains what meanings these patterns make available, it does not link those linguistic insights to any specific literary theory.

The stylistics approach owes much to an influential paper by Halliday “Linguistic Function and Literary Style: An Enquiry into the Language of William Golding’s ‘The Inheritors’ ” (1971/2003). Halliday analyses extracts from Golding’s novel from the viewpoint of the SFL system of transitivity as an aspect of ideational function. Halliday claims that Golding uses transitivity patterns of process types and participant roles to depict the worldviews and actions of different groups of people in the novel. Golding’s novel deals with the prehistoric struggle for survival between Homo Sapiens communities and Neanderthal man, resulting in the latter’s extinction. The major part of the novel presents events through the Neanderthal outlook of the protagonist, Lok. The special Lok-style which Golding devises for this purpose differs considerably from the style he uses towards the end of the novel, when the point of view shifts to Homo Sapiens. An outstanding feature that Halliday detects in the extracts from the novel is the accumulation of intransitive verbs of motion and other non-goal-directed constructions such as “a stick rose upright and began to grow shorter at both ends”. This example reveals that inanimate objects are construed across the text as a whole as the affected participants of
transitive verbs, while Lok’s actions are always intransitive construed by intransitive material processes. So, in Lok’s perception of the world, humans, as Halliday (1971, p.335) observes, are subjects of intransitive verbs and do not have any impact on their surroundings. This lack of transitive clauses with human agents is very different from the “new people’s” views because they possess different ways of everyday living. Thus, transitivity choices such as these represent the two distinct groups of hominids as having very different interpretations of the world around them. The ideational function, and in particular the transitivity system, is shown to be the primary feature that is foregrounded in the text and responsible for world building (Halliday 2002 [1971], p.119).

Hasan’s (1985) study of the poem “Widower in the Country” by Les Murray using the theory of “symbolic articulation and “cline of dynamism” with SFL transitivity analysis offers crucial insights for literary criticism. Hasan’s analysis of the poem gives us a general impression that despite performing the central participant role in the poem, “the widower” appears ineffectual and helpless. Through some language features, the poem is generally thought to concern grief and loneliness given that the protagonist is still grieving for the loss of his wife. However, Hasan examines in more detail how and why this effect is created. Hasan pays considerable attention to the transitivity patterns where, rather than picking out specific words or images, every clause is analysed for a configuration of process types, participant roles, and circumstances. She also employs her concept of cline of dynamism – of “-er roles” (active participants), and “-ed roles” (passive participants). Hasan’s transitivity examination of the poem shows that the widower’s schedule of daily living is quite repetitive, tedious and – less obviously – involves little agency over his environment or other people. This observation is realized in part by the high distribution of material processes in which the widower is the only human subject in an -er role throughout the poem. Hasan also finds that there are no verbal processes in this poem which indicates that there is a sense of utter aloneness and lack of communication with the world. From Hasan’s point of view, these language features are “making visible” the symbolic articulation of a theme – a strong sense of isolation and sadness of widowerhood – through the poet’s employment of many different language features all coordinated to suggest such a theme, rather than overtly stating them. However, in discussing the “meaning of the poem’s meanings”, Hasan asserts that there is a deeper level in that the poem is a statement not about an actual widower’s “personal bereavement”, but about “the centrality of interpersonal relationships for the preservation of a sense of humanity”
A traditional literary analysis could be expected to extrapolate this deeper meaning but would not necessarily tie it to the specifics of linguistic construction.

Also relevant to my thesis is Caffarel-Cayron’s analysis of de Beauvoir’s autobiographical writings. Although these writings are originally composed in French, Caffarel-Cayron’s insights (written in English) are useful because it appears to be the only study applying an SFL approach to autobiographical writing and none were found on English language life writing. Caffarel-Cayron has adapted Halliday’s transitivity models for French – the transitive and the ergative modes of participation – and used these for text analysis in the context of Hasan’s theory of symbolic articulation to explore de Beauvoir’s formation as a writer and the representation of the role of language and literature in her life. Caffarel-Cayron’s analysis is useful to understanding the linguistic reflection of de Beauvoir’s stance as a writer and the way she uses literature as a tool for change. Caffarel-Cayron thus shows how patterns of transitivity choices are associated with de Beauvoir’s stages of interaction and growth with literature, and how, in a Hasanian perspective of “symbolic articulation”, the construal of “agency” and “transcendence” is symbolically articulated through these foregrounded transitivity patterns. For instance, the author finds that in some passages experiential semantic patterns are foregrounded in relation to “books, their author and characters in books” which all continue to “affect de Beauvoir emotionally” with books/stories being frequently construed as Agent in effective mental clauses. In another passage “literature” is also constructed as Agent in effective material clauses thus “literature and de Beauvoir have equal agency in material processes, emphasising literature as a mode of action and the way it impacted on de Beauvoir and changed her view of the world. She would later use literature in the same way to change the lives of her readers” (Caffarel-Cayron 2018, p.164). Caffarel-Cayron concludes that “de Beauvoir’s linguistic choices contribute to realising her conception of literature and philosophy of existence whereby, choice, action, agency and transcendence are key concepts”. She remarks that the themes encoded in the patterns of transitivity show that “de Beauvoir and literature become one: her existence as an individual cannot be dissociated from her existence as a corpus of texts as she becomes ‘the Textual Simone de Beauvoir’ as Toril Moi (1994, p.3) describes her” (Caffarel-Cayron 2018, p.164).

Some recent empirical work using Hasan’s approach to the analysis of the language of literature – Ripples in a Timeless World: On Verbal Art - Essays in Honour of Ruqaiya
Hasan (2018) – includes research contributions by scholars from around the world with different perspectives and approaches to verbal art. But all adopt Hasan’s theory of symbolic articulation, foregrounding, theme and secondary semiosis, etc. as a method to inform their analyses of literary texts. Employing Hasan’s theory, the researchers in this volume approach the themes and aesthetic quality of the stories in terms of prominent linguistic patterning occurring across various linguistic systems. For example, Butt incorporates Hasan’s theory in the teaching of poetry, in order to discuss the link between community habits, i.e. the unselfconscious use of language in everyday life, and new thoughts crafted in verbal art; Miller and Luporini apply the theory to the investigation of Coetzee’s novel Foe – a post-colonial rewriting of Robinson Crusoe, showing how a careful corpus analysis can highlight “the symbolically articulated theme of the novel in its evaluative context”; Tuckwell investigates a sonnet by W.H. Auden, “Who’s who”, using SFL metafunctional analysis to explore form, using in particular Hasan’s concepts of “patterning of patterns” deautomatisation and foregrounding; Tilney uses Hasan’s approach to study Peter Carey’s Conversations with Unicorns, demonstrating that the linguistic toolbox of foregrounding and defamiliarization is ideal for producing a rich literary interpretation. Moreover, Lukin and Pagano (2016) study Katherine Mansfield’s Bliss in relation to how Mansfield choreographs the interplay between the inner and outer worlds of the central character, using “classical” stylistics, that is, stylistics informed by Hasan’s a social-semiotic linguistics.

In short, the findings drawn from the studies reviewed in this section are significant. They offer descriptions of language features in a literary text which allows us to understand how a text generates deeper levels of meaning and how characters with particular perspectives and worldviews are created. However, although these and other studies focus on the grammatical analysis of functional meanings in literary texts, my thesis can be differentiated from them due to its interdisciplinary approach – an approach that incorporates specific theories of literary criticism as well as theories of cosmopolitanism, the glocal, postcolonialism, and exile into a linguistic analysis. Thus, through bringing together the different patterns of the linguistic analysis and the insights from specific theories of literary criticism, the thesis draws a bigger circle of connection between the two disciplines in order to achieve a deeper understanding of Adnan’s literary text.
4.4 The selected text from Adnan’s life writing for textual analysis

This section will offer a descriptive overview of the text selected for investigation, and will then explain the steps taken to conduct the analysis of Adnan’s text.

The text under investigation in this thesis is Adnan’s final chapter “To be in a Time of War”. This chapter is described by Adnan as her response to and critique of the 2003 war against Iraq by the United States of America and its allies. On 16th March 2003, the United States declared war on Iraq which resulted in the U.S-led invasion and occupation of Iraq. In this chapter Adnan engages in the politics of warfare and positions the subject as both an insider and outsider.

Adnan’s chapter discusses the theme of war – which is quite pervasive in many of Adnan’s writings as mentioned earlier – along with other themes. In this chapter she uses many resources of the English language to express the chaos, meaninglessness, absurdity and imprisonment that the subject experiences in a world that is characterized by a profound divide between “us” and “them”. In Adnan’s introduction to her life writing she acknowledges that the chapter portrays a moment of simultaneous response to the war – a personal account of that day and a wider focus. She says:

In March 2003, war was brewing in Iraq. History was again bringing unbearable tensions. My imagination was on fire and my anger was increased by the triumphant tone of the news. In California, very few people were really concerned … and fewer were those ready to consider the destruction of Iraq in terms of human and cultural loss. … it happened that at some moment, sitting at my table, detached from my environment, projected to an East of my mind, and alienated myself, I took paper and ink and started to write “To Be in a Time of War” (Adnan 2005, p. xvi).

The chapter enunciates Adnan’s notion that “politics do not allow us to forget” (Adnan 2012, p.3). It depicts a specific moment of simultaneous engagement in politics by Adnan. It also offers a transnational perspective, maintained from the subject’s everyday existence in her home in California, United States – the country which declared the war – to a geography in the Middle East (Iraq) so near to her home country (Lebanon). However, this moment of engaging the personal and political through transcending the
temporal and spatial boundaries is itself transcended by Adnan to achieve a literary piece of artistic innovation.

The book’s final piece is written in a distinctive style comprising a number of idiosyncrasies linked to the writer herself as a complex subject oscillating between a sense of self as an insider and outsider. Adnan’s chapter reflects a profound sense of statelessness that is seen through shifting locales across the narrative. At the beginning this chapter, Adnan writes chiefly from her home in California, U.S.A. She writes from her apartment in New York City, assuming the position of a metropolitan woman writer. In the concluding paragraph, she tells us that she disembarks in Paris. Throughout the narrative the subject expresses her anxiety about living in safety while elsewhere is in turmoil. This ‘elsewhere’ is seemingly meant to be ‘Iraq’ at a specific point of history. However, in Adnan’s text ‘Iraq’ is the writer’s point of departure. She amplifies the critique on the 2003 Iraq war through adding a broader perspective on other tumults which have occurred globally, including the past Civil War in her homeland, Beirut. Thus Adnan’s critique of a single event within shifting locales links the local and global across a vast time span.

Adnan’s critique which stresses notions of dislocation and displacement is associated with an unstable sense of self and other. The persona in the text is set up with different positionalities evoking numerous voices which sometimes sound incompatible. At times the persona speaks with a local voice; at others, it is hybrid or global. In addition, the persona may hold the position of a survivor, a witness entering into a testimonial as “passages tend powerfully to show that those who have been civilians in a combat zone know that the body and mind enter into a state of attempting to anticipate the unthinkable” (Szymaszek 2006, p.2). Or, sometimes the persona represents a powerless self, or a powerful other at a particular point of time and location. This suggests that although self and other are different and sometimes in opposition to each other, they may also be one. This indicates a sense of constant struggle and precariousness maintained by the persona throughout the chapter, although some aspirations for a better future are put forward. These nuances of meaning are represented by a multitude of language features.

Adnan’s chapter is composed in a distinctive manner. It consists of fifty-three paragraphs that unfold as separable parts. These paragraphs are mostly written in short, single
infinitive clauses. They describe not only a war incident or scene but reflect on a sense of helplessness, anger, confusion, and the unavoidable absurdity of day-to-day life that the persona of the text leads in a time of war. However, this sense of the absurdity of tedious events and actions may be significant, as Adnan asserts:

Contrary to what is usually believed, it is not general ideas and a grandiose unfolding of great events that most impress the mind in times of heightened historical upheavals but, rather, it is the uninterrupted flow of little experiences, observations, disturbances, small ecstasies, or barely perceptible discouragements that make up the trivialised day-to-day living (Adnan 2005, p. xii).

Adnan’s use of the infinitive throughout the final chapter situates the repetitive flow of these little happenings and experiences” in a specific temporal and spatial context and within a wider context of the declaration of war that causes the subject’s displacement from her surrounding environment and alienation from this specific social environment. Here is an excerpt from the chapter:

To say nothing, do nothing, mark time, to bend, to straighten up, to blame oneself, to stand, to go toward the window, to change one’s mind in the process, to return to one's chair, to stand again, to go to the bathroom, to close the door, to then open the door, to go to the kitchen, to not eat or drink, to return to the table, to be bored (Adnan 2005, p.99).

This passage implies a senses of guilt and powerlessness, and depicts the banalities of little actions and events so as to reflect the subject’s deep sense of disorientation and confusion. This particular sense is associated with a profound reflection on the relationship between self and other by a subject fluctuating between the local and global who acts, through the practice of writing itself, transnationally. These and many other themes in the chapter are depicted through the features of English language Adnan chooses to use, such as the infinitive. Adnan’s linguistic choices in the chapter will be explored through an SFL textual analysis to show how the above mentioned themes are represented and deployed through these choices.
4.5 Analysing Adnan’s text

For the purpose of the present study, a textual analysis of Adnan’s chapter “To be in Time of War” is conducted using a combination of linguistic analysis and traditional literary criticism. I will refer to Adnan’s chapter as ‘Adnan’s text’. Adnan’s text is analysed to build up a general overview of how and why the writer composes the text using forms of English that are atypical of life writing. The analysis is carried out by examining four aspects: a transitivity analysis of the representation of inner and outer experience of the world; an ergative analysis of the degree of agency attached to participants in the discourse; a mood and modality analysis of the interpersonal relationships between the writer and her readers where relevant and between social subjects represented in the text; and an analysis of taxis and logico-semantic structures used to combine clauses in the text.

The data is explored both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative and qualitative patterns resulting from the analysis of the four dimensions will then provide evidential bases for the discussion of my thesis’s arguments on: how Adnan uses language and genre to depict events, actions, and social relationships; how this use is achieved within a specific temporal/spatial frame to represent a specific situation of chaos and atrocity that is reminiscent of other conflicts and perceived from a cosmopolitan perspective; and how this perspective opens up a deeper, wider inquiry into the relationship between the self and other. In addition, the discussion of these issues through the exploration of linguistic patterns is carried out in combination with literary criticism drawn from life writing theories. The combination of the linguistic and literary enables possible answers to questions of how and why language users make selections from the complex systems provided for them by the English language to generate distinctive pieces of writing that defy conventions and offer challenging tasks of interpretation for readers.

The analysis begins with dividing all the clauses in the text into simple (single) ranking clauses within clause complexes. The analysis at the level of a simple clause will allow access to patterns of process types to identify single actions and events; participant roles to describe what kinds of entities are involved in actions and events and how; and to the circumstances surrounding events. In addition, analysis of simple clauses is useful for determining how agency is represented, what entities are involved in actions and what responsibility is attached to them; and how mood and modality choices are constructed.
The analysis at the level of clause complex will address the construal of continuity and separation between events and participants in events.

Accordingly, each element of each clause will be identified and labelled for each of the four systems to be analysed. For instance, for a transitivity analysis all clauses will be divided into their constituents and given labels of Process: material’ or Process: mental’ etc., ‘Participant: Actor’ or ‘Participant: Goal’ etc., and ‘Circumstance: place’ or ‘Circumstance: extent’ etc. These labels specify the function each element/unit performs from a transitivity point of view. A similar process will be followed for the interpersonal analysis of each clause and the logical analysis of clause combination patterns. The relative frequency of different options within each system is then calculated by dividing the total number of instances of each of the type of elements observed by the total number of clauses or clause complexes in which the element could potentially have been observed. Relative frequencies of features can be compared across different parts of the text, for different topics, etc. and can also be compared where possible with known patterns for English more generally or specific literary forms. Tables and figures will be used to display the distribution of features, but I will not use inferential statistics on my analysis because it is only intended to show whether comparisons in terms of frequency and distribution are small or considerable and how any major differences might influence the interpretation of the results. The results of these analyses are expected to throw light on which functional units in the text are related to each other in terms of the meanings they express and how many different wording selections combine to convey a network of broader perspectives and deeper meanings.

4.6 Chapter conclusion

The outline of theoretical and descriptive tools in this chapter provides a general understanding of the network of linguistic tools my research uses for studying Adnan’s text. SFL provides an account of the grammar of English language by reference to the social purposes and context of language use, indicating that writers’ linguistic and functional choices are results of social circumstances and their influences on writer’s worldviews. This account aligns with the idea that in autobiographical texts authors establish their agency through their distinctive meaning-making practice. Accordingly, intertwining the useful resources provided by SFL for tracing, describing and interpreting language features and patterns of choices with contemporary approaches to literary
criticism, the present research offers an opportunity to investigate not only the social perspectives that language provides in Adnan’s text, but how an interdisciplinary analytical practice can inform the study of life writing.

The next chapter, Chapter Five, will explore the setting up of the experience of inner and outer events that Adnan depicts in the text through patterns of experiential metafunction.
Chapter 5

The Construal of Inner and Outer events in Adnan’s Text

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the construal of experiential relations, that is, the juxtaposition of outer and inner experiences of the world, in Adnan’s text “To be in a Time of War”. The chapter is concerned with the experiential function of language, which refers to those language resources that humans use to represent their experience of the world, including the experience of the inner world of thoughts and emotions. Chief among these resources is the transitivity system.

**Transitivity** is a grammatical system which in SFL is located within the experiential metafunction of language, which refers to those language resources that humans use to represent their inner and outer experience of the world. According to Thompson (2008, p.17), the analysis of the transitivity choices of language users, “is one of the most effective ways of exploring the ideological assumptions that inform and are construed by the texts”.

This chapter explores how Adnan uses particular grammatical choices to depict events, the participants in events, and the circumstances involved in these events – that is, who does what to whom, in what circumstances – in ways that together bring out the higher order themes of her work. Of particular interest is how Adnan, as a language user, a social human being, and a verbal (and visual) artist chooses to express in language her mental conceptualizations of external events, how she accounts for her inner experiences, and how these two sides of her experience are entangled.

What emerges is that experience is construed in Adnan’s text in a distinctive and atypical configuration of inner and outer experiential relations linked to the writer’s complex testimonial experience and profound sense of detachment, statelessness and precariousness. The particular experience portrayed is linked to Adnan’s personal reaction to the ferocious invasion and occupation of Iraq by US-led coalition in the spring of 2003, but this particular experience is made universal by Adnan. ‘Inner and outer experience’ is usually used to mean mental – feelings, thoughts on the one hand – one’s inner life as a psyche; and social/material on the other hand – actions and activity and how one participates in the world as a social subject on the other. In order to show how issues of inner and outer experience are tackled by Adnan, this chapter will compare the
notion of ‘experience’ as used in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and literary criticism of life writing, in relation to the writer’s ideological worldviews, the social and political situations and the expectations of readers.

My investigation of how experience is textualised in Adnan’s text is based on the premise that Adnan’s text demonstrates that there is always a purpose to life writing beyond recording the ‘autobiographical experience’. Adnan tends to show this purpose through the experiential grammar used in her life writing. However, Adnan’s life writing is unusual way of depicting ‘experience’ and the contradictions that this ‘experience’ implies.

In this chapter, first I argue that Adnan’s text presents an atypical juxtaposition between outer and inner experiences in terms of the way she manipulates the grammar that expresses experiential relations in English. This juxtaposition is used by Adnan to make a point about how things just are, always used to be, or at least how they are commonly in close proximity or comparison essentially between the ‘outer apocalypse’ and the ‘inner apocalypse’. The autobiographical subject depicts how the inner self reacts to what is happening or has happened in the outer world by means of patterns of language of inner and outer detachment, deliberately creating a rupture in the structure and language of what is expected in an autobiographical text. This is grammatically realized by specific choices in experiential relations, that is, outer and inner experiences in the world – that is to say, in the specific selection of Process type and Participant role configurations, when depicting the acts of ‘doing’, ‘thinking’, ‘saying’, ‘feeling’, ‘behaving’, and ‘existing’.

Second, I argue that there is a dialogic orientation essential to Adnan’s construal of reality in her text. Adnan’s text is seemingly construed as monologic – at least for the central character – but on further inspection it is dialogic in nature, but in an unusual way. The dialogic or verbal interaction among the social actors is one of the essential parts of the experiential relations in grammar. This verbal interaction in Adnan’s text is made less prominent than the writer’s dialogue (monologue) with the self, and the content of the messages that signal the writer’s socio-political consciousness is given prominence. This is realized by specific choices in the text that depict the act of ‘saying’ as an experience.
From a functional linguistic point of view, this juxtaposition between the inner and the outer experiences in the world and the presence or absence of dialogic interaction is instantiated in the text by the types of a process unfolding through time and of participants being directly involved in this process in some way, and there may be circumstances of time, space, cause, manner or one of a few other types (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999). Within the grammatical system of transitivity, there are six types of processes (material, mental, relational, behavioural, verbal and existential). Each process type represents a particular domain of inner/outer experience. In addition, each type of process has its own set of participant roles. For example, in ‘She is writing a letter’, ‘is writing’ represents a process of doing, ‘she’ functions as Actor and ‘a letter’ functions as Goal. In ‘She says a few words to her brother’, ‘says’ represents a process of saying, ‘she’ functions as Sayer, ‘a few words’ Verbiage, and ‘to her brother’ Receiver.

In order to further understand the construal of experience in Adnan’s text, the present chapter examines Adnan’s grammatical representation of self while being in and doing activities of day-to-day living but experiencing a condition of precariousness and detachment. The chapter pays close attention to the configuration of verbal processes in the text and their role in bringing out one of the main themes of the text – social detachment characterising the nature of the existing dialogic interaction between the self and the other (other people, other things, or the lived cultural world in time and place).

Before overviewing the system of process types and participant roles in SFL and showing how these patterns are depicted in Adnan’s text in the following sections of analysis and discussion, the next section will review how the notion of ‘experience’ has been conceptualized in literary criticism and life writing theories.

5.2 ‘Experience’ in literary criticism and life writing theories

This section explores the notion of ‘experience’ in a number of literary theories. It contextualizes the linguistic approach used in this study by identifying what ‘experience’ means more generally and highlighting in particular its significance in the constitution of autobiographical subjectivity.

The notion of ‘experience’ is examined by many scholars. The term ‘experience’ is seen by Williams (1985) to have numerous senses that “has been used in the Anglo-American tradition”. According to Williams (1985, p.126) these senses are charted as “(i)
knowledge gathered from past events, whether by conscious observation or by consideration and reflection; and (ii) a particular kind of consciousness, which can in some contexts be distinguished from ‘reason’ or ‘knowledge’”. These usages described by Williams show that ‘experience’ can be seen as the “most authentic material for truths” and “the product of social conditions or systems which by definition it cannot itself explain” (Williams 1985, p.128). Thus, ‘experience’, based on William’s description, may be perceived as subjective (consciousness) or objective (material world), past or present, interior or exterior, and “conditioned” more by the subject’s “existence” than by her perception of the social self, its subjectivity, identity or agency and how they are constituted.

In literary criticism, for Smith and Watson (2001, p.24), the phenomenon of ‘experience’ is one of the constitutive elements of autobiographical subjectivity, where in an autobiographical narrative ‘experience’ is “mediated through memory and language” and is “an interpretation of the past and our place in a culturally and historically specific present” (Smith & Watson 2001, p.24). ‘Experience’ is also ‘discursive’ in the sense that it is “embedded in the languages of everyday life and the knowledges produced at everyday sites”, thus, subjects know or experience themselves “through multiple domains of discourse” (Smith & Watson 2001, pp.24-26). Further, Smith and Watson (2001, p.32) remark that in making meaning of the material events, subjects make that meaning, or the “experience” of those events, “discursively, in language and as narrative”. Thus, subjects “retrospectively make experience and convey a sense of it to others through storytelling”. As we tell our stories “discursive patterns guide, or compel, us to tell stories about ourselves in particular ways” (Smith & Watson 2001, p.32).

Experience, Smith and Watson (1992, p.xx), argue, may be utilized by the autobiographical subject to “authorize an alternative way of knowing”. The autobiographical subject may provide “an account of the world as seen from the margins, an account which can expose the falseness of the view from the top and can transform the margins as well as the center”. This account of the world sees “our perspectives not as subjugated or disruptive knowledges, but as primary and constitutive of a different world” (Hartsock 1990, p.171).
Eakin claims (2008, p.32) that since the autobiographical narrative is seen as “part of the fabric of our lived experience”, in such texts life writers “selectively engage their lived experience through personal storytelling” which is positioned in specific times and places and is simultaneously “in dialogue with the personal processes and archives of memory.” However, Eakin notes that the social and cultural ‘devices’ or ‘rules’ that govern the “structuring of experience into sharable narrative” often pertain to “the subject’s ability to structure a narratively coherent life story” (Eakin 2008, p.30). Accordingly, social conventions and models can place constraints on the way ‘experience’ is shaped and structured.

Whitlock (2007, p.12) notes that life narrative is fundamental for “attending to the recounting of experiences that have previously been silently excluded” so in this global framework “individuals narrate their personal experience to invoke ‘rights discourse’”. Schaffer & Smith (2004, p.3) observe that the life teller “bears witness” to her experience through “acts of remembering elicited by rights activists and coded to rights instruments” thereby as witness she “prioritize[s] the act of memory” particularly that of personal experiences and thoughts.

In Adnan’s text, the writer portrays her personal reaction to the horrific US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq in the spring of 2003 using a structure that evokes “the sorrows of the particular experience” linked to a profound sense of statelessness, detachment, hindered dialogical communication, and trauma caused by other war events. In this vein, Adnan writes from a position of a war survivor or witness. Adnan points out in the introduction to her life writing that during times of historical crises, grand events do not impress the mind as heavily as the continuous flow of small experiences, actions, moments of bliss or discouragement that make up “the trivialized day-to-day living” (Adnan 2005, p.xii). For Adnan, perhaps it is this kind of consciousness – shown in her depiction of inner and outer experience – that keeps people or “any living body” sane (safe) during wartime although surrounded by “sentiments of precariousness” (Adnan 2005, p.xii).

I argue that in relation to what might seem to be a personal life ‘experience’ in Adnan’s life writing, Adnan extends the concept of self – located in specific time and place – to incorporate glocal concerns, providing “a new level and mode of understanding issues of
self and other” (Grace 2007, p.213), a mode that is broader than the postcolonial. To do so, Adnan makes a conscious choice to use the resources of English grammar to construct an alternative narration of experience and history as part of her non-violent ethics of writing. Adnan’s narration of experience and history offers a radical reinterpretation of the notion of ‘experience’ that creates her ‘glocal’ concerns and cosmopolitan ethos, linking the text environment to a wider socio-political environment.

5.3 ‘Experience’ in linguistic terms (SFL)

Having provided a brief discussion of how ‘experience’ can be understood in the field of literary criticism, the present section provides an SFL-oriented overview of the grammatical system of transitivity which is concerned with the construal of experiential relations in the grammar of the clause. It outlines the general characteristic features of SFL configurations of process types and participants roles, what domain of experience each process type signifies in the transitivity system, and how they are lexicogrammatically realised in the transitivity structure of the clause. Although a brief introduction to transitivity system was provided in Chapter 4, section 4.2, this section explains in detail the main elements of the system in order to understand how they operate to construe different domains of experience, and how Adnan employs this lexicogrammatical resource of the English language to depict a distinctive human construction of social reality and experience.

In SFL theory, construing experience is “an intersubjective process” performed by speakers and addressees using the grammar of the language (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999, p.428). This process is at once ‘semiotic’ (the construction of meaning) and ‘social’ (the social construction of reality). The representation of different experiential constructions through the grammatical system of transitivity is displayed in a taxonomy of six different types of process in English. These processes are outlined below.

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22 Grace (2007, p.213) argues that postcolonialism concerns “the concept and positioning of the ‘other’, yet now the ‘other’ is increasingly non-locatable within geographical space. The postcolonial has negotiated and expressed the voice of the oppressed, problematising agency and freedom, but the current status of neo-colonialism demands a new level and mode of understanding issues of self and other”. For Grace, the new alternative mode is “the small “i” of identity”. In the case of Adnan, many previous contributors to this field have placed Adnan, and a range of writers like her, in the conventional postcolonial box. This is why this study can be considered pioneering in examining Adnan from the lenses of ‘going beyond the postcolonial’ and how she offers a novel mode of understanding issues of self and other through the textually ‘absent’ “I” of the autobiographical subject.
5.3.1 Material clauses

Material clauses signify the material realm of the subject’s outer experience. A material process embodies an action verb of doing or happening. The doer (animate or inanimate) is labeled as Actor – the one that does the action, that is, the one that brings about the change. The unfolding of the material process may extend to another participant which is labeled the ‘Goal’, which is impacted by the process (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.179-180). Material clauses do not necessarily signify concrete, or physical events. They may also represent abstract ‘doing’ and ‘happening’, (e.g. The disappointing forecast dampened the enthusiasm) so can display a metaphorical character (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.196).

A key distinction in material clauses is that they are either processes of happening (intransitive) or doing (transitive). For example, in ‘the war has begun’ the process ‘begun’ denotes an action of happening where the action does not extend to another participant and it is also unknown who/what makes ‘war’ happens; whereas in ‘the military aircrafts bombed the city’ the process ‘bombed’ denotes an action of doing initiated by an Actor and produces an impact on another participant ‘the city’, that is, the Goal. Actually, even when example (b) could be restated as ‘The city was bombed’ leaving out the Actor of this action, the impact on another participant is still there.

5.3.2 Mental clauses

While ‘material’ clauses represent our experience of the external world, ‘mental’ clauses are concerned with our experience of the internal world – the world of our own consciousness. Mental clauses are clauses of ‘sensing’ which can be distinguished by four major subtypes of sensing: perception (e.g. hear, see, smell); cognition (e.g. believe,
think, know); emotion/affection (e.g. hate, fear, enjoy); and desideration (e.g. want, wish, desire).

Cognition and desideration types of sensing can grammatically ‘projects’ ideas through cognition or through desideration (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999, pp.137-139). For example, in ‘I think that I’ll give up’, the idea ‘I’ll give up’ is created by the process of ‘thinking’; it does not exist prior to the beginning of the process. This grammatical structure is not possible with material clauses – one cannot usually say ‘I walk that I will give up’ – or certainly not with the meaning of an idea projected by the walking.

In contrast with cognition and desideration, perception and emotion types of sensing cannot project ideas into existence but they may accommodate ‘pre-existing’ projections (facts already pre-projected), for example, ‘We heard that the news of war was horrific’, where, ‘the news of war was horrific’ is construed as something already projected. However, the four subtypes of sensing may shade into one another. For instance, perceptive mental process can shade into cognitive mental process, where ‘I see’ comes to mean not only ‘I perceive visually’ but also ‘I understand’.

In a mental clause there is always one central participant who is a ‘conscious being’, human or human-like: the Senser – the one that ‘senses’ – feels, thinks, wants or perceives. The significant feature of the Senser is that of being ‘endowed with consciousness.’ For example, in ‘The woman feels sad’, ‘the woman’ is the Senser. Yet, any entity, animate or not, can be construed metaphorically as a conscious participant. For example, in ‘The empty houses were longing for the civilians to return’, the nominal group ‘the empty houses’ is the Senser since it is understood in this grammatical environment as something endowed with consciousness (i.e. they felt longing) (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.201-202).

The other main participant role in a mental clause is the Phenomenon – that which is felt, thought, wanted or perceived. The Phenomenon may be a thing, an act or a fact that is ‘sensed’. Any of these ‘things’ – person, creature, institution, object, substance or abstraction, including our inner experience or imagination – can be construed as the object of consciousness in a mental clause.25

25 Unlike in material clauses, in mental clauses the concept of ‘thing’ is extended to include ‘macrophenomenal clauses’ where the Phenomenon is an ‘act’ and ‘metaphenomenal clauses’ where the Phenomenon is a ‘fact’ (see Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.204).
5.3.3. Relational clauses

Relational clauses involve processes of ‘being’ and ‘having’. They serve to characterise and identify entities, and to construe change as unfolding ‘inertly’ (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.211). The verbs that occur most frequently as the process of a relational clause are ‘be’ and ‘have’. Relational processes construe experiences of being and relate one configuration of experience to another through attribution (e.g. ‘The soldiers were atrocious’) or identification (e.g. ‘Her friend was a war correspondent’), although they can also depict relatively inert change such as the process of ‘becoming’.

In a relational clause, there are always two participant roles (two be-ers): Carrier and Attribute or Token and Value. The function of the relational clauses is either to assign attributes or ascribe values to entities. These entities may be ‘things’, ‘acts’ or ‘facts’ that are ‘sensed’. In attributive clauses, the Carrier is or has the Attribute (e.g. I’m very scared) and in identifying clauses the Token is the Value (e.g. I’m that old woman).

5.3.4 Behavioural clauses

Behavioural clauses involve processes which signify physiological and psychological behaviours, such as crying, laughing, breathing, coughing, watching, or listening. Behavioural processes are grammatically positioned between material and mental processes. For example, in ‘I was crying over the death of civilians’, the behavioural process ‘crying’ is seen as being an outward sign of an inner state or process (one sees tears as action but it signals inner state of sadness). In a behavioural clause, the participant who is ‘behaving’, is called the Behaver which is typically a conscious being (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.250). The most typical pattern of participants in a behavioural clause consists of Behaver and Process only, as in ‘I was always laughing at the absurdity of life’.

It is worth mentioning that many of these lexical verbs may also be used non-behaviourally. For example, ‘think’ in ‘I’m thinking’ is a behavioural process which contrasts with ‘think’ in ‘they think we are stupid’ which is a mental process.

26 A certain set of lexical verbs, other than the verbs ‘be’ and ‘have’, can be used as Process in a relational clause. See (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.238) for a list of lexical verbs serving as Process in relational clauses.

27 There is a typical set of lexical verbs that can be used to construe a behavioural clause (see Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.251).
5.3.5 Verbal clauses

Verbal clauses involve processes of ‘saying’. These clauses are considered an important resource in a discourse because they contribute to setting up dialogic passages and they also cover any kind of “symbolic exchange of meaning” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.252-53). Verbal processes are on the borderline of mental and relational processes and represent symbolizations constructed in human consciousness and enacted in the form of language (e.g. They told the troops the capital city has surrendered). Grammatically, verbal processes are distinguished from behavioural and relational processes by their capacity to project utterances, similar to the way that mental processes can project ideas (e.g. ‘The woman said that she was upset’). Verbal processes are realized by verbs such as ‘say’, ‘criticize’, ‘tell’, ‘reply’.

The participants involved in verbal clauses are: Sayer, Receiver, Verbiage, and, occasionally, Target. The Sayer is the central participant role in a verbal clause which can be human and non-human. For example, in ‘I said it’s noisy in here’, ‘I’ functions as the Sayer (human); whereas in ‘The notice tells you to keep quiet’, ‘the notice’ functions symbolically as the Sayer (nonhuman). The Receiver is the one to whom the process of saying is directed, and is realized by a nominal group typically denoting a conscious being (a potential speaker), a collective or an institution. The nominal group either occurs on its own (e.g. ‘me’ in ‘He told me the whole truth’) or is marked by a preposition – almost always to but sometimes of – (e.g. ‘to me’ in ‘He told the whole truth to me’). The Verbiage construes what is said which is represented as a thing rather than a report or a quote (e.g. ‘a question’ in ‘He asked me a question’). The Target is the function that occurs only in a sub-type28 of verbal clause, i.e. the Sayer verbally acts on another entity (e.g. in ‘She insulted him’, ‘she’ is the Sayer who functions as if it were acting verbally on another entity ‘him’; and ‘him’ is the Target of the verbal process ‘insult’ (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.255-56).

5.3.6 Existential clauses

Existential clauses involve processes which represent that something happens or exists. They are typically realized by the structure (‘there’ + the verb ‘be’) or some other verb which expresses existence, such as ‘exist’, ‘arise’, ‘occur’, ‘happen’, ‘remain’. Existential

28 There is a sub-type of verbal processes that construe the activity of targeting such as: praise, blame, insult, criticize, abuse, etc. See (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.255) for a set of lexical verbs serving as Process in verbal clauses.
processes are on the borderline of material and relational processes. The word ‘there’ in such clauses is neither a participant nor a circumstance – it has no representational function in the transitivity structure of the clause but fulfils English’s requirement for independent clauses to contain a subject (i.e. it is a ‘dummy subject’) (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of what interpersonal meanings such Subjects construe in Adnan’s text). The central participant in this type of clause is a nominal group which functions as an Existent (e.g. ‘a picture’ in ‘There was a picture on the wall’). The Existent can be any type of entity (person, object, institution, abstraction) or an action or event (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.256-59).

Typically, texts construe events, actions or activities using different process types. Texts also construe the participants in these processes either as direct and active social entities bringing a change or an impact on other people/entities as Actor, Sayer, Senser, Goal, or as indirect, optional and passive participants assigned the grammatical roles such as Receiver, Verbiage, Phenomenon, Behaviour.

Process types and participant roles within the system of TRANSITIVITY can be summarized as in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 Process types, their meanings and characteristic participants (from Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.260)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESS TYPE</th>
<th>category meaning</th>
<th>Direct Participants</th>
<th>Indirect Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>material: action event</td>
<td>‘doing’</td>
<td>Actor, Goal</td>
<td>Recipient, Client, Scope:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘doing’</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initiator, Attribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘happening’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behavioral</td>
<td>‘behaving’</td>
<td>Behaver</td>
<td>Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mental:</td>
<td>‘sensing’</td>
<td>Senser, Phenomenon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perception</td>
<td>‘seeing’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognition</td>
<td>‘thinking’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desideration</td>
<td>‘wanting’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotion</td>
<td>‘feeling’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbal</td>
<td>‘saying’</td>
<td>Sayer, Target</td>
<td>Receiver, Verbiage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relational:</td>
<td>‘being’</td>
<td>Carrier, Attribute</td>
<td>Attributor; Beneficiary;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attribution</td>
<td>‘attributing’</td>
<td>Identified; Identifi</td>
<td>Assigner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identification</td>
<td>‘identifying’</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>existential</td>
<td>‘existing’</td>
<td>Existent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Having outlined how the notion of experience is treated in literary criticism and SFL through TRANSITIVITY system, I shall devote the rest of this chapter to analysing Adnan’s text in terms of its transitivity patterns. My analysis will focus on investigating Adnan’s depiction of the semantic and grammatical features associated with the options of processes, participants, and circumstances, in order to identify how the writer construes inner and outer experience and why that construal is seen as not typical in some instances.

5.4 Overview of the construal of process types and participants roles in Adnan’s text

The transitivity analysis undertaken in this chapter starts with establishing the relative frequencies of Adnan’s usage of different lexicogrammatical choices in terms of the transitivity system. A total number of 1361 clauses are analysed in terms of process types and their participant roles and circumstances in order to identify the general transitivity patterns across the whole text.

To do transitivity analysis, the process type for each clause and all the participant roles involved in it are categorised in separate tables of experiential relations. For instance, if a clause’s process type is ‘material’ then its associated participant roles are Actor and (optionally) Goal or Scope. Or, it could be a ‘verbal’ process type with Sayer, Verbiage and/or Receiver as key participant roles. The frequency and the availability (presence and/or absence) of these entities configured as participants in different kinds of process are of interest in the analysis. Graphic illustrations of the different aspects of the transitivity analysis are provided in the Appendix B.

Descriptive statistics are then given which summarise these frequencies in order to indicate the “favoured and foregrounded options from the total meaning potential” (Halliday 2002 [1977], p.58) used by Adnan. These results are then interpreted in terms of how the elements that have been selected represent particular kinds of external and internal experience and, ultimately, a very particular kind of relation between inner and outer experience that constitutes a major theme of Adnan’s work. Later, a separate section in this chapter will be dedicated to the discussion of transitivity patterns across verbal processes in particular, using, along with SFL transitivity interpretation, Bakhtin’s (1984) theory of dialogism, in order to understand the dialogic orientation in Adnan’s text since it constitutes another of the key themes in her life writing.
5.4.1 Analysis of process types selections

The transitivity analysis of process types is undertaken for 1361 clauses occurring across 53 sections of the final chapter.

To begin with, the analysis of types of process and their frequency as they are used in the text is illustrated in Table 5.2 below (processes bolded).

Table 5.2 Types of process and their frequencies in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Example Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Material     | 660       | 49%        | [1_1_8] To go toward the window (happening)  
[1_1_14] To open the door (doing) |
| Mental       | 340       | 25%        | [4_4_134] To see if the clouds are moving (perception)  
[7_16_252] To think about the war (cognition)  
[9_63_316] To bemoan its absence (emotion)  
[9_71_329] To want to forget about [the war] (consideration) |
| Relational   | 143       | 11%        | [20_244_575] To be disoriented (attributive)  
[17_204_511] [[To destroy Baghdad]] is the order of the day (identifying) |
| Behavioural  | 142       | 10%        | [48_643_1177] To cry over the sack of Baghdad’s archaeological museum. |
| Verbal       | 72        | 5%         | [42_585_1069] To say goodbye to the friend |
| Existential  | 4         | 1%         | [18_233_556] To keep knowing that there are mysteries and secrets |
| **Total**    | **1361**  |            |                |

From Table 5.2 above, it can be seen that in Adnan’s text the frequency of the use of processes varies noticeably among the six types of processes. Material processes are the most frequent, with 660/1361 clauses being material, which typically portrays the realm of the subject’s outer experience, such as her social actions, events, and activities. The next highest frequency of use is of mental processes (340/1361). Relational processes (143/1361) and ‘behavioural’ (142/1361) processes are less frequently used, while verbal (72/1361) and ‘existential’ processes (4/1361) are the least used.\(^\text{29}\) Figure 5.12 below

\(^{29}\) With this value it does not add up to 100%, but due to rounding, this is replaced with an approximate
graphically depicts these results a percentage: the majority (49%) of clauses are material and they are mostly ‘intransitive’, e.g. “to go to the kitchen”. However, a substantial number of clauses (25%) are mental, e.g. “to think about the war”, and a smaller number of clauses consist of relational (11%), e.g. “to be bored”, behavioural (10%), e.g. “to stare at the wall”, verbal (5%) “to say nothing” and existential (1%), e.g. “there’s no ‘later’ at this moment”.

Figure 5.1 Distribution of process types in proportion in Adnan’s Text

Logogenetically, the results of process type classification reveal a repeated pattern in which a set of clauses are represented moving in sequence from material to mental. Although mental processes are used with less frequency than material clauses, mental processes situated nearby material processes create a distinctive pattern depicting how the workings of outer and inner worlds are entangled. This pattern, which is recurrent across the 53 sections of the text, creates a sense that although the inner and outer are different they are crucially intertwined in the experience of the persona of the text. The following table illustrates the pattern across two sections (two clause complexes) of Adnan’s text (material Processes are shown in blue, mental in red, behavioural in green, and both verbal and relational are in black).

Table 5.3 Pattern of sequence of mental and material processes in Adnan’s text.

value that has a more explicit representation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section (paragraph)#</th>
<th>Clause Complex (CC)#</th>
<th>Clause#</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Process type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To say nothing,</td>
<td>say</td>
<td>verbal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>do nothing</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>mark time</td>
<td>mark</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>to bend</td>
<td>bend</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>to straighten up</td>
<td>straighten</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>to blame oneself</td>
<td>blame</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>to stand</td>
<td>stand</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>to go toward the window</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>to change one’s mind in the process</td>
<td>change</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>to return to one’s chair</td>
<td>return</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>to stand again</td>
<td>stand</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>to go to the bathroom</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>to close the door</td>
<td>close</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>to then open the door</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>to go to the kitchen</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>to not eat</td>
<td>eat</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>not drink</td>
<td>drink</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>to return to the table</td>
<td>return</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>to be bored</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>to take a few steps on the rug</td>
<td>take</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>to come close to the chimney</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>to look at it</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>to find it dull</td>
<td>find</td>
<td>relational: attribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>to turn left until the main door</td>
<td>turn</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>to come back to the room</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>to hesitate</td>
<td>hesitate</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>to go on, just a bit, a trifle</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>to stop</td>
<td>stop</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>To pull the right side of the curtain</td>
<td>pull</td>
<td>material</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>then [to pull] the other side</td>
<td>pull</td>
<td>material</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>to stare at the wall</td>
<td>stare</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>To look at the watch, the clock, the alarm clock</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>to listen to the ticking</td>
<td>listen</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>to think about it</td>
<td>think</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>to look again</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>to go to the tap</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section (paragraph)#</td>
<td>Clause Complex (CC)#</td>
<td>Clause#</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Process type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>to open the refrigerator</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>to close it,</td>
<td>close</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>to open the door,</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>to feel the cold,</td>
<td>feel</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>to close the door,</td>
<td>close</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>to feel hungry,</td>
<td>feel</td>
<td>body state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>to wait,</td>
<td>wait</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>to wait for dinner time,</td>
<td>wait</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>to go to the kitchen,</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>to reopen the fridge,</td>
<td>reopen</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>to take out the cheese,</td>
<td>take</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>to open the drawer,</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>to take out a knife,</td>
<td>take</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>to carry the cheese</td>
<td>carry</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>and enter the dining room,</td>
<td>enter</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>to rest the plate on the table,</td>
<td>rest</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>to lay the table for one,</td>
<td>lay</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>to sit down,</td>
<td>sit</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>to cut the cheese in four servings,</td>
<td>cut</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>to take a bite,</td>
<td>take</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>to introduce the cheese into the mouth,</td>
<td>introduce</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>to chew</td>
<td>chew</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>and swallow,</td>
<td>swallow</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>to forget</td>
<td>forget</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>to swallow</td>
<td>swallow</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>to daydream,</td>
<td>daydream</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>to chew again,</td>
<td>chew</td>
<td>behavioural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>to go back to the kitchen,</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>to wipe one’s mouth</td>
<td>wipe</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>to wash one’s hands,</td>
<td>wash</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>to dry them,</td>
<td>dry</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>to put the cheese back into the refrigerator,</td>
<td>put</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>to close that door,</td>
<td>close</td>
<td>material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>to let go of the day</td>
<td>let go</td>
<td>mental</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen from Table 5.3, the inner workings of consciousness (mental processes in red) are inseparable from activities of the outer world of experience (material clauses in blue) on the other – one type of experience shades into another, or occurs simultaneously with the other. For example, mental processes (blame, change mind, hesitate) are entangled with material processes of motion in the passage “to bend, to straighten up, to blame oneself, to stand, to go toward the window, to change one’s mind in the process, to return to one’s chair, to stand again, … to turn left, to come back, to hesitate, to go on, to stop”. What is significant about this pattern is that the sequence of the mental and material is interposed with behavioural processes (highlighted in green in the table) – processes that represent the outer manifestations (physiological and psychological states) of inner workings (processes of consciousness). This choice enhances the sense of an intertwining of the inner and the outer. However, this does not mean that other process types are not entangled in a similar manner. Rather, other process types – relational, behavioural, verbal, and existential – are also interposed but because they are less frequent overall their intermediation is understood here as less central to the grammatical patterning of the text and the ‘symbolic articulation’ of its higher order themes in Hasan’s terms.

Detailed analyses of the grammatical features of process types of material, mental, relational, behavioural, existential and verbal are discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

30 It is necessary here to explain double-codable processes shown in Table 5.3. Clause 3 could be doubly coded as material clause and as mental clause. From the grammatical point of view the process ‘mark’ might be considered material; however from the semantic perspective I treat it here as metaphorically mental with the meaning ‘notice’ time (‘although mark time’ does not easily project). Similarly, in clause 6, the process ‘blame’ is double coded being on the borderline between mental and verbal, here I treat it as mental (‘blame’ cannot project); in clause 9, the process ‘change’ is grammatically a material process but is metaphorically construing mental activity from semantics perspective (‘change’ cannot project); in clause 19 ‘to be bored’ the process ‘be’ is double coded as it is on the borderline with mental where in form it is relational (attributive) but it depicts a mental state; clause 23 ‘to find dull’ is double coded as it construes mental state although it is relational-attributive; in clause 26 the process ‘hesitate’ is double coded where from a structural point of view of it is material, but from a semantic perspective it is construed as a mental activity (‘hesitate’ cannot project). In clause 42 the process ‘feel’ from point of view of form is relational with verb indicating phase (e.g. I am hungry/I appear hungry/I feel hungry). In clause 70 the process ‘let go’ is material from the perspective of form, but construes mental state metaphorically. There are many expressions we use that are like this: material processes used to construe mental activity; often to construe some kind of agency in the mental activity which is unavailable in the usual mental process framework (as demonstrated for example in Moore 2004/2005). The process “sit down” in clause 54 is behavioural but it could be treated as material. Interestingly, this sequence of clauses (58, 59, 60, 61, 62, and 63) displays an example of behavioural clauses that are interposed with mental clauses, producing a sense of hesitation and anxiety associated with the persona’s actions shown through the sequenced processes – “to chew, to swallow, to forget to swallow, to daydream, to chew again”.

118
**Material clauses**

Figure 5.1 above shows that the material process type is the most frequently used process type in Adnan’s text (49%, or 660/1361). In the majority of these material clauses (64%, or 425/660), actions, events, and/or activities are depicted as processes of ‘happening’ rather than ‘doing’, thus combining the feature where the unfolding of the material process does not extend to another participant (as in ‘to come back’). In other words in most material clauses there is no participant realising the grammatical function of the Goal. Another notable feature in the configuration of material clauses is that in most cases the grammatical role of Actor, which is the ‘doer’ in a material process, is absent from Adnan’s text except for a few instances (e.g. ‘to tell that the sun is going down’ where ‘the sun’ is Actor).

These actions which do not extend over a Goal are represented in processes like *go, walk, stand, return, sit, stand, drive, wait*. They are related to the realm of tedious activities of a social human being in the context of day-to-day living. Nevertheless, there are some material clauses of doing in the text (36%, or 235/660) which extend to another participant, the Goal (e.g. ‘to blow up the planet’ where ‘the planet’ is Goal), thus the pattern of material clauses of happening is disrupted by the of material clauses of doing.

The activities construed by material processes of happening can also show a pattern denoting dynamic motion. This dynamic nature of the action can be clearly seen in the opening paragraphs where the subject speaks from California, San Francisco, Bay Area. This pattern displays the destination of motion through space and is realized in either of two construals: a single process of motion (to+infinitive (verb of motion, e.g. to go)) or a process of motion (to+infinitive (verb of motion) + a circumstance of place, e.g. *to come close to the chimney*). Pattern 1 of (happening) single processes of motion and pattern 2 of (happening) processes of motion+circumstance are illustrated in example clauses from Adnan’s text in Figure 5.2 below.
A notable feature of the configuration of circumstances of place coupled with material processes of motion is that these circumstances denote not only a constant movement or static location in space (see Table 5.3 above). Typically they also denote trivial destinations (e.g. “on the rug” in “to take a few steps on the rug”) and a sense of anxiety and a lack of cumulative sense of destinatory purpose or ‘travel’ from the piling up of these circumstances (e.g. “left until the main door” and “back to the room” in “to turn left until the main door, to come back to the room, to hesitate”).

However, the dynamic nature of action is two-fold: when a motion happens ‘indoors’ it brings the subject a sense of unpleasantness and hesitation, as in the following example excerpt:

(a) *To say nothing, to do nothing, to blame oneself, go to the kitchen, to not eat nor drink, to return to the table, to be bored, to take a few steps on the rug, to come close to the chimney to find it dull, to hesitate* (Adnan 2005, p.99).

When motion embraces nature it brings the subject a sense of delightfulfulness, comfort, and company, as in the following example excerpt:

(b) *To listen to the radio, to do nothing, to find a solution, to want to go to the beach, to make sure nobody’s around, to pull back, to go ahead, to drive down the coast, look at the ocean, to admire it, to feel happy, to go up the hill, to stop, to make sure that the ocean has not disappeared, to feel lucky, to appreciate the breeze, to advance into the waves* (Adnan 2005, p.100).
Thus, paradoxically, although construed by a similar grammatical pattern of processes of motion, the two passages quoted above from Adnan’s text convey opposing senses. These senses are explicitly portrayed through lexical choices (e.g. blame, bored, dull, hesitate in (a)) as opposed to (e.g. admire, happy, lucky, appreciate in (b)) and grammatical choices, such as the agentive mental action in the section example (e.g. ‘make sure’, ‘find a solution’).

Notably, in the sections of the text that are set in New York (described by Adnan as “the Metropolitan”), the pattern of motion by material clauses and its effects is disrupted by a pattern depicting a static movement of the subject. This covert patterning describing explicitly how the subject feels about New York is reinforced by less use of material clauses with circumstances of place conveying movement and through lexical choices (e.g. exasperating, imprisonment, hostility, pollution, disgusting, appalled, ashamed, betray, embarrassed, die, restless, dark, immured), as in the following example section:

(c) To land in New York. To be exasperated. To feel imprisonment. To feel in the morning the hostility of humid weather, to realize how high the surrounding buildings can be, to sneeze out the pollution, to rub the soot off the mirror, to cough and spit. To buy the New York Times and find it disgusting. To look at pictures glorifying war. To be appalled by the number of civilian casualties. To feel ashamed of feeling so comfortable in the apartment. To feel tired of living. To betray one’s thoughts. To be embarrassed that Basra’s inhabitants are dying of thirst under the returning British. To die of thirst is for the natives. To die is for others. To inform the living that they aren’t yet dead. To hear in children’s voices their future death. To dim the light, with restlessness. To go to the kitchen for no reason. To sit in the dark. To welcome dark thoughts. To loosen the squeeze around one’s heart. To empty one’s veins of all forms of love. To find oneself inanimate. To be immured (Adnan 2005, pp 107-108).

This patterning conveys a threatening character to the city yet at some point it encourages Adnan to devise a provocative critique of war and an appalling projection of mental images of the war and its aftermath in the sections to follow, which goes paradoxically with Adnan’s words “to foresee no personal action”. The coexistence of opposing senses of joy or discomfort attached to different places in Adnan’s text is textualized through the linguistic choices discussed and is an important way that the writer’s conflicting sense of self and belonging are made available to the reader.
To summarize the findings of material clauses, it was found that material processes, with absent Actors, are the most frequently identified type of processes in Adnan’s text, with the majority of these processes construed as processes of ‘happening’. The processes of happening constitute a dominant pattern conveying movement reinforced by the use of circumstances of place. This pattern of processes of happening with a motion coexists with and is disrupted by a pattern of material processes of doing that extend over a Goal, and a pattern of static movement, both used with less frequency.

**Mental clauses**

With 340 out of the 1361 clauses in the text (25%), mental clauses represent the second major pattern of process types in Adnan’s text. These mental clauses are distinguished in four major subtypes of sensing: perception, cognition, emotion/affection, and desideration, depicting the workings of mind, imagination, and memory. Table 5.4 shows the distribution of different types of mental processes (bolded) which construe the inner experience of the Senser.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Example clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental-cognitive</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>[9_65_320] To think of the morning news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental-perceptive</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>[6_6_212] To hear the noise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental-emotive</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>[9_59_308] To enjoy the enormous variety of the shades of green on the mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental-desiderative</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>[33_442_860] To desire strongly to be in Baghdad, in defiance of the war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>340</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the types of mental activities involved in mental processes, the most frequent mental activity appears to be cognition and perception compared to activities of emotion and desideration. This pattern is observed whether a Phenomenon is involved or not. Additionally, Table 5.5 below shows the most frequent mental processes in Adnan’s text, many of which do not only construe mental activities but are also explicit realizations of emotions (Affect) manifested through a mental process (See Appendix C for the full clauses that show the full transitivity configuration for many of these clauses).
Table 5.5 lexical verbs showing the most frequent mental processes in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognition</th>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Desideration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>think</td>
<td>feel</td>
<td>love</td>
<td>wish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td>hear</td>
<td>regret</td>
<td>decide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wonder</td>
<td>see</td>
<td>blame</td>
<td>avoid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remember</td>
<td>notice</td>
<td>suffer</td>
<td>want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forget</td>
<td>smell</td>
<td>fear</td>
<td>need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>admire</td>
<td></td>
<td>enjoy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dream</td>
<td></td>
<td>worry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>believe</td>
<td></td>
<td>hesitate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of these mental processes listed in the table above construe in Adnan’s text unsettling mental reactions to either events or entities being sensed – Phenomenons – (as in “To forget the war. To never stop thinking about it”; “To despise history as taught, but love Greece, anyway, always”. They also construe a surge of pleasant/unpleasant emotions triggered by a surrounding entity, landscape or social environment in the text (as in “to suffer from the day’s beauty”, “to fear the distance”; “To admire light yellow broom trees”; “To avoid the news”) or by imagination (as in “To hear the pounding of Baghdad in the music’s tissue”; “To hear bombs falling on Baghdad”). This indicates how the self (or text’s persona), while trying to comprehend war, enters a troubling and hallucinatory state of mind. However, the emotions instantiated through these mental processes can be ascribed a sense of agency because they can alter readers’ own perceptions and attitudes.

The majority of mental processes in Adnan’s text involve a Phenomenon – the entity or quality being sensed. However, the majority of these mental processes do not include a textually present human participant, especially when that participant would fill the grammatical role of the Senser. Figure 5.3 below display example mental clauses with participant roles.
The text persona’s construal of mental activity on the Phenomenon is mostly confined to cognition. However, these cognitive activities emerge adjacent to the activities of perception, emotion and desideration although the latter are of low density. The text persona is depicted as using the process of ‘thinking’, along with processes of ‘sensing’, ‘feeling’ and ‘desiring’ to represent her inner world experiences. However, despite an apparent sense of “inner defeat” the text persona tends “to prevent the trajectory of inner defeat from reaching the centre”, “to put up with an inner rage”, “to face the iridescent inner chaos”, and “to discover inner tears which turn into wounds” so that mental activities of cognition convey a sense of agency and empathy in the internal world of the mind.

Another notable feature of mental processes in Adnan’s text is that these processes are used to project the subject’s “mental images” or the content of her consciousness. For example, in “To regret that evil exists” the clause “that evil exists” is projected by the mental process “regret” thus it represents a thought brought into existence by mental activity so as to share it with readers or draw their attention to it. Further features which produce this sense of intersubjectivity will be explored in detail in Chapter 7.
In summary, the mental clause analysis shows that although the central participant, the Senser, is textually absent while the Phenomenon, an indirect participant, is available in the majority of mental clauses, mental processes contribute in large part to the representation of the persona’s inner thoughts and emotions and play an important role in construing the unsettling nature of Adnan’s text. Also, the higher density of cognitive mental processes of thinking and knowing than processes of perception, emotion, and desideration portrays the text persona’s greater engagement in the mental activities of cognition, which gives rise to a sense of agentiveness that is ‘cognitively’ achieved thereby provoking readers’ mental capacity for agency to think about the “heart-wrenching reality” Adnan’s text stresses.

**Relational clauses**

With 143 clauses out of 1361 clauses, relational clauses are not frequently used (11% of all clauses). Looking at the relational clauses from the perspective of “domain of attribution” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014), it can be said that Adnan uses fewer relational processes to construe her inner world experiences associated with affect. Adnan depicts a range of emotions most of which are construed through other types of process, but some are construed through relational clauses. Thus the use of relational clauses and lexical choices describing emotions by Adnan is important because they contribute to instantiating the text persona’s inner and social life and the surrounding environment. The most frequent attributes in Adnan’s text are negative attributes such as pain (physical or psychological), anger, fear, uncertainty, restlessness, detachment, powerlessness, apprehension. However, although used with low density the positive attributes bring out a sense of joy and hopefulness, and convey a striking combination of daily pleasure with the cognition of horror and precariousness. Table 5.6 below represents examples of relational clauses showing negative attributes (bolded) relating to physical and/or psychological pain as well as positive attributes associated with pleasure.
As seen from Table 5.6 above, in the majority of relational clauses the Carrier – the central participant in attributive relational clauses and the entity that assigns the Attribute is not textually present (e.g. “to get upset”), except in a few instances.

Some important points can be brought out by looking at the patterns of relational processes in Adnan’s text, namely attribution. The attributes in these patterns represent the inner experience and shade into an outer experience, modelling this experience as ‘being’, but a very different, less dynamic sense of being than the experience construed in material processes. For example (processes bolded),

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31 In SFL theory, relational clauses are realized through attribution and identification. The majority of relational clauses in Adnan’s text are attributive and are used mainly with the process ‘to be’; however, other verbs serving as process in relational clauses are also used, for example, ‘become’, ‘get’, ‘remain’, ‘make’, ‘keep’, ‘find’. Identifying clauses are used with a very low density.
In example (a) the process “be” and the attribute “ecstatic” conveys an inner activity that does not involve a change, while in (b) the process “close” indicates a change from the initial phase (the door is open) to a final phase (the door is closed). However, it is important to consider that while material processes do double service to indicate the workings of outer and inner worlds, the configuration of relational clauses portraying surges of emotions experienced internally also gives rise to a sense of agency in the outer world manifested especially through the selected attributes that powerfully engage readers in Adnan’s inner reality thus encouraging their empathy.

To sum up, although relational clauses are found with less frequency in Adnan’s text, they are important because they work with other types of clauses to instantiate how the text’s persona, while trying to “empty [their] head of overflowing emotions” and “face the iridescent inner chaos”, experiences these embodied emotions and opinions about a particular domain of ‘being’, which in turn contributes to the overall accumulation of conflicting moods and reactions in the text, and draws readers’ attention to these tensions.

**Behavioural clauses**

Constituting 142 clauses out of 1361 clauses, behavioural clauses are also relatively infrequently used (10%) in Adnan’s text. However, being on the borderline between ‘material’ and ‘mental’ thus signifying typical human physiological and psychological experience, behavioural processes contribute to the way Adnan represents the acting out of processes of consciousness (e.g.; “to watch”; “to wait”) and physiological states (e.g. “to cry”; “to vomit”) in the text. A general pattern observed among behavioural clauses in the text is a sequence of processes denoting tedious activities accompanied with a sense of powerlessness, anger and precariousness, as shown in Table 5.3 above. More examples of the pattern of behavioural clause sequence are exhibited in the following table, which shows that flow in and out of mental and behavioural/behavioural and material clauses:
As observed earlier from Table 5.3, each sequence of behavioural clauses usually interposes between mental and material clauses (and sometimes relational clauses). The sequences of behavioural clauses shown in Table 5.7 above depict a combination of behavioural activities, some of which are interposed between other process types. Some of these behavioural activities (e.g. waiting, staring, glancing), are not directed toward a second clause participant (the element called ‘Behaviour’ in SFG, for example “salty tears” in “to cry salty tears”). Such clauses without a Behaviour element indicate a sense of anticipation, precariousness and futility of action. However, some of the behavioural clauses do feature the element Behaviour, as in “to digest defeat” – where “defeat” is the Behaviour, albeit an unusual one to appear with the verb “digest”. In addition, the central participant, the Behaver, which is typically a conscious being responsible for expressing behaviours through inner processes of consciousness and outer processes of physiology is textually absent in the majority of behavioural clauses, except for a few instances (e.g. “some eat bio-foods” — “some” is the Behaver). More interestingly, many of these...
behavioural processes depict a range of physiological reactions and emotions to war and war news and portray how the afflicted persona viscerally embodies these reactions and emotions, as in “To vomit one’s stomach and spit out the heart”. As Adnan says, “the body knows itself in apocalyptic moments: in ecstasy, and in pain” and in this body we achieve “a strong sense of being” (Adnan 2004, p.62).

Thus the use of behavioural clauses is a crucial strategy in Adnan’s text because it contributes to the instantiation of emotions through physiological reactions and to the way Adnan brings these emotions to resonate with what she tells us in the introduction to her book about her own reactions to war and news of war, which is a powerful way of getting the reader to feel how embodied her reaction is and perhaps correspondingly to feel that in their own bodies.

**Verbal clauses**

With 72 out of 1354 clauses, verbal processes of ‘saying’ are the least used (5%) in Adnan’s text apart from existential clauses. Although verbal processes are used in lesser density than other processes in the text they contribute to the dialogic orientation essential to Adnan’s text (which will also be discussed from the interpersonal perspective in detail in Chapter 8). Verbal processes gain importance in Adnan’s text because the writer’s configuration of the verbal clauses is not straightforward or typical of English generally. I will explore this patterning in a separate section (5.4.3) of the present chapter. The use of fewer processes of saying indicates that the text is in one sense more monologic than dialogic, as Adnan asserts herself in the text saying, “To linger on the mystery of communication, to bemoan its absence” (Adnan 2005, p.102). Nonetheless, it will be seen that although the low frequency of verbal processes represents a sense of minimal or hindered verbal communication especially among human social actors, in another way these verbal clauses show that communication is still present albeit more among nonhuman that human social actors.

**Existential clauses**

Existential clauses are the least frequently used (1%) and are realized in 4 instances out of 1361 clauses in Adnan’s text. Although used with very low density, being on the border line between material and relational processes, existential clauses represent something that happens or exists in the outer world of experience, thus contributing to Adnan’s depiction of social self and its inner and outer reality. For example, in “to keep knowing
that there are mysteries and secrets” “mysteries and secrets” are lexical choices representing the Existent, the central participant in existential clauses. However, Adnan’s selection of existential clauses contributes to a sense of frustrated agency in the text.

5.4.2 Analysis of participant roles selections

Having explored language patterns in Adnan’s text in terms of the central element of experiential structure – the process type – I will move to the analysis of the second important element in the transitivity system – the participant roles – in other words, who/which does what to whom. Importantly, it can be seen that the text involves both direct and indirect participant roles. This section follows SFL’s distinction between direct and indirect participant roles in the transitivity system and looks at the participant roles from the perspective of Hasan’s cline of dynamism and the distinction between -er roles and -ed roles.

The section explores mainly direct participant roles (Actor, Goal, Behaver, Senser, Phenomenon, Sayer, Target, Carrier, Attribute, Identified/Token, Identifier/Value, Existent), but also includes the roles of Receiver and Verbiage – which are indirect participant roles in verbal clauses – because the analysis of them is important to understand one of the main themes – the dialogic orientation of Adnan’s text.

The results of my analysis of participant roles in Adnan’s text show that many of these direct participant roles (Actor, Behaver, Senser, Sayer, Target, Carrier, Identified, Identifier, Existent) are textually downgraded in some way. For example, the participant may be implied but textually not realized, or participants within certain participant types may be fully realised but used in quite a small proportion. For example, in “to create terror”, the Actor of the material process “create” is not textually present in this clause because of the infinitive construction, and most of the clauses in the analysed text follow this pattern. In some clauses the Actor is textually present, as in “the Iraqis” in “the Iraqis are resisting”, but this kind of pattern occurs in quite a small proportion of all clauses. This is mainly because of the extensive use of non-finite clauses in the text (with to-infinitive verbs), so that the majority of these processes do not unfold in time and also lack their key participant roles. In other words, in the transitivity structure of the clause in Adnan’s text the central (human or non-human) social entities that take ‘-er roles’ (the social roles encompassing responsibility for events/actions or taking control over events/actions or other people) are not textually present, except for few instances.
Nevertheless, there are a few direct participant roles (Goal, Phenomenon, Attribute) which are used in somewhat higher proportions in Adnan’s text. However, these direct participant roles can be understood as marginal because the participants involved in the processes assume different roles according to the type of the process. Some of the participant roles (e.g. Actor of a material clause) are major or essential to the process to be actualized. Some other participant roles (e.g. Goal of material clause) although direct, can also be understood as marginal. The significance of these results lies in the way Adnan brings the construal of these different participant roles to readers’ attention so as to consider how usually a sense of agency and responsibility for social actions is hidden or manipulated.

Participant roles can be seen through Hasan’s (1985) cline of dynamism (as outlined in Chapter 4 section 4.3.1), which deals with how participants in texts may be read as having different capacities for bringing change into the world, based on the grammatical patterns used to represent them.

The analysis of participant roles in Adnan’s text shows, to begin with, that across 1361 clauses 868 direct participant roles are textually realized. The distribution of these direct participant roles in Adnan’s text varies across the different participant types and is displayed in Figure 5.4 below.

Figure 5.4 Distribution of direct participant roles in Adnan’s text in terms of number of occurrences

33 The 868 clauses does not represent the proportion of all clauses that have direct participant roles because clauses can (and do) have more than one participant.
As can be seen from Figure 5.3 Goal (301/868) and Phenomenon (233/868) have the highest number of occurrences. Further, the figure displays that Attribute (141/868) constitutes a relatively higher number of occurrences compared to Actor (81/884) and Carrier (71/868). The least frequently used participant roles are Senser (13/884), Target (8/868), Sayer (7/868), Behaver (5/868), Existent (4/868), Identified (2/868), and Identifier (2/868).

Table 5.8 below summarizes these results as percentages: the majority of direct participant roles are depicted in Goal (35%), e.g. “to grind some coffee”, and Phenomenon (27%), e.g. “to remember the different wars [[that wove one’s life]]”, which are direct but marginal participant roles. However, Actor (9%), e.g. “the ocean has not disappeared”, Senser (1%), e.g. “one knows”, Sayer (1%) e.g. “to hear the friend say”, and Behaver (1%), e.g. “his music is somehow crying” which, although they are considered major conscious participant roles from an SFL perspective, are used with lesser frequency. In contrast, Attribute (16%), e.g. “to be agitated”, and Carrier (8%) e.g. “to render one’s glance uninhabitable”, show a relatively higher frequency. Other direct participant roles, Identified/Token (1%) and Identifier/Value (1%), e.g. “[[to destroy Baghdad]] is the order of the day”, Target (1%), e.g. “To curse the hour, the fire, the deluge and hell”, and Existent (1%), e.g. “there’s nothing [[that one can do]]”, are textualised in lesser frequency. Table 5.8 below shows the frequency and percentages of participant roles.34

Table 5.8 Distribution of direct participant roles in numbers and percentages in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant roles</th>
<th>Number of occurrence</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenomenon</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribute</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actor</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrier</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senser</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayer</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaver</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifier</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34 With this value it does not add up to 100%, but due to rounding, this is replaced with an approximate value that has a more explicit representation.
Detailed analyses of the grammatical features of participant roles in material, mental, relational, behavioural, existential and verbal processes are discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

**Goal**

The role of Goal occurring across 301/868 clauses is the most frequent role (35%) in Adnan’s text. Goal is the participant that is impacted by the (transitive) material process. The results show that in the text Goal can be distinguished in two categories: Goals (73/301) that are metaphorically construed, and Goals (228/301) that are non-metaphorically construed. The metaphorical Goals (73/301) are not people or physical objects, but are entities symbolically impacted by the transitive material processes, for example (Goals italicized), “To hammer one’s anguish into oneself”, “to sweep away one’s worries”, “to displace shadows”, “to kill the desire to go out”. On the other hand, non-metaphorical Goals are construed as congruent goals – entities representing people (animate) or physical objects (inanimate) – for example, “to turn people into beasts for the slaughterhouse”, and “to uncork the inkpots”. Thus, metaphorical or internal Goals are not material and external to the apparent Actor – they do not represent other people, things or institutions that are physically impacted but are often aspects of the persona of the text.

On the other hand, the Goal which is assigned an -ed (passive) role in Hasan’s cline of dynamism, is the most frequently used grammatical Participant in Adnan’s text. However, the number of instances in which the persona (or autobiographical subject) is construed overtly as the Goal of an action performed by some entity is very minimal as is the number of instances in which the subject is construed as the Actor of an action. As mentioned above, the only reference that readers may have to guide them in understanding when the persona talks about herself as Goal can be found in clauses encompassing pronouns like “one” and “oneself”, for example, “to wrap oneself with death” and “to empty one’s head of overflowing emotions”. However, these pronouns are non-definitive so they are still not enough for readers to easily and conclusively identify to whom exactly the material action extends.

35 From the last two examples mentioned it is important to note however that even in these examples there are some metaphors and images at play – since people cannot really be turned into what we call ‘beasts’ and ‘uncorking’ is more commonly collocated with wine rather than inkpots.
Actor

Occurring in 81 out of 868 clauses, the role of Actor is less frequently (9%) used, although it is the central participant in both transitive and intransitive material clauses because it is the source of energy bringing about the change – that is, the one that does the action. As mentioned above, the absence of the role of Actor in the majority of material clauses is apparently because of the dominant use of non-finite clauses.

However, this is not the only reason why the Actor is not textually present in a high proportion. The limited textual presence of Actor in some clauses and textual absence (or non-presence) in many other clauses suggest that the persona (or autobiographical subject) of Adnan’s text does not want to unequivocally distinguish herself from other entities as Actor in the majority of the text. This lack of identification with the Actor role can be seen in relation to material actions that are mostly associated with the realm of mundane every-day activities of a social human being, such as performing acts of living, acts of going to different places, moving, walking, sitting, driving, for example, “to go to the beach”. This can also be seen in relation to material acts of doing things that extend to other participants (Goal), for example, “to align some books on the shelf”, except in a few instances. This means that it is unclear whose social life and social engagements with other social humans and non-humans is being depicted by Adnan. Moreover, in all of the instances (9%, 81/868) in which an Actor is construed as performing material actions, there is no one instance or reference that shows unambiguously that it is the autobiographical subject herself who performs the act.

Also, when there is an Actor it is usually not the persona and often not a human participant. When there is an explicit Actor role in Adnan’s text most Actors refer to other human and non-human participants or semiotic entities other than the persona of the text herself, for example, “they” in “they do such things in other places”, “war” in “war is devastating Iraq”, and “evil” in “evil exists”. The reader may conclude that the text’s persona is the non-textualized actor in most cases, but even when it is or probably is the persona this is never unambiguous. The extremely consistent avoidance of unambiguous reference to the authorial persona in this way must be interpreted as part of the “design” of the text in Hasan’s sense. In addition to this surprising absence of textualized Actors and the way that any Actor found in the text is vague in terms of who they refer to, half of the number of instances (41/81) in which various entities are construed as Actor are found in material clauses of happening, where the material process does not extend to the
Goal, for example, “the ocean has not disappeared”; “the trees have grown”; “things aged”. Even in some other material clauses that involve pronouns like “one”, in “one can do” or “we” in “we eradicated small sicknesses”, it is not clear who does the action and to whom it extends.

According to Hasan’s theory of cline of dynamism textual participants assigned an -er role, e.g. Actor, are inherently more ‘dynamic’ and ‘active’. Yet, because the role of Actor in Adnan’s text is minimally present, it is not playing as important a role as it does in many other texts, and is generally not construing an active or ‘dynamic’ social entity endowed with responsibility for or control over events or other people. For example, if we attempt to retrieve an Actor in the clause “to flush the refugees out of his new refuge”, identifying which participant should fill the grammatical role of the doer of the action is quite challenging and in particular the ‘I’ of the persona seems implausible. Accordingly, from this point of view the text could be seen as holding back from allocating responsibility for actions and events to specific individuals or groups. This is of course not the final word on responsibility, and I will consider further how we might understand this rejection of the more typical and obvious ways of showing grammatically who does what to whom.

It is worth noting that most of the clauses with Actor roles are configured in dependent or hypotactic clauses construed by logico-semantic relations (projection and/or expansion) which seems to be the only semantic space in which Adnan chooses to articulate (most of) her attitudes. Adnan’s construal of logico-semantic relations, which provides one way of exploring this point further, will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7. But for now it is sufficient to say that the logico-semantic patterns she uses echo the ideational patterning by way of downgrading agency and building a world where frustration of action dominates. Taken together these results mean that in Adnan’s text there is no one instance in which the subject overtly construes herself as Actor performing material actions that are either intransitive or extend to human or non-human participants.

**Phenomenon and Senser**

 Appearing in 233 out of 868 clauses, the role of Phenomenon is the second most frequent participant role (27% of all Participants) following the role of Goal in Adnan’s text. The Phenomenon is the thing which is felt, thought, wanted or perceived. This participant role is not restricted to a particular semantic or grammatical category in the sense that the
Phenomenon may be not only a thing or an entity (usually expressed as a noun or nominal group), but also an act or a fact (usually expressed as a whole clause embedded within the larger, main clause). Any of these ‘things’ – person, creature, institution, object, substance or abstraction, including our inner experience or imagination – can be construed as the object of consciousness in a mental clause. In the text, the number of Phenomenon roles found is substantially greater than the number of Sensers. This means that the persona’s involvement in the mental activity is achieved through other entities that the Senser, which points to the importance of what is sensed rather than who/what does the activity of sensing.

The role of Phenomenon gains importance in Adnan’s text because it contributes in important ways to the overall configuration of inner experience of emotion and thinking. Because the role of Phenomenon is textually present in a high proportion of mental processes, we as readers can know about that which is emotionally felt, thought about, perceived and desired by the persona in Adnan’s text. For example (Phenomenons bolded), “to fear the distance”, “to know the absoluteness of the war”, “to hear bombs [[falling on Baghdad]]”, “to wish the end of everything, oneself and others” respectively.

On the other hand, a Senser emerges in only 13 clauses out of 868 clauses so it is suppressed in the analysed text. However, although the persona as Senser – the participant who performs the mental process and is the entity that is ‘endowed with consciousness’ – is not textually present in most of the mental activities, it is still significant for understanding Adnan’s concerns and methods because when it is textualized in most of the instances it is realised using the pronoun ‘one’ thus depicting the Senser as an unspecified individual that can refer to anyone of us or to a global persona, for example, “let oneself believe”; “one has loved”. This grammatical feature connects with Adnan’s cosmopolitanism because it produces a sense of engagement beyond the personal.

**Attribute and Carrier**

The role of Attribute, which is textually present in 141 out of 868 clauses, is the next most frequent (16%) participant role in Adnan’s text. However, the Carrier which is the entity to which the Attribute is assigned is used with low density (8%) in 71 clauses out of 868, thus the Carrier is only minimally present. Yet, both participant roles in the text represent a configuration of inner ‘being’, for example, in “to be breathless”, “breathless” is the
Attribute, and in “the day is beautiful” “the day” is the Carrier. These both represent inner experience even though the Carrier “the day” might apparently seem like an external entity to the text persona. The selection of these two participant roles by Adnan is a central grammatical strategy for assessing what evaluative quality an entity takes. For example, “war” in “war is everywhere” and “war is an atrocity” is a Carrier which is described differently. In the first example it takes a circumstantial Attribute and in the second an intensive Attribute. The construal of one Carrier taking two different attributes enables the writer to represent the persona’s evaluation of a state of ‘being’ or a reality associated with what seem conflicting moods, emotions and reactions in many ways (‘everywhere’ and ‘atrocity’ may appear conflicting ways of describing war, but something ‘atrocious’ can be ‘everywhere’). Thus, the Attribute, following mental clauses, construes most of what the text tells us about the subject’s experience, and it signals the subject’s emergent apprehension of various sensations along with the mental and material domains of experience.

Accordingly, semiotic attributes in Adnan’s text contribute to instantiating the text persona’s personal and social life experience. This experiential pattern of attribution is important because it provides a domain to depict how a self, being in a precarious situation, comes to characterise itself and other entities.

**Other roles**

The grammatical realization of the direct participants’ ability to impact or effect change in the world around them in terms of Hasan’s theory of dynamism and passivity seen above with construal of Actor and Goal can also be observed in the construal of other direct participants with -er roles that require ‘conscious being’, human or human-like. The role of Sayer – which can be a conscious being or, symbolically, a non-sentient entity – is the least frequent (1%) occurring in about 7 out of 868 clauses, for example, “evil says”. With 5 out of 868 clauses the role of Behaver – who/which is typically a conscious being – is the next least frequent (1%), for example, “how ferocious invading armies ate”.

As with the Actor, it is unknown in the majority of the text who/which carries out the mental, verbal and behavioural processes, except for few instances. This means that these direct participant roles are suppressed in the semiotic space construed by the text in the sense that thoughts and feelings, voice, and behaviours are made more apparent and
given greater emphasis than the identification of who holds these views as ‘dynamic’ participant. This also suggests that not only is the outcome of the subject’s outer experience – represented by the high proportion of Goals rather than Actors in material processes – given prominence in Adnan’s text but so too is the persona’s inner workings of consciousness – represented by the Phenomenon sensed. These roles are made more central to the content of the text than the role of any ‘conscious being’ who/which performs the material or mental process. Accordingly, the roles of Goal and Phenomenon, although described as ‘passive’ -ed roles within Hasan’s cline of dynamism, have a greater impact in Adnan’s text than that of all other direct participants even those put in the cline as ‘dynamic’, like Actor, Senser, and Sayer.

Finally, the results of direct participant roles show that although the role of Existent (1%, 4/868), for example, “there’s noise in the corridor”, is rarely textually present in the analyzed text, it contributes in some ways to the instantiation of the subject’s personal and social experience.

Adnan’s selections of participant roles are entangled, displaying an avoidance of some participant roles and a preference for other roles. However, these patterns and the effects they produce do not establish a stable flow in the text, and this enhances a sense of indeterminacy and ambiguity. Readers can see these patterns from multiple points of view particularly when trying to retrieve an ambiguous participant role, which suggests for them that in Adnan’s text ‘nothing is fixed’.

5.4.3 Analysis of verbal clauses selections

A more detailed discussion of verbal processes which represent semiotic processes and the configuration of direct and indirect participant roles in verbal clauses and their contribution to the construal of inner experience in Adnan’s text is given in this section. It is necessary to note that dialogic interaction is one of the essential parts of the social world and from a functional linguistic point of view the nature and extent of dialogism is primarily an aspect of the interpersonal function in language. From the point of view of the experiential metafunction and transitivity, this is in part realized by specific choices in the text that depict the act of ‘saying’ as an experience. Saying something is a physical

36 Grammatical systems from other metafunctions can also contribute to creating metafunctional “resonance” between experiential meaning and interpersonal meaning (Hasan 1995, p.183).
and social action that reflects mental operations, so it is partly ‘outer’ and partly ‘inner’. As noted before, on the borderline of ‘mental’ and ‘relational’ is the category of verbal processes which represent symbolic relationships constructed in human consciousness and enacted in the form of language (saying). Although verbal actions occur with less frequency in the text (of the 1361 clauses, less than 5% are verbal clauses), their relative absence enhances one of the themes of the text which is the detachment and frustration of the social persona. This means that when representation of semiotic activity – for example, saying, reporting, stating – does occur in Adnan’s text it becomes foregrounded, revealing a background inner world that is dominated by a lack of verbal actions where the persona tends “to say nothing” or “to say the least”.

This patterning certainly produces a sense of a hindered communication among human social actors. However, I argue that this is in fact part of the dialogic orientation essential to Adnan’s construal of reality in her text. Rather than celebrating or even depicting a monologic world, which Adnan’s book may first seem to be doing, on further inspection the work is dialogic in nature, and points the reader to the importance of dialogue through displaying its absence.

To start with, the analysis of verbal clauses in Adnan’s text reveals that verbal processes are realized in two grammatical patterns: verbal processes as a transitivity pattern (Sayer+Process+Verbiage/Receiver/Target) (51 clauses), and verbal processes with (hypotactic) projection pattern (21 clauses). I will discuss the grammatical resource of projection itself in Chapter 7 in detail.

Typically, either one or three of participants may be involved in verbal processes: the Sayer who performs the verbal action; the Receiver who is the person or entity at whom the verbal action is directed; and the Verbiage which represents what is said (content of verbal action), the Target which is the entity that is targeted in some special processes of saying such as ‘praise’ or ‘blame’. In a verbal clause, Sayer and Target are direct participant (-er) participants roles, while Receiver and Verbiage are indirect (-ed) participant roles.

In Adnan’s text the role of Receiver occurs in 24 clauses (i.e. “to say to the friend”), and the role of Verbiage in 20 clauses (i.e. “to say goodbye”). Occurring in only 6 clauses, the role of Sayer is rare (i.e. “says evil”), and the role of Target, occurring in 2 clauses (i.e. “to curse the savagery of the technologically powered new crusades”), is the least
frequent. Figure 5.5 shows the distribution of direct and indirect participants of verbal processes.

![Distribution of participants in verbal clauses](image)

Figure 5.5 Distribution of participants of verbal processes in Adnan’s text.

Across English as a whole the Sayer is usually a human participant endowed with consciousness, for example, ‘the woman asked whether the road was blocked’, or sometimes function symbolically as a nonhuman speaker, for example, ‘the newspaper says many civilians are wounded’. However this kind of Sayer role is suppressed in Adnan’s text. Here there are only two instances where the Sayer is understood to be a conscious human being. Other examples of Sayer involve inanimate entities. Similarly, the role of Target is downgraded because the role of Sayer does not act on another conscious social entity in the text, and if the role of Target is present in the text it is only represented by symbolic entities that are not normally endowed with consciousness. This means that although in Hasan’s cline of dynamism the Sayer and Target are -er participant roles, that is, active and dynamic social entities, they are downgraded in Adnan’s text and construed as non-agentive. On the other hand, the role of Receiver, which has an indirect participant role in verbal clauses and is typically conscious, in Adnan’s text is usually realised as an inanimate entity, with few examples of conscious entities.

The lexical expressions selected by Adnan to represent the role of Sayer, Target and Receiver are categorised in terms of animate or inanimate entities, as Table 5.9 displays below.\[37\]

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37 I treat “to establish contact” as verbal process because the mountain, like other landscapes, is personified by Adnan. In a TV interview Adnan was asked to name the most important person she had ever met, and she answered “A mountain”. Adnan describes the mountain as her “very idea of home” and “the very center
Table 5.9 Examples of lexical choices representing animate and inanimate participant roles of verbal clauses in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instances of Sayer</th>
<th>animate</th>
<th>inanimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[36_494_933] where some reporter affirms</td>
<td>reporter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[53_730_1288] To her the friend say</td>
<td>friend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[24_322_685] To read an invisible line that says</td>
<td>line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[12_115_388] evil says</td>
<td>evil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[25_331_695] To be informed by a phone call</td>
<td>phone call</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instances of Target

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>animate</th>
<th>inanimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[10_77_337] To curse the hour, the fire, the deluge, and hell</td>
<td>the hour, the fire, the deluge, and hell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instances of Receiver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>animate</th>
<th>inanimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[4_4_131] To establish contact with mountain</td>
<td>mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[9_61_312] To speak to the clouds</td>
<td>clouds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[10_94_359] To discuss with one’s heart</td>
<td>heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[15_165_454] to welcome the sun</td>
<td>sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[33_452_875] To think the sky</td>
<td>sky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[24_304_667] To greet the fog</td>
<td>fog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[42_588_1072] To ask death</td>
<td>death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[18_228_547] To pray to the ancient gods</td>
<td>gods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[32_440_857] To call the waitress</td>
<td>waitress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[35_477_910] To say to the friends</td>
<td>friends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results reveal, the Verbiage which is an indirect participant role corresponding to the content of what is said (rather than a projected new clause representing what is said) is more frequent than expected in Adnan’s text compared to the Sayer and Target. Some instances of Verbiage in the text the form of nominalised statements symbolising the persona’s anger and frustration, thereby becoming one of the important participants in the verbal process. Table 5.10 below displays examples of Verbiage in the text.

Table 5.10 Instances of Verbiage in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal clause</th>
<th>Instances of Verbiage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[11_106_372] To admit the evidence of evil, the existence of pain</td>
<td>the evidence of evil, the existence of pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[16_186_487] To discuss the atrocities [committed by the British and the Americans in Iraq]</td>
<td>the atrocities [committed by the British and the Americans in Iraq]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[42_584_1068] To insist on violence’s bestiality</td>
<td>violence’s bestiality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

of [her] being” (Adnan 1986, p.10) and it becomes “a companion”, “a best friend” (Adnan 2011, p.5). Elsewhere, Adnan refers to the sea as “she”, “her own love” and the first with which she “had a love affair” (Adnan 1985, p.116). I also treat “welcome” as verbal process because Adnan often portrays “the sun” with the potential of human agency and human qualities (Plum 2020, p. 505).
From the results it can be clearly seen that the verbal communication in Anan’s text is not encoded straightforwardly between social actors. The act of saying appears to be construed as monologic, taking the form of a prolonged talk or discourse by a single speaker for the most part. Except for a few examples verbal action happens rarely between (conscious/animate) social humans. This pattern of absence of “true” verbal interaction, especially with the verbal process ‘say’ conveys a state of static and unchanging verbal activities lacking possibilities for critique or creative thought. The textually absent or implied direct participant roles of verbal clauses or their textual presence in low frequencies closes down possibilities for discussion, questioning, challenging and responding on the part of the participants in the discourse. This renders speech paralysed because the social interaction is perceived by the text persona as futile and absurd accompanied by a growing sense of despair and anger resulting in ‘the mystery’ and ‘the absence’ of communication.

However, against this background of non-verbal action with social humans, a pattern emerges that shows a verbal action is possible with nonhuman entities (mountain, clouds, the sky, the heart) or semiotic objects (e.g. death) which are construed to function as Receiver. Although in Hasan’s cline of dynamism the role of Receiver is ‘passive’, in Adnan’s text it is endowed with agency and effectuality.

5.5 Discussion

In the previous sections a detailed description of the inner and outer experience of the text persona in Adnan’s text has been provided. Through the language resources used, the persona of the text is depicted as powerless and detached. This grammatical depiction creates a sense of an environment that fills the persona with apprehension and precariousness. This section gives a summary and discussion of the transitivity findings.

To summarize the findings of the analyzed text, the use of different process types varies considerably across the text. Material processes and mental processes are used more than relational, verbal, behavioural and existential processes to depict inner and outer world experiences. In depicting material activities and events, Adnan chooses to use more processes of happening than processes of doing, and these activities of happening are construed in a dominant pattern of dynamic, directionless motion, reinforced with circumstances of place in some of these clauses, yet conveying a sense of uncertainty and futility of action. However, the observed pattern of purposeless motion creates for the text
persona a paradoxical emotional effect depending on where the material action is initiated – California or New York. The role of Actor in the majority of material clauses is suppressed compared to the role of Goal which is used with high frequency, although in many examples Goals are metaphorical goals. The material world of a social human being is thus depicted as monotonous and characterised by detachment. In talking about mental activities and events, Adnan uses more mental processes of cognition and perception than of emotion and desideration. The role of Senser is inhibited while the content of the persona’s consciousness realized through the Phenomenon role is given prominence. The apparent text persona thus appears more actively engaged in activities of thinking and knowing than in activities of doing. To describe a personal state of being in relation to a surrounding environment, Adnan favours the selection of attributes relating to pain and anger rather than joy or hope in relational clauses. The apparent Carrier of these negative attributes might seem to have a gloomy and ambivalent persona but the persona’s agency is foregrounded through emotions that contribute to the depiction of inner reality and to readers’ engagement. In portraying how the persona behaves in response to a particular situation, Adnan selects patterns of behavioural clauses that mainly indicate activities of hesitance or restlessness associated with a sense of anticipation and waiting on the part of a textually absent Behaver, but these patterns are also used to display an “unpleasant body” that reacts intensely with embodied anguish (Adnan, 2005, p.25). In representing verbal events as she does, Adnan chooses to construct a seemingly monologic text with the exchange of ideas occurring most often only with the self or with non-conscious entities which creates a sense of detachment from the social world. However, although subtle, this is still a dialogic orientation made explicit through the discourse with the self and the implied discourse with the reader and writer.

The avoidance of certain participant roles is not necessarily detrimental to the text’s meaning. In other words, Adnan’s selection of certain participant roles in high proportion foregrounds some specific roles while backgrounding certain other participant roles in the analyzed text. For example, there are more Goals than Actors in material clauses. On one level, the effect of this selection is that the persona is displayed as an unambiguous Actor (or Goal or Senser or Sayer). This creates a sense of the persona as not very dynamic. The usually non-dynamic participants are used in such a way as to construe a persona within the text whose agency is suppressed or is enacted over tedious actions only. The avoidance of clear roles and responsibility shows the persona as engaged in a struggle
with agency. This sense of struggle is revealed through Goals, Phenomenons, and Attributes which are usually interpreted as downgrading agency and are typically assigned -ed roles but here they are given agency. One way of understanding this is to consider that as we emerge from the world inside the text to the ‘real’ world that embraces Adnan’s text, all the above results can be seen as Adnan’s portrayal of her own agency as an author and the agency of her life writing. Adnan says, “writing is not only a tool but a mode of apprehension of reality. It ‘uncovered’ a new sense (added to touch, hearing…); writing open[s] a new line in the flesh of Being” (Adnan 2005, p.34).

From the investigation of transitivity patterns and lexical choices used by Adnan to construct inner and outer experiences, we can see her construal of these realities is given a cosmopolitan character in the sense that Adnan’s text demonstrates that there is always a purpose to life writing beyond recording the ‘autobiographical experience’. We can understand this by looking at Adnan’s text as a testimonial piece of life writing. Adnan’s testimonial experience fractures the narrative into a series of atypical structures of dialogues and debates with other characters, but also with the life narrator herself, so that the main character or the autobiographical subject – who writes from the position of a war survivor or witness – becomes multivoiced, multidimensional, constantly calling her thoughts and experiences into question. This is achieved by the suppression of grammatical participant roles to give the text a wider perspective of agency. Experience on the writer’s terms is not only a subjective life experience. Rather, it is more about weaving the burden of particular testimonial experience in a postcolonial life narrative together with universal human experience in general, thus linking the passages of that testimony or witnessing with the experiences of the dispossessed, distanced other. It is “testimony”, as Kaplan argues, that “thoroughly unsettles the terms and conditions of classical autobiography” (1992, p.122).

The transitivity analysis displays how Adnan juxtaposes inner reality and outer reality by means of grammar. Transitivity patterns is one of the important ways the detached self is situated in relation to the other in the text. Adnan uses material processes of happenings with high density to alert us to the lack of reaction in the outer world. The persona is construed as detached and powerless by these processes. However, Adnan interposes mental processes between the material ones to depict how the inner self of the persona reacts to what is happening or has happened in the outer world. This pattern displays how the inner reality influenced by the horrendous events of war creates a rupture in the
structure and language of what is usually expected in a lifewriting text. This rupture can be understood in Friedman’s words (2004, p.189) as “the rupture of writing rupture”. Such detachment enables Adnan to exercise a multiple positionality of the subject and a shift in voice that creates multiple and alternative placedness in the world. Yet the construal of apparent detachment and powerlessness typical of the material world is paradoxical as the inner resources that denote an active self which carries out actions demonstrate the writer’s (or the text persona’s) assertiveness over her tedious daily life. Adnan’s textual practice is characterized by juxtaposition, however, this is not made consistent. This is because Adnan’s text displays both life and writing as undergoing a series of metamorphoses or transformations.

The employment of verbal resources linguistically characterized as verbal processes creates an impression that, except for a discourse with the self, there is a strong inability to communicate or a complete absence of communication with others, as Adnan indicates in the memoir saying, “To linger on the mystery of communication, to bemoan its absence” (Adnan 2005, p.102). This is also one aspect of detachment and futility of action in the analyzed text. Adnan’s patterns of verbal clauses demonstrate how the persona of the text is grounded in a grammatical construal that does not apparently start from the self as a central point of reference. Rather, the persona enters into a covert dialogue with others yet on the writer’s terms. This strategy also decentres the voice of the autobiographical subject herself and allows for other marginalized voices to be heard, achieved through the downgrading of direct participant roles such as Sayer while foregrounding indirect participant roles such as Verbiage or Receiver in verbal clauses. Thus, Adnan’s linguistic strategy produces a ‘multi-voiced’ writing practice.

Bakhtin (1986, p.68) observes that any understanding of an utterance is “inherently responsive. Any utterance is a link in the chain of communication” and that we are always “in dialogue”, “not only with other people, but also with everything in the world including a nonhuman being”. This means that the discourse of the self must be always recognized as “fundamentally dialogic and historically contingent or positioned within, and inseparable from, a community, a history or a place” (Irvin 2012). All texts are formed through the speaker’s “relation to otherness – other people, other’s words and expressions, and the lived cultural world in time and place” (Irvin 2012). Therefore, the dialogic orientation of Adnan’s text can be seen as ‘collaboratively’ constructed: the writer is oriented toward the person addressed, toward who that person is, and what issue
demands a response; but the text is also oriented to the writer herself – the dual/multi-ism of self –, or we may say the dialogic interaction of self. It is the dialogical self that is arguing/debating/discussing with self and others. The debate in Adnan’s text connotes fundamentally how we should live our life accordingly, that is, by promoting an “ongoing dialogue” both within ourselves and with distanciated others, which fulfills the text’s cosmopolitan obligations.

Accordingly, the grammatical construal of experience in Adnan’s text shows a particular kind of consciousness where experience is not only “constitutive” (Scott 1992) of self but also “intersubjective” (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999), governing the relationship between social actors such as writers and readers. Adnan’s text is paradoxically dynamic and interactive although its grammatical structure suggests the opposite. The patterns of foregrounding some features while suppressing others are associated with the persona’s experience of inner and outer unsettling events. We can understand this sense of unsettledness as the effect of the persona’s interaction with and bearing witness to events of the global world through the practice of writing. Thus Adnan’s text (testimony) may be understood as “an appeal to an addressee, a text in search of a witness, a desire to invoke witnessing publics” as Whitlock (2015, p.8) maintains.

5.6 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has explored inner and outer events in Adnan’s text in terms of the transitivity system of process types and participant roles. Adnan’s grammatical selections are textualized in an unusual configuration of inner and outer experiential relations in order to assert the extent to which these selections are linked to the writer’s complex testimonial experience and profound sense of detachment and precariousness in relation to what is happening in the world. The juxtaposition realised in Adnan’s transitivity choices and the paradoxical meanings they convey produce an agentive sense of self breaking the conventions of the autobiographical experience. To provide a better understanding of how Adnan constructs agency through her text, the next chapter, Chapter Six, tackles issues of agency in more detail by undertaking a detailed analysis of agency patterns using the ergative model of transitivity.
Chapter 6

The Construal of Agency in Adnan’s Text “To be in a Time of War”

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the construal of human agency in Adnan’s text “To be in a Time of War”. This construal is built up in the text by specific configurations of self, time, space, and community. Adnan’s text is predominantly designed with a grammatical pattern that displays minimal agency. However, at the same time the text itself can be interpreted as, paradoxically, highly agentive as an act of writing. In order to show how issues of agency are tackled by Adnan, this chapter will discuss the concept of agency in life writing and SFL then will discuss what agency Adnan exercises as a contemporary Arab Anglophone woman life writer in relation to ideological projections, national and cultural worldviews, social and political situations, and the expectations of readers.

The textual construction of agency is analysed in stylistics and elsewhere to explore the manipulation of patterns in the language of literature to construe outer experience. Agency can be expressed and/or suppressed through a number of grammatical constructions but particularly transitivity. Adnan employs constructions of agency to suggest the limitation of human action and the text persona’s restricted but not extinguished capacity for changing or affecting an environment. At first glance, the linguistic features of Adnan’s text weaken any sense of agency of the (implied) persona within it, in the sense that the social subject depicted in the text is not construed as an actor or initiator of any action, and the role of agent as conscious of the need and obligation to transform an outer reality is downplayed. I will employ an SFL ergativity model of text analysis to look at the specific configurations of the grammatical agency in Adnan’s text, which I interpret as mainly a testimonial response to and critique of the US-led coalitions’ attack on Iraq in 2003.

Adnan’s text demonstrates that language is inseparable from the social environment into which it is created. The text, as a linguistic product, is a complex of various grammatical choices that contribute importantly to the central themes of the text. One of those themes depicted by Adnan is “to foresee no personal action” and the “inherent futility of any action” of the social actor in a time of war, as Adnan herself says (Adnan 2005, pp.108, 115). Adnan depicts this theme of futile action through the linguistic construction of the
persona’s agency or lack thereof. She manipulates how the text deploys the grammatical system of agency so that the subject is never seen as active or in control of any situation, except for a few instances where agency proves to be present, but still the identity of that agent is not clear in the textual structure of the clause. Taking the clause grammar into account with other lexicogrammatical features of the text, this pattern of minimal agency can be seen as a paradoxical or provocative representation of the writer’s worldviews. In other words, the choice to select or withhold the representation of agency in the text shows that social human agency is in fact present and is represented by the practice of life writing itself. This chapter therefore investigates how this paradoxical pattern of grammatical agency is built in the text and how the practice of writing is appropriated to play an agentive role that fosters socio-political agency and transformation and fulfils a particular ideological and social practice.

Using the grammatical systems of AGENCY and VOICE in SFL, we can consider whether the events in the external world of the narrative are depicted lexicogrammatically as if they just happen by themselves (using what SFL describes as a ‘middle’ clause) or as events that are engendered by external causes (using an ‘effective’ clause) (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.297). In Adnan’s text, this grammatical representation of agency, which has to do with understanding how the participant(s) affects and/or changes the world around them, is mostly made up of ‘middle’ clauses.

Related to the question of clause type (effective/middle), the present analysis considers participant types as modelled in SFL. In clauses events and actions are construed in processes which can have and allow for, among other grammatical participants, the doer of the action and the done-to. A middle clause allows only for the Medium – as in ‘The woman laughed’ – (or the more peripheral element Range, as in ‘The woman crossed the room’) whereas an effective clause implies (and may specify) an Agent – as in ‘The woman wrote the letter’. The choice of one of these clause types over another is a crucial resource for depicting responsibility and/or (in)effectuality in a text. As in the second example above, the construal of grammatical agency, which is part of the experiential meaning in the text (who did what to whom and under what circumstances), may be explicitly realised or may be a matter of implication when an Agent role is made absent. This grammatical agency is manipulated by Adnan to confuse the sense of who is taking responsibility for actions. For example, in “to close the door”, the clause is grammatically
effective (depicts agency as being involved) but it does not specify an Agent. Many clauses in Adnan’s texts are like this in that agency tends to be referenced only by implication, for example, the Agent role is obscured. Consequently, instead of telling the reader who did what to whom, the reader is left wondering who did the action because the Agent is predominantly implied (in effective clauses) or is not part of the construal at all (in middle clauses).

6.2 Agency in literary and life writing criticism

This section explores the conceptualization of ‘agency’ in a number of literary theories. It contextualizes the linguistic approach used in this study by identifying what agency means more generally and highlighting in particular its significance in the constitution of autobiographical subjectivity.

To begin with, in dictionaries the concept of “agency” is defined as the capacity to act or to exert power, and refers to means, instrumentality and intervention producing a particular effect (OED, n.d.). The “agent” is a being or thing that acts to produce a particular effect or result; a person who or thing which acts upon someone or something; one who or that which exerts power; the doer of an action; the cause of some process or change (OED, n.d.). The “agent”, thus, refers to the performer, author, executor, perpetrator, or means, instrument, vehicle (Oxford Paperback Thesaurus, 2012).

In literary criticism the concept of “agency” is theorized in different ways and associated with a list of terms such as selfhood, purposiveness, freedom, creativity, and subjectivity. Crucial to the present chapter is the conceptualization of agency in postcolonial literary studies. In contemporary postcolonial theory “agency” rests on the question of “whether individuals can freely and autonomously initiate action, or whether the things they do are in some sense determined by the ways in which their identity has been constructed” (Ashcroft et al. 2007, p.6). Agency here is particularly important because it refers to “the ability of post-colonial subjects to initiate action in engaging or resisting imperial power”. However, Ashcroft et al. (2007, p.6) argue that agency is taken for granted in many postcolonial theories in which “the importance of political action is paramount” because they suggest that “although it may be difficult for subjects to escape the effects of those forces that ‘construct’ them, it is not impossible”: since such forces may be “recognized”, they may be also be “countermanded”. Adnan’s text demonstrates a particular possibility
for agency through the subject’s political intervention beyond the boundaries of identity or social forces.

From a related but distinct perspective, feminist theories provide an understanding of agency in terms of how individual political and moral autonomy of the subject is placed “in the face of power” (Mahmood 2006). For example, Hekman argues that subjects act as agents when they construct for themselves “distinctive combinations, that is, individual subjectivities” out of the hegemonic and non-hegemonic discourses around them; agency resides in the “piec[ing] together” of a subjectivity and parallels “the way that speakers of a language create unique, distinctive statements from commonly used materials” (Hekman 1995, p.194). Adnan’s text “pieces” together a particular combination of political and moral obligations which draws our attention to the link between language and the action of the subject, both of which are agents of a lifewriting production.

In postcolonial life writing, “agency” is often conceptualised as residing in the identification of the autobiographical “I” which is rendered unstable, shifting and provisional in postcolonial autobiography that has in recent years been increasingly recognized as “a powerful counter-hegemonic practice” (Boehmer 2000, p.758). Eakin (1992, p.52) holds that by being “referential”, autobiography manifests “a position entailing the agency of the autobiographer” and that the act of writing autobiography is “an extension of a lifelong process of identity and agency formation [which] mirrors experiential reality . . . in performance as well as in product”. In this regard, “the making of autobiography” belongs to “the world of reference that is its subject”. For Gilmore (1998, p.184) when thinking about a text’s “autobiographics”38, it becomes unavoidable to consider the autobiographical “I”, which is discursive and constituted in writing: “an exploration of a text’s autobiographies allows us to recognize that the ‘I’ is multiply coded in a range of discourses: it is the site of multiple solicitations, multiple markings of ‘identity’, multiple figurations of agency” (Gilmore 1998, p.184). In her life writing, Adnan experiments with the “I” to depict a particular configuration of agency, and this configuration contrasts writing one’s narrative about agency according to whatever conventions are imposed over life writing. We can understand Adnan’s experimentation

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38 Gilmore’s “Autobiographies” is both “a description of self-representation” and a reading practice, and it is “concerned with interruptions and eruptions, with resistance and contradictions as strategies of self-representation” (Gilomre, 1998, p.184).
with the autobiographical “I” as a creative practice of agency that is not only a self-generative practice but also a language-and-genre-generative practice.

The act of life writing, accordingly, has the capacity to “meaningfully resist[s] dominant ideologies” and establishes “effective” agency in the world (Henke 2000, p.xix). A life narrative is “an important means of asserting … agency for postcolonial subjects,” because agency is one of the constitutive processes of autobiographical subjectivity (Smith & Watson 2001, p.45). A process of agency in life writing implies that “human beings are agents of or actors in their own lives, rather than unconscious transmitters of cultural scripts and models of identity” (Smith & Watson 2001, p.42).

Crucially, the subject of life writing can project a sense of a writer’s agency outside the text – in socio-political contexts for instance – “more directly than other forms of literature” (Jolly 2001, p.28). Friedman defines agency in political contexts as “the assumption of human subjectivities that create meanings and act in negotiation with the systemic conditions of the social order, however circumscribed” (Friedman 1998, p.90). Accordingly, the agency of the subject is enacted in life writing by women through “showing how … the subject [can] come to know herself differently, the conditions under which the subject can exercise any kind of freedom and find means to change”, and how, while being “implicated in contradictory and conflicting discursive calls”, she can “discover or glimpse spaces through which to manoeuvre, spaces through which to resist, spaces for change” (Smith & Watson 1998, p.23). According to Gilmore (1994, p.14) the “discursive signature of the subject and [the signification of] agency in self-representation” is the “mark of autobiography”.

Drawing on testimonial transactions in life writing (see Chapter 3, section 3.5), Whitlock (2015, pp.22-23) comments that agency may be conceptualized as “finite” by scholars like Moretti (2005, p.17). Although “finite agency” in these transactions can further “dialogues” between cultures and perform “small acts of cultural translation in a time of precarious life”, it is “limited” and merely has a “present tense” (Whitlock 2007, pp.22-23). However, Whitlock suggests that although “the present ‘tense’ of

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39 Whitlock (2007, p.203) observes the notion of transit as “the work of contemporary autobiography as it moves across cultures in conflict”. Whitlock (2015, p.1) notes that “testimonial transactions shapes the postcolonial history and cultural dynamics that are mobilized here: moving beyond nation and narration to track transnational and transcultural passages of life narrative, its volatile currency and value and its changing technologies of the self”.  

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testimony can have a transformative force, the “finite” agency of (testimonial) postcolonial life writing is shaped by “this ebb and flow of social activism and resistance” which makes testimonial cycles “mobile and fragile force fields, contested and finite” (Whitlock 2015, pp.6, 143). Whitlock’s consideration of the social and political transformative capacity of testimonial transactions is linked to her call for “an interlocking of pasts, presents, and futures across postcolonial life narrative” (Whitlock 2015, p.201) which will thereby challenging the conceptualisation of agency as “finite”. For Whitlock, this can be achieved through asking readers to consider the “dissemination of testimony” – that is “the circulation and consumption of testimonial narratives as they travel across the globe” and to continue to question “the transformative agency of testimony”. With a sense of urgency, testimonial narrative travels “across cultures, media, and histories in pursuit of social justice” (Whitlock 2015, p.69). My argument about Adnan’s life writing as a practice that enacts agency is linked to Whitlock’s theory of “the agency of a testimonial culture” in the sense that Adnan’s work can be seen as a ‘pursuit’ to gain recognition, witnessing, and social justice that is not limited or merely operates in the present tense.

I argue that Adnan’s life writing is an intervention in testimonial postcolonial life narrative which offers a new way of thinking about agency and the desire for agency. This aligns with the idea of establishing a unified or divergent agency through a discursive social practice in autobiographical texts, because autobiographical writing is recognized as having the capacity of effectively revealing agency or the desire for agency and projecting a sense of a writer’s agency outside the text more directly than other forms of literature since it makes a lived experience accessible to readers (Jolly 2001, p. 28). Adnan’s life writing does not only show how meanings are created for people, how people create meanings for themselves, and how people engage with the world around them. It is also an important example of how an Anglophone Arab life writer – in the act of narrating her life – “might change the stories [she tells], might gain access to other cultural scripts, might come to understand [herself] differently, might, that is, exercise agency” (Smith & Watson 2001, p.45). Within the production of autobiographical voice and agency, Adnan’s testimonial writing practices a textual manoeuvring and negotiation, with some autonomy, within boundaries of agency which control textual production. Adnan does this by using different grammatical resources from English language to construe agency and its absence, showing the importance of autobiographical production.
as far as language and genre are concerned. These resources tend to establish a variety of semantic shifts in Adnan’s text, and as a result Adnan’s grammatical selections generate her notable cosmopolitan perspective and link a text environment to a socio-political environment. Accordingly, Adnan seeks ways to manifest a distinctive mode of engagement in her use of English language and the genre of life writing through which she depicts her agency from a particular cosmopolitan perspective. She suggests that there are various patterns of mobility and various infinite ways of being and becoming for a displaced subject that become indefinitely re-producible in the cosmopolitan space in the sense that, when displacement constitutes identity and agency it is “the identity of the ever-shifting” (Chow 2003, p.338). In so doing, Adnan draws our attention to the link between language, genre and the social action of the subject.

Having provided a grounding in what agency means in the field of postcolonial life writing, in the following section I will talk about the concept of agency as a grammatical model from an SFL perspective.

6.3 Agency in linguistic terms (SFL)

The present section offers an SFL-oriented overview of the grammatical concept of ergativity and how it can be used in text analysis as a clause-level model for depicting human agency or its absence. Here, I introduce the main elements of the model in order to build a general understanding of how ergativity and its elements operate, and how they can be used to describe Adnan’s text and the meanings available in it. The account is limited to ergativity in English.

As we saw in Chapter 4, a language’s grammar can be seen as a kind of theory of experience, not merely annotating experience, but actively construing it (Halliday 2003). One key role for language then is as “a common-sense theory” of human and non-human agency and how cause and effect works, since this is an important aspect of our experience that we need to make sense of verbally.

In SFL’s analysis of language use, the textual construction of agency is often examined and can be interpreted as reflecting the speaker’s choice of declaring or avoiding the allocation of responsibility to themselves or to other people in the context described. This choice thus depicts either powerfulness or powerlessness for different participants, or a high or low degree of engagement between persons and the material or social environment, among other functions (there is no one-to-one relation between grammatical
choice and the depiction of persona as we shall see). Generally speaking however, in text analysis, agency is understood as the capacity to act and to bring about change, and the agent is the person or the entity that stands behind change and causes it.

The ergative model is essentially a model of causation – it asks whether a process is caused by a participant (or not), for example.

2a | I | opened | the door | slowly
Agent + Process + Medium + Circumstance

2b | The door | opened | slowly
Medium + Process + Circumstance

The ergative model posits the grammatical role of Medium as the primary participant role, and the question becomes: is there also an optional Agent? In 2a above, the answer is yes, as the door’s movement is expressed as being caused externally by ‘I/me’. In 2b the event is depicted as self-engendered, that is, without external agency. In other words, in the ergative model, all clauses have a central participant known as the ‘Medium’ through which some action or state of being unfolds, and without which “there would be no process at all” since “it is the entity through the medium of which the process comes into existence” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p. 288). Therefore, in the ergative model of agency, the categories of Medium and Agent remain constant across all process types.

This distinction in ergativity between options of ‘effective’ versus ‘middle’ processes corresponds to the labels ‘doing’ versus ‘happening’ for the two clause types in SFL. In a middle clause (‘happening’), an event is depicted in a way that suggests no other participant is involved, as in ‘The bomb exploded’. Here there is just one participant (the bomb), which is the Medium, and one process (exploded). The effective option (‘doing’) depicts the process as having a causer which is represented grammatically by the function ‘Agent’ which is external to the other participant (the ‘Medium’), as in ‘The army exploded the bomb’, where ‘the army’ is the Agent, and ‘the bomb’ is the Medium, as shown in Figure 6.1 below:
A further distinction in the grammatical system of agency is made between “active” or “operative” voice, as in ‘The woman broke the vase’ (effective clause/active voice), and “passive” or “receptive” voice, as in ‘The vase was broken (by the woman)’ (effective clause/passive voice). In receptive/passive clauses, the grammatical role of Agent may be stated (as in ‘by the woman’) or merely implied as a role with no specific entity allocated as Agent. Figure 6. 2 exhibits the grammatical system of agency and voice in SFL.

Another perspective on the ergative model which is useful for my study of Adnan’s text is Davidse’s (1992, p.111) view that prototypical effective clauses have features that cluster around “intentional goal-directed action implying a conscious agent”. This

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40 It is worth noting that Halliday’s transitive and ergative models are not just re-labelling of the categories ‘transitive/intransitive’ or ‘active/passive voice’. I am using ‘effective/passive’ for ease of reference to the reader since the terms ‘operative’ and ‘receptive’ are unfamiliar to many.
“intentionality” ascribes responsibility because, as Nishimura (1989, in Davidse 1992, p.111) puts it, “in intentional effective clauses an Agent consciously puts an action onto a Medium (Goal)”. On the other hand, agency can also be “not intentional” (Davidse 1992, p.111) and this has two meanings: “lack of control” (with a conscious Agent) and “absence of intentionality” (with an inanimate Agent). This distinction between “conscious” and “non-conscious” goal-directed action is useful in my analysis of Adnan’s text because as we shall see, actions undertaken by inanimate Agents in Adnan’s text are, perhaps surprisingly, more endowed with agency than actions undertaken by conscious human participants thus the text challenges the “intentionality of an action” presupposition.

Having explained the concept of agency in literary criticism and in SFL and how the presence or absence of the feature of agency can be grammatically realized by looking at whether the process is “self-gendered” (middle voice) or caused by an external entity (effective voice), I shall devote the rest of this chapter to analysing Adnan’s “To be in a Time of War” in terms of the ergative model. My analysis will focus on identifying how the writer construes agency and responsibility and why that construal builds up a picture of agency that is not typical for lifewriting or English overall.

6.4 Initial analysis of the feature of agency in a selected extract

In this section I present an initial analysis of a selected extract, consisting of two sections (sections 3 and 4) of Adnan’s Chapter IV “To be in a Time of War”. This initial analysis displays how agency is effaced and downgraded in Adnan’s text, and illustrates the degree of precision with which agency and voice are deployed in Adnan’s writing.

The text of the selected extract is first broken down into clauses and then the ergative model is employed to describe the participant roles present in each clause; middle clauses are shown in blue and effective clauses are shown in red, in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.11 The initial ergative analysis of the selected excerpt from Adnan’s text (sections 3&4, across 93 clauses)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C1ID</th>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Voice</th>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Beneficiary</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Circumstance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1.71</td>
<td>To listen to the radio.</td>
<td>listen</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.72</td>
<td>to put it on.</td>
<td>put on</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.73</td>
<td>to walk a bit.</td>
<td>walk</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.74</td>
<td>to think.</td>
<td>think</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.75</td>
<td>to give up thinking.</td>
<td>give up</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.76</td>
<td>to look for the key.</td>
<td>look for</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>the key</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.77</td>
<td>to wonder.</td>
<td>wonder</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.78</td>
<td>to do nothing.</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>nothing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.79</td>
<td>to regret the passing of time.</td>
<td>regret</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>the passing of time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.80</td>
<td>to find a solution.</td>
<td>find</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>a solution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.81</td>
<td>to want.</td>
<td>want</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.82</td>
<td>to go to the beach.</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>to the beach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.83</td>
<td>to sell.</td>
<td>sell</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.84</td>
<td>that the sun is going down.</td>
<td>go down</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.85</td>
<td>to hurry,</td>
<td>hurry</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.86</td>
<td>to take the key.</td>
<td>take</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.87</td>
<td>to open the car door.</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>door</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.88</td>
<td>to sit,</td>
<td>sit</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.89</td>
<td>to pull the door shut.</td>
<td>pull shut</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>door</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.90</td>
<td>to insert the key in the ignition.</td>
<td>insert</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>key</td>
<td>in the ignition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.91</td>
<td>turn it.</td>
<td>turn</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.92</td>
<td>to warm up the engine.</td>
<td>warm up</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>engine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.93</td>
<td>to turn right.</td>
<td>turn</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>right</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.94</td>
<td>to make sure</td>
<td>make sure</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.95</td>
<td>the monitor's screen.</td>
<td>screen</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.96</td>
<td>to pull back.</td>
<td>pull</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>back</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.97</td>
<td>to go ahead.</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>ahead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.98</td>
<td>to pass right.</td>
<td>pass</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>right</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.99</td>
<td>(to turn) then left.</td>
<td>turn</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>then left</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.100</td>
<td>to drive straight on.</td>
<td>drive</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>straight on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.101</td>
<td>to follow the road.</td>
<td>follow</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>the road</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.102</td>
<td>to see many curves.</td>
<td>see</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>many curves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.103</td>
<td>to drive down the coast.</td>
<td>drive</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>down the coast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.104</td>
<td>look at the ocean.</td>
<td>look at</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>the ocean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 ID</td>
<td>Clause</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Beneficiary</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Circumstance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.05</td>
<td>to admire it</td>
<td>admire</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.105</td>
<td>to feel happy</td>
<td>feel</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>happy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.107</td>
<td>to go up the hill</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>up the hill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.108</td>
<td>to reach the other side</td>
<td>reach</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>the other side</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.109</td>
<td>to go straight</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>then straight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.110</td>
<td>to step</td>
<td>step</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.111</td>
<td>to make sure</td>
<td>make sure</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.112</td>
<td>that the ocean has not disappeared</td>
<td>disappear</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.113</td>
<td>to feel happy</td>
<td>feel</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>lucky</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.114</td>
<td>to stop the engine</td>
<td>stop</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>engine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.115</td>
<td>to open the door</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>door</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.116</td>
<td>to enter</td>
<td>enter</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.117</td>
<td>to close the door</td>
<td>close</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>door</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.118</td>
<td>to look straight ahead</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>straight ahead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.119</td>
<td>to appreciate the breeze</td>
<td>appreciate</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>the breeze</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.120</td>
<td>to advance into the waves</td>
<td>advance</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>into the waves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.121</td>
<td>To wake up</td>
<td>wake up</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.122</td>
<td>to stretch</td>
<td>stretch</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.123</td>
<td>to get out of bed</td>
<td>get out</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.124</td>
<td>to dress</td>
<td>dress</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.125</td>
<td>to stagger towards the window</td>
<td>stagger</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>towards the window</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.126</td>
<td>to be ecstatic about the garden’s beauty</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>ecstatic about the garden’s beauty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.127</td>
<td>to observe the quality of the light</td>
<td>observe</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>the quality of the light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.128</td>
<td>to distinguish the roses from the hyacinths</td>
<td>distinguish</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>the roses from the hyacinths</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.129</td>
<td>to wonder</td>
<td>wonder</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.130</td>
<td>if it rained in the night</td>
<td>rain</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>in the night</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.131</td>
<td>to maintain contact with the mountain</td>
<td>maintain</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>mountain</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.132</td>
<td>to notice its color</td>
<td>notice</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>its color</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.133</td>
<td>to see</td>
<td>see</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.134</td>
<td>if the clouds are moving</td>
<td>move</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.135</td>
<td>to stop</td>
<td>stop</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.136</td>
<td>to go to the kitchen</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>middle</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>to the kitchen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.137</td>
<td>to grind some coffee</td>
<td>grind</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>coffee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.138</td>
<td>to light the gas</td>
<td>light</td>
<td>effective</td>
<td>Persona (implied)</td>
<td>gas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Table 6.1 above, it can be seen that the selected extract is construed almost entirely in non-finite clauses, that is, the majority of 93 verbs are in the to-infinitive form except for few clauses.\(^{41}\) The clauses in the table display a dominant pattern of combining this non-finiteness with the feature ‘middle voice’ from an ergativity point of view, which depicts a lack of agency (72/93 clauses). In these 72 clauses, the events of the clause are

\(^{41}\) Clauses construed with finiteness (tense) in Table 6.1 are: projected clause [4_4_130] is in simple past tense; projected clause [4_4_134] is in the present continuous tense; and projected clause 163 is in the past-in-present tense in SFG (or the present perfect tense in traditional grammar). These clauses represent a pattern construed by logico-semantic relations of projection in Adnan’s text, which I will discuss in Chapter 7 in detail. This pattern includes clauses represented under the scope of some mental or verbal (in this case all mental) processes; they are thus ‘ideas’ only, not reported events that are anchored in time grammatically by tense.
depicted as self-engendered ‘happenings’, while the remaining 21 clauses select ‘effective voice’ (for example, clauses [3_3_89], [3_3_90], [3_3_91], [3_3_92] which appear in a sequence) construing processes of ‘doing’. In percentages, these results constitute the majority (77%) of clauses are middle voice (e.g. “to sit”), while a small number of clauses (23%) are effective voice (e.g. “to make the coffee”).

Further, the initial analysis shows that the Agent role is not specified in any of the effective clauses. Even where ‘effective clauses’ do occur, depicting events as having inherent agency, because they are at the same time subjectless non-finite clauses there is no explicit identification of who or what deploys this agency. Admittedly, there is an implication, from the context of how lifewriting typically works, that the authorial persona is the Agent but this is not at all certain. Thus in 93 clauses there is no clear representation of a person or an object that is agentive. This absence helps create a distinctive sense of passivity and ineffectuality in the passage.

In the middle voice clauses, the non-finiteness described above also occurs. This means that even the “obligatory” underlying role of Medium is left unidentifed in most of the clauses in this excerpt although it does turn up in those clauses that are in ‘effective voice’ (21/93 clauses). Again, there is contextual and cohesive pressure to interpret the implied Medium of the middle voice clauses as the authorial persona, however as with the effective voice clauses this cannot be certain. Additionally, the Range – the participant which specifies the domain of the process – is used in a number of clauses, making Medium and Range the most frequently present participant roles in this excerpt, reinforcing the sense of passivity described above.

To sum up, the initial analysis of the selected extract shows that although the text has a dominant lack of agency, it occasionally depicts some enactment of agency by the author by realising the Agent role in a few effective clauses. These choices arguably create a sense of the possibility or changing the world.

Thus there is an ambivalence in the degree of agency the text conveys and an ambivalence regarding the explicitness of agency when we focus on the experiential clause grammar sections that build up the text. However, the excerpt suggests that narrative itself has the potential for agency. Despite the apparent paradox, the text patterning of lack of grammatical agency can still play a decisive part in bringing about a change or an effect in the world in the sense that the practice of writing itself – and the way writing can ‘call
out’ problems in how social humans act and take responsibility – can bring change and teaches us what ‘we’ have to do about our way of living, being, and belonging. Also, it can be seen that the text asks linguistic questions related to the extent to which the human capacity for linguistic creation and innovation, described by Said (2004, p.12) as “the achievement of form by human will and agency”, can be frustrated.

To explain in more detail how agency is downgraded in Adnan’s text but at the same time how the narrative depicts a capacity for agency, and how Adnan appears to be experimenting with this link between agency ‘in’ a text and the agency ‘of’ a text, the following section examines the construal of agency in the entire text in ergative terms.

6.5 Overview of the construal of agency in Adnan’s text

While section 6.4 gave an example of the approach taken in the present chapter, this section investigates in detail the grammatical construal of agency in Adnan’s text, drawing on the whole text consisting of 1361 clauses. As in section 6.4, text analysis is undertaken in terms of an SFL ergativity model of the clause to highlight the most prominent aspects of the construal of agency and some related meanings. After providing results of the clause by clause analysis, this section then shows how the grammatical construal of agency is related to one of the main themes of the text – the passivity, powerlessness and futility of the human agent in times of war.

The final chapter of Adnan’s memoir “To be in a Time of War” portrays Adnan’s response to the US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq in the spring of 2003 – most commonly but inaccurately referred to as the “Iraq War”.

The final chapter of the memoir is written in the infinitive form, which together with other linguistic choices evokes the sorrows of the particular experience depicted, and functions as an illustration of universal grief that captures Adnan’s profound sense of statelessness and precariousness. Adnan’s response to the so-called “Iraq War” creates a particular version of the autobiographical subject and a particular version of events. This particularity manifests itself in a number of aspects where the creation of a narrative about the terror

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42 The illegal armed conflict which is referred to as “Iraq War” is also known as “the War in Iraq”, “the Occupation of Iraq”, “the Second Gulf War”, and “Gulf War II”. The period of the war lasting from 2003 to 2010 was referred to as “Operation Iraqi Freedom” by the United States military and “Operation New Dawn” from 2010–2011. As a witness and survivor of the so-called “Iraq War” and its devastating aftermath, I will refer to this conflict as the invasion and occupation of Iraq led by the United States and its Allies, or the US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq. In contexts when I (ironically) use the term “Iraq War” I tend to refer to the downgrading of agency seen in the dominant discourses describing war events.
of a war in the Middle East resonates with other worldwide terrors that Adnan responds to from a distance of sorts – far and yet near.

One way in which Adnan breaks with linguistic conventions is the way she deploys the grammatical system of agency. In the same way as in the sample section described above, Adnan’s whole chapter depicts the majority of events and actions in the external world as though they just happen by themselves. This sense of lack of agency is largely created through the extensive use of middle clauses in the text, which means that – grammatically – actions and events do not extend to another participant. The exact distribution of middle clauses and effective clauses is displayed in Table 6.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of clauses</th>
<th>Type of voice in clauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1361</td>
<td>middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1103</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 6.2 above, it can be seen that across 1361 clauses, 1103 clauses are middle-voice and 258 clauses are effective-voice. The high proportion of middle-voice clauses (1103/1361) produces in the text a dominant pattern of a self-engendered ‘happenings’, while the remaining (258/1362) clauses select ‘effective voice’, construing processes of ‘doing’. Figure 6.4 below summarises these results as percentages: the majority (81%) of clauses are middle voice; however, a smaller number of clauses (19%) are effective voice. Against the dominant pattern of middle clauses and lack of agency it can also be seen from Table 6.2 and Figure 6.3 that there are still a substantial number of effective clauses, however the agency conveyed in these clauses tends to be restricted or diminished in some way, as we shall see later.
Figure 6.3 Distribution of agency in Adnan’s whole chapter (53 sections consisting of 1361 clauses)

The results seen in Figure 6.3 suggest that Adnan’s repeated use of middle voice and avoidance of effective voice can be understood as setting up a local environment in which the theme of passivity and futility of action prevails – events and actions seem not to be under human control – and in which the reporter of these events seems powerless and defeated, as seen in the following examples of middle clauses (middle voice processes bolded) from Adnan’s text:

(a) [1_8_8] to go toward the window
(b) [9_22_321] To think of the morning news.
(c) [11_10_373] To not be capable of finding one’s source of energy within.
(d) [48_19_1193] To stare at the curtain.
(e) [11_18_381] to say the least

In terms of the agency construed in the above examples all the processes (go; think, be, sleep, stare; say) involved in the examples represent ‘happenings’ where the process is depicted as self-engendering, in which case there is no separate Agent. This means that most of the actions and events in the analysed text are self-engendered and that human actions of ‘doings’ in particular are backgrounded, except for a few instances.

The role of Medium in these middle clauses is textually implied only, except for a few instances (e.g. “the mountain is still there”). It is illuminating however to consider an alternative middle clause with Medium (representing different entities) to see the way this expression might work. One alternative clause could have been ‘the woman stared at the
curtain’ or ‘I went toward the window’. These alternative expressions – ‘the woman’ and ‘I’ – that assume a reference to text persona still show that the processes are non-ergative and the agentive role of Medium brings no agency to the text other than actualizing events and actions.

Although effective voice is mostly avoided by Adnan, there are a few instances of effective clauses realized in a certain pattern where the process is caused by an Agent and impacts another participant, the Medium. These effective clauses are generally observed to cluster in sequences which are interposed into longer sequences of middle clauses as seen in Table 6.1 above. However, there are grammatical strategies used by Adnan to downplay the feature of agency seen in effective voice clauses such as the use of receptive voice (Agentless passive construction); the choice to place effective voice in low status and rank-shift clauses; the construal of “highly impactful” (Lukin 2019) processes of war as non-impactful; the choice of causative construction; and downgrading the role of Agent and the role of Medium of effective clauses by ellipsis or depersonalisation. I will elaborate on these patterns in section 6.7.

In Adnan’s text, the semiotic meaning of who/what causes the impact on the Medium is confused. This is because even when the feature of agency is present in the few examples of effective voice, the role of Agent is almost always absent – either it is textually implied due to the repeated use of non-finite structure; metaphorically construed with abstract or inanimate entity; or construed with a passive structure where the doer of the action can be optionally not textualized, as seen in the following examples of effective clauses from Adnan’s text. These show how the role of Medium (underlined) is differently construed while the role of Agent is either referenced by implication (inferred in brackets) or textually present (bolded):

(a) [1_29_29] to pull the right side of the curtain (authorial persona implied)
(b) [22_15_622] that war is devastating Iraq (‘war’ abstract entity is Agent)
(c) [6_15_210] that Baghdad is being bombed (passive construction- implied Agent)
(d) [15_1_452] To bring down a military plane over Afghanistan (implied unnamed entity)

The examples mentioned above represent processes (such as pull; devastate; bomb) with effective voice that carry the feature of agency. Moreover, in the example clauses the role of Medium is textually present, thus it is made explicit which entities – such as the
underlined expressions ‘Baghdad’; ‘a military plane’ – are impacted by the process. However, in (a), (c), and (d) the role of Agent is textually absent – it may be inferred to be the authorial persona or unnamed entity.

From an SFL perspective the role of Agent in effective clauses is inherent, not obligatory. In Adnan’s text, largely because of the repeated use of the non-finite as well as the use of receptive voice and use of abstract entities assigned as Agent, the Agent role in the majority of effective voice clauses is textually not present. However in some instances (as in example (b) above) the role of Agent is textually present but is construed with the lexical choice ‘war’ which is an abstract entity, thus undermining responsibility for the action.

Interestingly, this strategy of inferring the narrative persona as Agent does not work for many other effective clauses where agency is construed, leaving the responsibility for the action still unknowable. For example, in (c) and (d) the presence of an Agent is implied because of the use of passive construction (is being bombed) in (c) or due to non-finite (to bring down) in (d). Nevertheless, if we try to explicitly retrieve an Agent for (c) (using the agentive ‘by-phrase’ at the end of the clause) or “I” for (e), the clauses could have looked respectively like ‘Baghdad is being bombed (by me/the woman)’ or ‘I brought down a military plane over Afghanistan’. These suggested versions do not achieve a plausible experiential meaning given that the text talks about an occasion of war so that the doer of the action would be expected to represent a person or institution which, although unnamed/implied, is an entity other than the apparent author voice or main character.

Here we can see that how the use of this ambiguous agency over actions that could both plausibly and implausibly be attributed to the text persona raises questions about the author’s intended effect. One possible aim is to obscure the boundary between the military apparatus and civilians – those who launch wars and those who perhaps support or merely passively accept them as ‘happening’. This also raises important questions about why Adnan should have chosen a grammatical strategy which we typically see in texts that reflect their authors’ intention of concealing the sense of who actually did what to whom in any discussion of their own government’s or institutions acts, as we shall see in the next sections.
To conclude this section, the overview of the construal of the grammatical agency in Adnan’s text provided above shows that the text depicts a lack of agency primarily because the majority of clauses are middle-voiced, that is, they are self-engendered and there are no external causes depicted ergatively. Nonetheless, in the text there is a small number of effective clauses, which do frame events as caused by an Agent. As noted, however, even when there are some instances where Agent or Medium is available in effective voice clauses, these clauses typically also show one of the grammatical ways to obscure agency. However, this observed pattern of effective clauses depicting events as construed with agency shows a possibility for human agency. Thus, the text depicts two general patterns of events and actions where in one pattern a local environment of lack of agency dominates whereas in another pattern this passivity is disrupted.

In the following sections, I will examine in more detail the most prominent resources of ambiguity and downgrading of agency in order to see and better understand how agency is lexically and grammatically represented in Adnan’s texts in relation to the theme of war and the subject’s passivity and how and why this representation can confuse sometimes the sense of who/what is taking responsibility for actions. I will also link Adnan’s ambiguous construal of who is responsible to what Adnan herself thinks about war and invasion, including notions of suffering and displacement. The investigation of agency in Adnan’s text can help us answer questions of whether Adnan wants to say that the responsibility is unknowable or just that we are not told about it. The language of the text, what Adnan thinks about war, and what we know about her approach to writing may settle these questions to some extent.

6.6 Agency in the construal of war events

The ‘war’ and bearing witness to it is the most explicit subject of Adnan’s writing in general. This section explores how Adnan handles the notion of war and violence with respect to the concept of agency. In “To Be in a Time of War”, Adnan depicts the notion of war as one of the main themes in the text. The notion of war is where humans enact violence against each other but this type of violence is distinctive from accidental violent acts; it is a highly organized, institutionalised, funded and pre-planned activity whose power system permeates many societies and their core institutions. However, in dominant discourses of everyday life too often wars are seen through the lenses of a dominant narrative of conflicts being “beyond human control” and construed as just “breaking out” due to a sequence of events. Such a narrative reinforces “good vs evil” dichotomies and
myths of war as “inevitable”, “necessary”, “just” or “part of the existence of [human] species” so as to justify politicians making the case for war and the public believing in it. It conceals war’s many forms of violence including the destruction and disproportionate killing of innocent individuals and, thus, obscures the real human agency responsible for war. In his War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning, Hedges – an experienced war correspondent – notes that “in mythic war we imbue events with meanings they do not have” and that the chief institutions that “disseminate” these myths of war are mainstream media and officials of states (Hedges 2002, p.25). He says, 

The potency of myth is that it allows us to make sense of mayhem and violent death. It gives a justification to what is often nothing more than gross human cruelty and stupidity. It allows us to believe we have achieved our place in human society because of a long chain of heroic endeavors, rather than accept the sad reality that we stumble along a dimly lit corridor of disasters. It disguises our powerlessness.

In Adnan’s text, the “potency” of the myths of war is juxtaposed with “powerlessness”. The notion of war is linked by Adnan to the powerlessness and passivity of the individual in times of war. We can also understand this sense of powerlessness in terms of Ardent’s (1963) banality of evil where one performs evil actions without evil intentions due to her/his “thoughtlessness” or “disengagement from the reality of her/his evil acts”. This might be noticed in Adnan’s narrative which heavily relies on portraying banal actions of ‘closing the door’, ‘opening the door’, ‘going to the fridge’, which produces a ‘banalising’ effect of interspersing violent acts of war with banal domestic acts in her narrative.

Thus, in the analysed text, an explicit reference to ‘war’ is mostly suppressed in the text. This is done through configuring the lexicogrammatical patterns associated with ‘war’ in a distinctive way that contributes to downplaying agency and responsibility, allowing Adnan to point at or background the perpetrators, give prominence to or discount the victims, and/or accentuate or minimise the violence. In this section, I will first discuss what Adnan herself has said about war and the agency of a social actor during a time of war. I will then present and discuss further the results of my analysis of agency in Adnan’s text with respect to this theme of war. My analysis investigates briefly the general and particular sense of the word ‘war’, and the lexicogrammatical patterns typically associated with this word and its agentive/non-agentive roles. Second, I examine the
lexical and ergative structures where the word ‘war’ is manipulated by Adnan to represent the military operations carried out by the US-led forces when invading and occupying Iraq in 2003 and its aftermath.

6.6.1 Adnan’s sense of war

In her essay “Voyage, War and Exile”, Adnan (1995, p.11) says,

war is a cataclysmic event which shakes the psyche and brings to the fore of consciousness ideas and emotions one thought resolved or forgotten. Memory gets heightened, overheated, so to say, thrown into a state of urgency. One’s life can put into question, forcefully, new light shed on old beliefs.

For Adnan, writing is a way of participating in politics, “that is to say, in the world and in the management of the world” (Lebovici, 2015, p.2). Accordingly, Adnan’s acute sense of war and strong perception of its tragedy are aligned with her literary and linguistic production.

One of Adnan’s idiosyncrasies noticed in different literary forms including her life writing when writing a response to a war is her distinctive way of using English language and specific genres within it to testify and bear witness “outside the usual”, to use Miriam Cooke’s words. In talking about women who respond creatively to war through writing, Cooke (1987, p.20) observes that in a time of war, women writers acquire a new task. They have to learn to communicate outside the usual, now obsolete channels. Words as signifiers have lost their force in a society that refuses to listen. A new language has to be found so that ear, eye, intellect and heart might be simultaneously engaged.

This is what Adnan does with respect to English language in her life writing when she responds to the “Iraq War”. She makes language, according to Steiner (1998, p.86), “share” and “mediate” between

the crucial antinomies of inner and outer, subject and object, past and future, private and public. Language is far more than communication between speakers.
It is the dynamic mediation between those poles of cognition which give human
experience its underlying dual and dialectical form.

On a personal level as well as on a literary and linguistic production level, Adnan has
been impacted by the far-away war in Iraq, and elsewhere. On the “Iraq War”, Adnan
says that “Being in California, I felt I was two people, because I was like all the
Americans, the same as my friends. But I had a problem they didn’t have: I was worried
about Iraq, and they were not worried to the same degree” (Obrist 2014, p.68). Fattal
(2002, p.102) comments that “Adnan lives what happens elsewhere as if she had been
‘right there’”. In “To be in a time of war”, the final chapter of Adnan’s memoir, Adnan
writes on the occasion of the 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq where this sense of
“being right there” is deeply and unusually expressed in the text. Adnan juxtaposes small
episodes of her everyday life in California with a sense of pain and detachment from what
was happening in Iraq. In this text, Naef (2019, p.26) remarks that Adnan “involves the
reader in the difficulty of being an average person living in peaceful surroundings and her
feelings of sorrow for a country thousands of miles away”.

In the introduction to her memoir, Adnan mentions that in March of 2003 when war was
“brewing in Iraq”, she was in California seeing people’s indifference to the monstrous
war against Iraq, thus became “detached from [her] environment” and then wrote her
response to that moment (Adnan 2005, p. xvi). Thus, Adnan creates a text persona which
is apparently experiencing physical and psychological detachment from her environment,
and is projected simultaneously towards different temporal and spatial orientations in a
time of war. However, Adnan’s depiction of such a persona is not only associated with
her concern for the cruelty of war operations that aim to “eliminate a country” and “turn
its people into beasts for the slaughterhouse”, in Adnan’s words (2005, pp. 101, 113).
Rather, from a wider perspective Adnan is also concerned with “people’s indifference to
each other” and how a person “move[s] forward into parading indifference” (Adnan 2005,
pp. 101, 111). On that consciousness of agency in relation to a period of war Adnan
comments, “when America attacked Iraq, each time they moved, they destroyed it. I
didn’t feel my best friends, poets or non-intellectuals, really cared. Though when you
think about it, there is so much going on in the world, and Americans cannot care for
everything. But this is something that America started and did” (Adnan 2009, p.2). Adnan
adds, “But this movement in writing against [the] Vietnam War didn’t happen about Iraq,
which is as monstrous a war and as long. Why?… what prevents many poets from writing politically [is that] they are unconsciously imitating each other. Poetry here has followed the general apathy of the years of Bush and Reagan (Adnan 2009, p.2).

Here, Adnan calls upon writer intellectuals to address what Said describes as “the constituted and authorised powers of one’s own society, particularly when those powers are exercised in a manifestly disproportionate and immoral war, discrimination, repression and collective cruelty” (Said 1993, p.5). Adnan stresses how the act of writing enables a social change in re-thinking the relationship between self and the other through adopting alternative ways of literary and linguistic expression that embraces an independence of form to “witness against the misuses of history and injustices of the time that befall the oppressed” (Said 1993, p.14). The alternative mode in Adnan’s text takes a critical “anti-systemic form” that “can be progressive” (Selby 2006, p.47). Adnan’s text is “progressive” in terms of being an ongoing project which does not only fit in a particular historical context, which recalls Whitlock’s critique of “finite” agency – as limited and merely in the present tense. It is also “anti-systemic” because it is directed against prevailing socio-political forces of production. The power of political action is displayed through a personal experience of daily events coupled with the horrors of war which provides the reader with a sense of the glocal that can be shared and remembered and form a dynamic transnational memory.

Adnan’s concern with war and social agency thus links the local and global, and through the language of the text it fosters a cosmopolitan ethos. However, while the grammatical construal of the social agency of individuals presents a dominant sense of passivity in the text, Adnan’s practice as a writing-speaking subject indicates paradoxically a radical act of transformation and constitutes an agentive voice that creates a text in which “the power of language is [demonstrably] vested in the act of meaning” (Halliday 2003, p.375).

It is worth noting that in the quote by Adnan above, Adnan states explicitly that “this is something that America started and did” which is unambiguously an effective clause allocating America the Agent role where the process of starting (and doing) war could mean ‘America started the war’; ‘America did the war’. This provocative statement by Adnan can be understood as an immediate intervention in the socio-political debates about the war and it displays an explicit expression and consciousness of the real human agency for war grammatically achieved through the use of effective clauses. This
grammatical pattern contrasts markedly with how Adnan has typically designed the grammatical agency with respect to the theme of war in her life writing. As we saw from the sample analysis and overview in sections 6.4 and 6.5, this design echoes what Lukin calls “insulation of war from its human agents and its terrible destructiveness” (Lukin 2019, p.xii). This raises important questions about how Adnan’s use of effective voice which clearly assigns blame ‘outside’ her lifewriting text echoes the same style used by mainstream media, politicians or the military apparatus, and why Adnan chooses a different design for her life writing.

Adnan’s manipulation of the lexicogrammatical patterns associated with war and agency exemplifies the writer’s immediate intervention in the socio-political debates about the war. In addition, the language of the text challenges “the triumphant tone of news”, that is, the aggressive policies represented by mainstream media and political officials’ speeches justifying this war and other wars. On her part, Adnan seems to be choosing specific lexicogrammatical configurations for the ascription of agency not only to mock the political or the “call to war” speeches and media reports on the 2003 Iraq war, speeches which sought moral and military support to legitimate that violent and unjust war, but also to make the textual environment mirror more widely the local and global environment. Adnan’s response to a war happening far away that links this response to wars and conflicts that have happened or are happening elsewhere offers a cosmopolitan perspective. Adnan’s text here is clearly politically and ethically engaged. It invites us, “like a whip to whatever in each of us is dormant” (Adnan 2005, p.6), to address our ignorance to each other through her negotiation of that danger, as Buuck (2006, p.1) suggests, “as a practice of the everyday to charge the present … To refuse to look away – that might be said to be Adnan’s charge here”. This ‘whipping’ effect is achieved in the text through a piling of patterns construing so many violent actions of war, which produces a sense of urgency and affect in order not only to prompt readers to ask questions about the passivity or lack of agency of the persona and the ambiguity surrounding the perpetrators of war/violence, but also respond with recognition and sympathy about something that is ‘not right’ and ‘who’ is responsible.

6.6.2 “War” and its meaning

The OED defines “war” as: “Hostile contention by means of armed forces, carried on between nations, states, or rulers, or between parties in the same nation or state; the
employment of armed forces against a foreign power, or against an opposing party in the state”; or “Actual fighting, battle; a battle, engagement (now obsolete)”. In a “particularized sense”, according to the OED, “war” means “a contest between armed forces carried on in a campaign or series of campaigns”.

Exploring what she calls the lexical nodes of “war” and “violence”, Lukin (2019, pp.84-85) observes that “with its particularized sense, the category of ‘war’ attracts particularizing names, a feature important for developing narratives around specific wars”. Thus, the OED’s definitions indicate that “war”, as Lukin notes, involves the notion of “bidirectionality of an action” taking place “between nations” or “states” where the perpetrators of this action are political entities, and “war” is therefore associated with political parties acting on each other. This bidirectionality of action, Lukin (2019, p.85) points out, may “exclude the semantics of transitive action, making war a form of happening rather than action that extends to, and impacts, outside of itself” since the lexical item “war” tends to “collocate with middle voice processes: war is construed as beginning, continuing, escalating, ending”. In these configurations, “war” “has a life of its own, going through cycles of unfolding without reference to any force other than itself” (Lukin 2019, p.85). In Adnan’s text the notion of “bidirectionality of an action” is obscured and the word “war” – lexically and grammatically – is construed in a “form of happening” rather than action that causes devastating impacts to peoples and environment, for example “to hear that the war against Iraq has started” (Adnan 2005, p.100). Consistent with this is Butler’s Frames of War (2010. p.38) which explores how the media portrays contemporary US-led wars and how this portrayal of aggressive armed conflict conditions the way we apprehend and engage with the victims of conflict, focusing on the notion of affect and precarity to address the question of “who ‘we’ are in these times of war … by asking whose lives are considered valuable, whose lives are mourned, grievable, and whose lives are considered ungrievable”.

“War” may also be used figuratively to refer to “a contest, struggle (between living beings or opposing forces)”, according to the OED. The metaphor of war can also be used to conceal realities. In his article “Metaphor and War” Lakoff (1992, p.463) discusses how

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43 In her War and Its Ideologies : A Social-Semiotic Theory and Description (2019), Lukin does an extensive exploration of the lexical items ‘war’ and ‘violence’ by reference to standard lexicographical resources, drawing on the Oxford English Dictionary and Roget’s thesaurus, and she considers the behaviour of these words in large corpora.
a metaphor of “war” can be applied to understand a particular complex situation, saying that “indeed, there is an extensive, and mostly unconscious, system of metaphor that we use automatically and unreflectively to understand complexities and abstractions”. In Regarding the Pain of Others Sontag (2003, p.59) explores visual representations of war and violence in today’s culture noting that

central to modern expectations, and modern ethical feeling, is the conviction that war is an aberration, if an unstoppable one. That peace is the norm, if an unattainable one. This, of course, is not the way war has been regarded throughout history. War has been the norm and peace the exception.

Sontag (2003, p.91) observes how war photography is associated with issues of exploitation of sentiment and ways of provoking feeling (pity, compassion, indignation), however, she also notes that shocking war photographs also have an ethical value since they may lead to challenging the authorities: “Such images ... [are] an invitation to pay attention, to reflect, to learn, to examine the rationalizations for mass suffering offered by established powers. Who caused what the picture shows? Who is responsible?” (Sontag 2003, p.93). In a similar vein, Adnan’s text opens up questions of how boundaries between “I” and war institutions are blurred and how transformative agency and intervention is inherent in the practice of writing itself as a reflective and deliberate mode of action.

As the points above indicate, one of the linguistic perspectives where “war” and its meanings are brought into sharpest focus is in the work of Lukin (2013, 2014, 2019), a linguist who is interested in the manipulation of the media and political discourse about the “Iraq War”. Lukin (2014) discusses the coverage of the invasion of Iraq on ABC-TV, arguing that “[t]he notion of “war” validates violence by construing it as having a higher purpose”. Lukin (2014, p.39) observes that through framing war events in this way “the ABC [like many other Western Media] could uncritically report the Coalition’s claims to be ameliorating the effects of its invasion and bombardment of Iraq through its ‘humanitarian efforts’”. Lukin relates her observation of how war events are framed in media discourse with the representation of agency. She maintains that media coverage of the US-led invasion and occupation of Iraq is one of the authoritative modes of writing that appropriates the notion of “war” and “agency” in a misleading way. The act of
invading and occupying Iraq is referred to by media, politicians and officials as “the Iraq War”. By calling the 2003 invasion of Iraq “the Iraq War”, Western media legitimizes the Coalition actions, and it does not appear to consider “what the Coalition was doing in and to Iraq [by means of] ‘violence’”. Instead, it reserved this word, ‘violence’, “for some of the actions of protestors … [where] protestors throwing rocks was ‘violence’; the Coalition bombing Baghdad was not” (Lukin 2014, p.39). In her text, Adnan echoes this typical media framing of “war” and “agency” thus presenting “the Iraq War” as an event of ‘happening’. However, in the context of the other textual choices that Adnan makes, it could be argued that her framing of war as a ‘happening’ has quite a different overall effect, that in fact it alerts readers to some of the problems of construing war this way and seek to provoke cosmopolitan reactions to this framing.

In his “War Rhetoric”, van Leeuwen (2006, p.517) explores the European and American approaches to war discourse in general and points out that among the most essential linguistic features of “war rhetoric” in political speeches and media reports is the ascription of grammatical agency:

In “call to arms” speeches, for instance, the ascription of agency fluctuates between the addressed audience (“we”), the nation (“America,” “this country”), and the moral cause that justifies war (“Western commitment to democracy”), thus conflating the three, while the actions ascribed to these agents tend to be referred to in abstract terms, as in Bush’s speech of March 16, 2003 … (“We work towards a great cause, and that is peace and security in this world”). The actions of the enemy tend to be more concrete and are ascribed to a personified and demonized enemy, as in the same speech (“The dictator of Iraq and his weapons of mass destruction are a threat to the security of free nations”). This then creates an us-them contrast [and] the use of agentless passive constructions obscures agency, as in the Times’ headlines at the time of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings of April 7 and 10, 1945: “Second City Hit”.

Lukin’s and van Leeuwen’s linguistic work demonstrates that there are various linguistic realizations (e.g. conflations between human and non-human subjects; use of us-them dichotomy; use of agentless passive) that obscure agency in war discourse.
In the following sections, I will explore the lexicogrammatical patterns of the word “war” and its ergative configurations in Adnan’s text in detail, and comment on how such choices can be interpreted in terms of Adnan’s apparent literary and political goals. I will show how the agentive patterns used by Adnan to depict and reflect on war in some contexts augment what these previous scholars have found, but in other contexts also throws new light and disrupts to some extent the picture put forward by Lukin and van Leeuwen.

6.7 Grammatical strategies/choices downgrading/obscuring agency in “warfare” context

Using the SFL ergative system, this section examines in detail the lexical and grammatical strategies Adnan uses to obscure and downgrade the ‘felt’ agency of the experiences, actions and events depicted in the text in relation to the notion of war.

6.7.1 Construal of the word “war”

With respect to the “Iraq War” in Adnan’s text, the word “war” appears in a variety of lexicogrammatical structures which are associated with how agency is conceptualized and located by Adnan within the domain of the mind, society and the external world.

6.7.1.1 “War” in non-ergative structure

Notably, Adnan does not often frame “war” as a constituent in an independent, ranking clause structure. Instead, despite the destructive characteristics that defines its nature, “war” for Adnan is construed mostly in a dependent clause environment, for example “to hear that the war against Iraq has started”. Also, in this example, the process “has started” displays a material process or action that does not transcend or affect another participant (that is, there is no Goal). The “war against Iraq” functions as Medium of a middle voice clause. As explained earlier, the role of Medium functions in both the ergative and non-ergative constructions. The latter of the two constructions, the middle voice, construes action without either extension or external causation.

44 As explained earlier, the role of Medium functions in both the ergative and non-ergative constructions. The latter of the two constructions, the middle voice, construes action without either extension or external causation.
highlighted. Perhaps surprisingly, these construals are very similar to the way that the media adopts a “self-engendered” configuration for rationalizing and legitimizing the actions of war such as those that caused the 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq. Yet, as indicated above, is unlikely that Adnan and western media share the same overall political purpose despite some shared choices in language.

This strategy of depicting war as an event of ‘happening’ and how no one is named for the atrocious events of war but someone actually does command them against Iraq and someone does drop the bombs actually blurs boundaries between the “I” persona and war institutions, and opens up questions about whether the “I” persona and other ‘ordinary people’ could in fact be responsible for war. However, by echoing the typical media construal of war as an event of ‘happening’ Adnan may be using this strategy as a form of critique. In other words, she complains not only about the news that the war happens but about the way it is reported. It is likely that in the statement “To hear that the war against Iraq has started” Adnan wants us to ‘hear’ not just that the war against Iraq has started but that the UN community or US troops have started what is congruent with the concrete material actions of war done by human agents – bombing houses and schools and killing and displacing citizens. So Adnan calls on her readers to ‘listen’ to what is not said, to be alert to what is missing. She prompts this kind of listening by the testimonial act of writing through which this agency or desire for agency might be transferred to readers. While sharing with readers a reality about extreme circumstances of suffering, this testimonial act has the effect of bringing readers close to bear witness, elicit a response, and pursue social justice.

6.7.1.2 “war” in ergative structure

The word “war” in Adnan’s text appears in certain ergative structures. Table 6.3 below exemplifies the construal of the word “war” in different ergative environments in the text.45 The word “war”, occurring across 36/1361 clauses, functions as Agent in one instance. In five instances “war” is construed as Medium in clauses with middle voice. In

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45 In Table 6.3 Adnan mentions some pioneer and contemporary Iraqi figures (like the poets Bader Shaker Al-Sayyab, Saadi Yousef, and the painter/ sculptor Nouri al-Raw) who have played an important role in shaping the Iraqi modern art/ poetry movements and with whom Adnan has shared artistic and literary experiences, so as to weigh up for readers her critique of the cultural destruction of Iraq in terms of human and cultural loss.
28 instances “war” functions as Range, and in 2 instances “war” functions as Circumstance, occurring all in middle voice clauses (see Appendix D).

Table 6.3 Construal of “war” in ergative structures in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War as Agent</th>
<th>War as Medium (or a Qualifier in ng expressing Medium)</th>
<th>War as Range (or a Classifier in ng expressing Range)</th>
<th>War as circumstance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[22_275_623] that war is devastating Iraq</td>
<td>[4_4_163] that the war against Iraq has started</td>
<td>[16_197_503] to imagine the war in Iraq</td>
<td>[41_569_1045] to blame it on the war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[10_84_345] that the marches against the war are growing in number</td>
<td>[48_651_1186] to remember the different wars [[that wound one’s life]]</td>
<td></td>
<td>[31_423_836] if Nouri will stay alive through this war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[16_187_490] that war is an atrocity</td>
<td>[17_216_527] that they are war criminals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[10_86_349] that war is everywhere</td>
<td>[24_303_665] to vomit the war</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the ascription of agency, except for one example clause where the “war” carries the burden of agency (e.g. ‘that war is devastating Iraq’), “war” in the majority of clauses is construed in a middle voice environment. Nevertheless, deployed as Medium in a middle voice clause where no feature of agency is assigned, or as Agent in an effective clause where agency is made explicit, the lexical item ‘war’ still refers to an abstract entity, which contributes to the minimization of responsibility and the concealment of human agency. However, this pattern of abstract ‘war’ might draw readers’ attention to the concrete, real external forces causing destructive impact because it seems odd and strikingly wrong, thus prompting readers’ recognition to questions needing to be asked about the real human agency responsible for war.

6.7.2 Construal of effective voice processes

The construal of effective voice processes in Adnan’s text to downgrade or obscure the feature of agency is portrayed and manipulated through different structures: “highly impactful” processes of war displaying concrete material actions of war construed by effective voice clauses.
In Adnan’s text, the construal of “highly impactful” processes (e.g. kill, bomb, invade, torture, conquer, fight) representing concrete material actions of war in effective clauses is observed in three patterns.

(1) effective voice processes displaying concrete actions with concrete entities as Medium;

(2) effective voice processes displaying concrete actions but Medium is a semiotic entity;

(3) effective voice processes of concrete actions of violence but Medium is not textually present (implied).

These processes are known as “highly impactful” because they are usually constructed in a way to display how acts of violence impact entities (Medium). Although these processes are used with low frequency they play an important role in actualizing and obscuring agency in the text.

The three patterns identified above are exemplified in tables 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 below, with comments following each table.

Table 6.4 Key lexical choices of processes representing the violence of war in example clauses with effective voice and Medium as concrete entity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Process (concrete actions)</th>
<th>Medium (concrete entities)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[8.3.277] eliminate a country</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>eliminate</td>
<td>country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[8.4.278] blow up a civilization</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>blow up</td>
<td>civilization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[18.1.338] to extinguish the light in the eyes of those [[who love the world]]</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>extinguish</td>
<td>light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[18.6.533] kill the inhabitants of the Tigris’ banks</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>kill</td>
<td>the inhabitants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[18.7.539] to displace hills</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>displace</td>
<td>hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[18.8.340] to wipe out an open market</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>wipe out</td>
<td>market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[43.8.1040] to bury the living dead</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>bury</td>
<td>dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[43.16.1096] to destroy some more houses</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>destroy</td>
<td>houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[44.2.1109] to pervert the children’s eyes</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>pervert</td>
<td>children’s eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[44.14.110] to rain bombs over Baghdad</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>rain</td>
<td>bombs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[45.6.1131] To burn live matter</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>burn</td>
<td>matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[45.7.1132] to water the palm trees with fire</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>water</td>
<td>palm trees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 6.4 the notion of “war” with respect to the feature of agency is restricted in a variety of ways. The perpetrators of the violent actions of war represented in the table by processes of killing, destroying, burning, bombing, are construed with implied Agent. Notably, the combination between human (e.g. “the inhabitants”) and nonhuman (e.g. “hills”, “palm trees”) as entities (Mediums) equally impacted by the ferocious actions of war points to Adnan’s constant antiwar sentiment regarding the
environment as well as the human other, thus inviting readers to share it. Importantly, however, it is the accumulation of these excessive words depicting violent actions that alerts us to something being a miss and a question needing to be asked about who is responsible: as we can see these words building the impact of violence in the phrase “water[ing] palm trees with fire” which is strikingly wrong because it is not associated with human agency.

In addition, although some of the processes with effective voice are used to bring about an impact, the entities that are impacted are in many instances only semiotic entities as Table 6.5 displays pattern (2) below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Process (concrete actions)</th>
<th>Medium (semiotic entities)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[18_3_535] to impose death</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>impose</td>
<td>death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[39_9_1000] to fight regrets</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>fight</td>
<td>regrets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[44_11_1113] to distribute evil with specially built machines</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>distribute</td>
<td>evil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[45_5_1130] to spray hatred on its corpses as well as on the living</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>spray</td>
<td>hatred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[49_13_1212] to kill the desire [[to go out]]</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>kill</td>
<td>desire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen from table 6.5, effective voice processes such as ‘fight’ and ‘kill’ depict concrete material actions but they are construed with Medium as semiotic entities (e.g. regret, desire). As Hasan’s cline of dynamism predicts, using verbs like ‘kill’ without a human or animate Medium downgrades their sense of agency. This is another notable way of building the impact of violence to encourage readers to “admit the evidence of evil, the existence of pain” caused by social action which is largely paralyzed.

Using effective voice in pattern (3) (in which concrete actions of violence are construed with a Medium that is implied only) is another way Adnan diminishes agency. In Adnan’s text these processes are presented as self-engendered whereas they are usually (but not always) associated with human agency, as shown in Table 6.6. below:
Table 6.6 Key lexical choices of processes representing highly impactful action of war in effective clauses with implied Agent and Medium

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Agent</th>
<th>Process (Concrete actions)</th>
<th>Medium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[8_2_276] to bomb</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>bomb</td>
<td>implied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[14_11_437] conquest.</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>conquest</td>
<td>implied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[14_12_438] To burn.</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>burn</td>
<td>implied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[14_13_439] To kill.</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>kill</td>
<td>implied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[14_14_440] To torture.</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>torture</td>
<td>implied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[14_15_441] To humiliate</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>humiliate</td>
<td>implied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[44_8_1105] to corrupt</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>corrupt</td>
<td>implied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[44_9_1106] and destroy</td>
<td>implied</td>
<td>destroy</td>
<td>implied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These actions of violence (such as bombing, killing and destroying) display an “inherent implication of intention” implying but not expressly encoding sentience agency, to use Lukin’s words (2015, p.187). Such construals arguably discourage an empathetic, responsibly response from readers towards those who are being bombed and killed unless there is something else in the text that prompts this.

The repetition of so many violent actions in these patterns creates a piling up of a sense of urgency and affect, which is what alerts the readers to consider what is actually ‘happening’, that is, ‘who is doing what to whom’, and may be prompt us to look for the actors. In this way, readers are alerted to something being not ‘not right’ and encouraged to act with responsibility towards others.

6.7.3 Construal of Medium role

Relevant to the parts of Adnan’s text that relate fairly directly to war, the role of Medium in effective clauses is predominantly realized as non-conscious (inanimate), depersonalised, or elliptical entities.

6.7.3.1 Depersonalised Mediums

With respect to effective voice clauses, the grammatical role of Medium is observed in two categories: conscious and non-conscious. Table 6.7 shows selected examples of the lexical choices representing these two types of entity that function as Medium in Adnan’s effective clauses.
As can be seen from Table 6.7, the dominant type of Medium in Adnan’s 228 effective clauses is non-conscious, occurring in 228 clauses of effective voice. Following Moore (2004) and Hao (2018) entities taxonomy, the category of non-conscious Medium involves material objects and semiotic (abstract) entities, as Table 6.4 shows above. Thus, from the ergative point of view of affected participants, the majority of the affected participants in the text are material objects and abstract entities. The majority of the lexical choices instantiating the category ‘semiotic entity’ are seen to have negative emotions (e.g. resentment, anguish, terror, defeat). There are very few instances of conscious entities as Medium in effective clauses (n=10). Thus, the suppression of the impact of action on human entities through depersonalised Mediums contributes to creating a sense of passivity and defacing a sense of agency because the embodiment of the impact of action is predominantly realized through a material or abstract entity while the conscious entity as affected participant is marginalised. Again, we are alerted to this depersonalisation and its effect on the sense of agency conveyed.

### 6.7.3.2 Elliptical Mediums

Some processes are material actions which are apparently construed as middle voice but they can be interpreted as displaying effective voice with the ellipsis of Medium (the
affected participant), which is referenced only by implication, as in the following examples:

(a) [10_9_341] To resist (Medium not given)

(b) [41_6_1044] To hurt (Medium not given)

(c) [16_22_506] To press on (one’s head)

In examples (a) and (b) processes are apparently middle voice but can be interpreted as effective with ellipsis of Medium which can (sometimes but not always) be known from previous context, for example what is being pressed on in (c). This grammatical strategy is used by Adnan to downplay the ‘felt’ agency of the actions depicted in the text to draw our attention to this tendency outside the text.

6.7.4 Construal of Agent role

With respect to effective voice clauses the grammatical role of Agent is either unknowable or implied in the majority of effective clauses in Adnan’s text. However, the Agent role is textually present in a few effective clauses, occurring in only 18 clauses out of 258 clauses. Table 6.8 shows the lexical choices that represent what entities function as Agent in Adnan’s text.

Table 6.8 Lexical selections instantiating the grammatical role of Agent in effective clauses in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agent: non-conscious</th>
<th>Agent: conscious</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>new ribbon</td>
<td>one [generic first person]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a blackish tide</td>
<td>we [generic third person]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war</td>
<td>one [generic first person]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve’s music</td>
<td>a monotheist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>death</td>
<td>the military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bitterness</td>
<td>correspondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the mind</td>
<td>the British and the Americans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memory</td>
<td>those [generic second person]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>murder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the sky</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 6.8 shows, the role of Agent is observed in two categories: conscious and non-conscious. The dominant category of Agent in Adnan’s text is non-conscious, occurring
in 11 clauses, while the category of conscious entities as Agent, occurring in only 7 clauses, is less favoured. Furthermore, although in these 7 clauses the Agent role is lexically instantiated by a conscious entity (human being), some of the lexical choices still render the Agent as unknowable. For example, the choice of pronouns such as ‘one’, ‘we’ and ‘those’ denote non-definitive entities. This suggests that human agency is predominantly suppressed in the text. However, it suggests also that Adnan raises questions for the reader about human/nonhuman agency and the possibility of extending a sense of agency to a nonhuman in situations where human agency is rarely present, to prompt us to think differently about agency and the value of agency by a nonhuman.

6.7.4.1 Causative constructions

The notion of “war” with respect to the presence and absence of a feature of social agency is also evaded through choices of causative constructions in Adnan’s text. ‘Causatives’ are configured by Adnan in a way that contributes to the dominant pattern of obscuring social agency in the text.

The ergative model of causation involves the distinction between a typical effective clause and a ‘special case’ where there can be more than one Agent role (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.509). Clauses with verbal group complexes include the feature of ‘causation’, for example in ‘the military made the police assault journalists of war’, the clause displays a chain of agency where external force is construed by the causative verb ‘make’; thus ‘the military’ functions as the initiating Agent and ‘the police’ function as the Agent performing the event of assaulting.

In Adnan’s text, although causative constructions are employed to show some feature of effective agency, these constructions evade agency in some way, as in the following examples (bolded sections):

(a) [25_12_699] To force the Arabs to move backwards
(b) [51_14_1251] To make countries explode
(c) [39_6_992] To allow death to manifest itself
(d) [39_8_994] To let bitterness invade the soul

In these examples the clauses represent effective voice. We can note that only one Agent role is textually present as a participant in the clause, based on the second verbs “move” and “explode”. However, the second group of causative verbs (“allow”, “let”) suggest
only potentiality rather than certainty of action and contributes to the sense of agency as missing or implicit. This has the effect of highlighting not only how ‘external forces’ ascribed to actions remain out of focus even with the use of causatives, but also highlighting these huge forces to reinforce what is ‘lost’ and what is ‘gained’ in war.

6.7.4.2 Receptive voice construction

Relevant to the discussion of the Agent role in the examples above, it should be noted that the construal of effective agency in receptive (passive) voice is thought of as one of the common grammatical constructions that deface agency, allowing the Agent role to occur in either an optional agentive ‘by-phrase’ at the end of the clause (e.g. ‘The main road was blocked by the military’), or eliminating the agentive ‘by-phrase’ (e.g. ‘The main road was blocked’). The Agentless passive option (with no by-phrase or agent) shows implied responsibility is assigned to a doer (see Quirk et al. 1985, pp.159-71; Kies 1992, p.231) though whether the doer is considered unknown depends more on cohesive relations throughout the text than on the construction of any single clause.

In Adnan’s text the passive voice in the effective clauses is used across the text to undermine a clear sense of agency and responsibility. This is mostly done by leaving the role of Agent implied through receptive (agentless passive) clauses as in the following examples (underlined sections):

(a) [53_19_1294] that a Palestinian newsman has been cold-bloodedly shot by some earnest monotheist.
(b) [16_4_487] To discuss the atrocities [[committed by the British and the American in Iraq].]
(c) [45_2_1127] To inhabit the city [[which has been conquered by murder].]
(d) [50_3_1216] that Baghdad’s National Library has been destroyed.

In the examples above grammatical agency is obscured through the option of construing actions in receptive voice construction (bolded verbal groups). In examples (a), (b) and (c) the Agent role is realised by an optional agentive ‘by-phrase’ at the end of the clause (underlined in the examples), while in example (d) the receptive voice construction is realised by the use of Agentless passive, that is the Agent is not textually present but implied. However, even when the role of Agent is textually present by an optional ‘by-phrase’ it is referred to as a non-conscious entity (e.g. “murder” in (c)) or is a human
entity but located in embedded structure thus hard to access (e.g. “by the British and the American in Iraq” in (b)). More is said about this clause status pattern in the next section. Consequently, instead of telling the reader who did what to whom, the reader is left wondering who did the action because responsibility is predominantly implied. However the text engenders action in the reader – that is, they are prompted to think about this avoidance of agentive figures and the sense of ambiguity around agents that are only implied.

6.7.5 Agency in relation to clause status

A pattern depicting the linguistic realisation of agency is observed with respect to clause status in Adnan’s text.

6.7.5.1 Agency in dependent clauses

In a range of clauses with effective voice where agency is displayed (with or without the Agent role), this agency is placed in subordinate (dependent) clauses which represent the meaning as presumed, or less arguable than meanings in an independent clause, as in the following examples (bolded sections):

(a) [6_14_210] to read || [6_15_211] that Baghdad is being bombed
(b) [22_14_622] To remember || [22_15_623] that war is devastating Iraq.
(c) [39_16_1007] to inform him || [39_17_1008] that Bassora is being destroyed

In the example clauses (a), (b), and (c), the processes ‘bomb’, ‘devastate’, ‘destroy’ represent ergative voice structures where the feature of agency is present (although the Agent role is implied due to the use of passive voice). However, agency in all the examples is placed in a subordinate (dependent) clause (of projection) which is given a lower grammatical status or weight. The choice to represent agency and actions associated with war in subordinate clauses with lower status diminishes the agency of the represented actions and participants.

46 Dependent clauses do not independently select for Mood and this is what is meant by them being less arguable.
6.7.5.2 Agency in embedded clauses:

In embedded clauses agency is displayed by effective voice processes construing specific actions and events associated with war but is suppressed because of the clauses’ rank, as in the following examples (embedded clauses bolded):

(a) [7_15_256] To listen to the poison [[distilled by the military correspondents.]]

(b) [45_9_1134] To diagnose madness in those [[who exterminate Iraq.]]

Clauses (a) and (b) involve effective voice processes (“distil”, “exterminate”) but the feature of agency which is construed by these processes is placed in embedded structures which are “non-ranking” or “rank-shifted” clauses. In other words, from an SFL perspective an embedded clause is a part of a constituent within another clause and functions as qualifier (post-modifier) of a nominal group, never an arguable proposition in itself. In this way, placing agency in embedded clauses is another strategy of decreasing the feature of social agency.

It is important to note that these clauses (dependent and embedded clauses) are finite but again their status as dependent/embedded clauses limits the effect this has against the dominant pattern of non-finite – it is clearly part of Adnan’s design because we only see finite clauses when the clause is downgraded another way, either as dependent or as an embedded clause. I will elaborate on the types and configurations of these clauses in Chapter 7.

In summary, in these ways, agency, which is an important way of depicting responsibility, can sometimes be manipulated using lexical and grammatical options to confuse the sense of who/what is taking responsibility for actions. Moreover, even when there are some instances of effective voice clauses or where the grammatical roles of Agent or Medium is available in these clauses, these clauses typically also show lexical and grammatical strategies of ambiguity and downgrading of agency. The results of the agency analysis suggest, thus, that in Adnan’s text agency is diminished not only through the repeated use of non-finite structure but also through the construal of some ergative patterns which, although their typical function is to enhance the construal of agency, are in this text manipulated by Adnan to downplay agency and, as a result of these patterns being odd for English as a whole, alert readers to this tendency in the world outside the text.
6.8 Discussion

In the previous sections a detailed description of how agency is constructed in Adnan’s text has been given. Through a variety of grammatical resources used by Adnan, agency is predominantly diminished and agents when they occur are depicted as rather passive with regard to the events presented in the narrative. This grammatical construal produces a sense of the futility of action in a time of war.

To summarize the results of the analysed text, with respect to ergative structures the text is construed with a dominant pattern of middle voice clauses, where actions and events are not caused by an external participant. However, a few examples of effective voice clauses are used in the text to display a capacity for agency. Nonetheless, even in effective clauses this capacity for agency is restricted in a variety of ways in the text. Many of clauses with effective voice perform agency metaphorically. In the majority of effective voice clauses the role of Agent is textually absent or implied due to the extensive use of non-finite clauses. If textually present the Agent role is either marginalized by the use of passive construction or by representing non-conscious entities. Similarly, the entity taking the role of Medium that is impacted by the effective voice process is largely construed as non-conscious so it is depersonalised and the material action does not affect or bring about a real change. Furthermore the way the word “war” is used in relation to the feature of social agency can be seen as another explicit minimization of human agency during wartime. Through certain lexical choices and repeated use of non-ergative constructions highly impactful actions of violence in which humans act directly on other humans are construed as if there is no explicit human action or only abstract human action, with little or no reference to the impact of the action of war on humans. The material experience of war is not only represented as abstract or effaced because no agency is attributed to “high impact” events of war; it also implies that there is a sense of distance, indifference and detachment “to hear a war from far away, for others”.

Adnan manipulates a constellation of lexicogrammatical features to promote this theme of passivity and distance within the text environment and the text persona’s action. Chiefly, Adnan does this by creating a narrative that downplays the grammatical agency as a phenomenon of the text’s linguistic environment. The text portrays the inseparable interaction between the language and reality: Adnan’s grammar construes human agency as conspicuously absent. The theme of the passivity of the social individual in times of
war discussed in this chapter is modelled by Adnan through the grammatical constructions of the persona’s agency. This grammar might also act outside the text. It alerts us to this possibility by creating awareness or a new angle of envisioning the world. Adnan manipulates the expression of agency so that the subject is never seen as active or in control of any situation, except for some instances where agency proves present but where the agent is not clearly identified in the clause. A text such as Adnan’s is always an ensemble of various linguistic choices, which contributes to creating “our models of reality”. Variation and unusual patterns such as those found in Adnan’s text help make it possible “to reason about meaning [and also about our lives and what is happening to us], rather than simply becoming habituated to it”, to use Lukin’s words (2004, p.72). It prompts reaction and the potential for action.

We can understand the elimination of the Agent role, thus downplaying agency, through a consideration of the avoidance of the autobiographical “I”, or the literary persona. The “I”, the first-person personal pronoun, can clearly locate agency and responsibility when the rest of the clause selects agentive roles, but when referenced by implication only, this can undermine a clear sense of agency and responsibility for any action. Avoidance of proper nouns or personal pronouns in a life writing genre distances the text from any sense of a subject’s agency and responsibility – and even centrality in their own narrative – each of which we would normally expect in an instance of life writing. Adnan’s configurations of agency produce a dominant sense of passivity of a self and a community against which we react and it implies a strong sense of disconnectedness, fragmentation, and estrangement. It insinuates a dual criticism of the self and the community. Adnan insists that the community and the individual must respond to what is happening when “in a time of war” instead of remaining passive, only hearing of “a war from far away, for others”, to use Adnan’s words. This is revealed in the text through the portrayal of the self as passive or indifferent (through it also operates through shock value) but at the same time as struggling to perform some agency and resist helplessness. Adnan’s text effectively reveals that manipulating the linguistic construction of agency is well suited the task of supporting “arguments on behalf of people who have been oppressed or traditionally silenced” (Jolly 2001, p.28). The text promotes a novel precarious sense of life and responsibility to others through an incredible piling up of repeated structures, combinations, and effects that compound the impact and power of violent actions in the face of a complete lack of agency by onlookers. This disjunction, this huge power
differential gives the readers ‘pause’ – prompt them to consider how the loss of agency has occurred.

Adnan, the writer, thereby perceives war atrocities and the human and cultural loss of Iraq through aligning her literary and linguistic production with that perception. Her text generates an agentive voice paradoxically as a radical act of transformation. Against the absence of linguistic agency in Adnan’s text, we can recognize from a different perspective how the practice of life writing enacts itself the capacity of agency and ethical responsibility. It draws our attention through language style to what we should do about the way we live, be, and belong. The text exceeds the expectations of readers by challenging their understanding of the English language when the construal of basic linguistic elements is only referenced by implication. Adnan’s life writing practice indicates how experimentation with the autobiographical “I” as a site for agency can generate an intervention into the genre and language more generally.

The construal of agency in Adnan’s life writing reveals that the practice of life writing is an instance of and a resource to construct a counter-agency through the writer’s linguistic intervention. This counter-agency contrasts with the instrumental, but largely conforming, agency used by dominant media or political discourse on “war” to exert power and manipulate peoples’ thinking about the legitimacy of violent acts of war. It also points to the agency of the reader, that is, the power of the writer also has impact on the reader such that this power is transferred – there is a flow from one to the other. Whitlock calls this the agency of a testimonial culture that is enacted “to elicit recognition from others who will register and witness its truth and pursue social justice” (2015, p.138). This is what Adnan achieves as a cosmopolitan subject. Adnan says, during a time of upheaval the body and the mind are “thrown into a state of urgency. One’s life can put into question, forcefully, new light shed on old beliefs” (Adnan 1995, p.11).

6.9 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has investigated Adnan’s text from the perspective of the ergative model within SFL’s experiential function of language in order to offer us a better understanding of how the lexicogrammatical construal of the presence or absence of agency contributes to establishing a more critical and ideological dimension to the genre of life writing. Adnan’s text creates a particular urgency through the piling up of grammatical selections
to understand the role of life writing in the witnessing of a devastating reality. It depicts how the act of writing enables an impact, and therefore, a capacity for social agency and change that apparently may be restricted or not present in the external world. The next chapter, Chapter Seven, deals with the construal of interdependency relations in life writing by looking at patterns of logico-semantic connections between clauses in Adnan’s text, again using an SFL perspective.
Chapter 7
The Construal of Interdependency of Events in Adnan’s Text

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores clause complexing patterns (interdependency and logico-semantic relations between clauses) in Adnan’s text. It analyses one important aspect of how events and actions are construed and related in the text by examining choices in how clauses are combined together including their status as dependent or independent clauses. The grammatical complexity of language realized through the logical organisation of meaning in a text concerns how a sequence of events construes certain themes, depicting a world of connected events and selves or a world of isolated events and selves. Thus, analysing choices that construe logical relations between events in Adnan’s text can help us understand how Adnan designs in/dependence of events in terms of a critique of interdependence of people and the world, stressing how in/dependence of events gives rise to interdependence of human entities.

In Adnan’s text, I argue, there is a link between how clauses are set up as dependent/independent and how humans are construed as interdependent and how this relates to principles of belonging and intersubjectivity. Adnan’s construal of interdependency relations is associated with the principle of belonging which acknowledges the self’s interdependence with others and the foundation of one’s relationship with others in defining identity. Belonging is central to being (knowing and engaging the self in the here and now in relation to others) and becoming (changing and/or re-shaping the self in response to many different events and circumstances). Thus, belonging, being, and becoming shape who/what we are and who/what we can become in relation to others. Interdependency relations are also associated with the notion of intersubjectivity in autobiographical writing, which is a way of understanding what one can know about oneself and another, including the intersubjective relationship between readers and writers. Thus, how we understand the notion of interdependence of self, others and the world with respect to the act of writing itself is of particular importance in this chapter. So, understood as a novel model of linguistic representation of the principle of being and belonging, it is the reciprocal, mutual relation between interdependent entities, individuals or groups, which is given priority in this chapter. This is crucial not
only to understand Adnan’s sense of belonging but also to how Adnan makes meaning out of the expression of the local and global world around that self.

The clause complexing patterns in the analysed text can be seen as central to Adnan’s critique of the English language – in part she is showing how the within-clause grammatical choices such as transitivity, as seen in the difference between ‘I hurt you’ vs ‘you hurt me’ are not enough to capture the reciprocal nature of agency, responsibility and influence over one another. The world is much more complex than this – people are interdependent, causation can go both ways and be distributed in complex ways. Language can identify and make this evident as observed by Halliday (1990, p.11) in his seminal paper “New ways of meaning: The challenge to applied linguistics”, where he emphasises that “language does not passively reflect reality; language actively creates reality” and that “lexicogrammar… shapes experience and transforms our perceptions into meanings.” Adnan’s construal of grammatical patterns of interdependency in the text shows that language actively creates reality. That is, in Adnan’s text language resources enable the construal of our perception of how the world and reality is intersubjectively constituted or connected.

In order to further our understanding of how Adnan sets up a critique of the independent actor and how her life writing text asks questions and/or puts forward her worldview on interdependency, belonging and glocal relations through the use of clause combination method, the present chapter examines Adnan’s grammatical selections of taxis and logico-semantic patterns used to relate events and entities in those events in terms of their (inter)dependency.

The question of how events and humans are depicted as interdependent in Adnan’s text can firstly be discussed in terms of her choice of tactic relations which distribute information/actions in multiple positions and statuses within clause complexes. Some information/actions are given prominence by occupying main (independent) status while others are placed in subordinate (dependent) status by clause complexing. As we will see this creates a flow of events that are interconnected in complex ways. Firstly, in the opening paragraphs of the narrative, clauses are organised into a predominantly paratactic structure, showing long stretches of independent clauses that are equal in status. For example, in an opening paragraph the narrative begins as follows: “To listen to the radio, to put it off, to walk a bit, to think, to give up thinking, to look for the key, to wonder, to
do nothing, to regret the passing of time, …” (Adnan 2005, p.100). As the text unfolds, this paratactic structure gives way to more hypotactic relationship (with dependent/subordinate clauses), as in (hypotactic clause bolded) “To find a solution, to want to go to the beach, to tell that the sun is coming down, to hurry, to take the key, to open the car door, to sit, to pull the door shut, insert the key in the ignition, turn it, warm up the engine, to listen, to make sure (that) nobody’s around, …” (Adnan 2005, p.101).

From an SFL perspective, firstly, these two example structures function to extend, add, or temporally enhance the events depicted in unbolded clauses and/or other clauses within the text. Secondly, from the point of logico-semantic relations, the examples show that Adnan’s text uses both projection (how ideas are created by the writer in terms of their status and content) and expansion (how cause, time, contingency, purpose, restatement and many other relations) are set up between clauses in a way that depicts the writer’s sensibility and sensitivity to the repeated tragic history of war events and how we respond to these events. At a later point in the text, a more simplex structure of clauses prevails (single clause sentences), particularly as Adnan starts to negotiate war events and how the text persona reacts to them, as in “To drink some water. To turn in circles… To believe it. To pretend. To discuss with one’s heart. To talk to it. To quiet it down, if possible.” (Adnan 2005, p.105). So, we can see from the examples above how different complexities involve layers of depth (complexes inside complexes) creating a ‘local’ pattern of tactic and logico-semantic structure. Yet, a disruption of this structure of complexes can create a greater impact on our awareness of interdependency and how the writer negotiates it. In this way, the chapter shows how clause complexing is employed by Adnan as a crucial resource to display a specific configuration of the self and the world from the writer’s perspective and to devise a certain mode of reality for readers.

The following sections are dedicated to reviewing conceptualization of notions of belonging, interdependency and intersubjectivity in literary criticism and life writing theories, overviewing the system of clause complexing from an SFL point of view, and tracking how patterns of interaction between taxis and logical semantic relations are used by Adnan in the analysed text.
7.2 Belonging, interdependency and intersubjectivity in literary criticism and life writing theories

In literary criticism, the notion of interdependency as a relation of “mutual dependence” between interdependent entities (objects or individuals or groups) has been conceptualised in relation to notions of belonging and intersubjectivity.

The notion of belonging and nonbelonging is often problematized by postcolonial life writers and depicted in different ways in lifewriting texts to encourage readers to ponder on affiliations to tradition, home, and community across diverse borders in the postcolonial world. Belonging comes in many forms but is often seen as national, transnational or hybrid. However, the notion of belonging can also be liberated from any preconceived definitions or limitations of social or national identity. Understanding and enacting belonging beyond these limitations can enable a decentring, as well as an interdependent, sense of self.

The (de)centeredness of the self is one of the ways by which the notion of spatial belonging is depicted in life writing. Where dislocation and displacement of (postcolonial) autobiographical subjectivity are emphasized as typical features of this subjectivity, Moore-Gilbert (2009, p.54) argues that a specific “socio-geo-historical location” is crucial for articulating postcolonial subjectivity, so place, in this context, is not only gendered and racialized, it is also “selved”. That is, “socio-spatial location” in postcolonial life writing plays a significant role in establishing the subject’s sense of location and belonging so as to allow us to understand the interdependence between the self, others and the perceived world, all of which may intersect as “layers of narrative location” (Smith & Watson 2001, p.58).

In women’s life writing the principle of belonging may mean both belonging to, and being separate from, social institutions surrounding a woman life writer. This later position offers writers a mode of self-representation that is characterised by

the complex, uneasy relationship between the female autobiographical self that is ‘a part’ of communities and institutions, and the self that stands ‘apart’ from them. It is this complex and frequently agonized sense of self – seeking to belong yet yearning for solitude and privacy, or indeed for distinction from the group (Collett & D’Arcens 2010, p.1)
This ‘agonized’ sense of self women life writers, in general, and Adnan in particular, construe in a variety of ways.

Moreover, the notion of belonging can be seen from the perspective of the concept of cosmopolitanism in one of its many conceptualizations. As cosmopolitanism makes claims to being free from local, provincial, or national prejudices and attachments, it emphasizes, however, that this intellectual ethos or spirit “is not one of rootlessness” (Cheah 2006, p.21). Instead, what is imagined is an interdependent circle of belonging that not only involves the “transcendence of the particular” and “blindly-given ties of kinship and country”, but also the realisation of an interdependent responsibility within a world: a world of intersubjective meaning and “intersubjective formation of moral agents” (Cheah 2006, p.49).

With respect to the act of (life) writing itself, the notion of interdependence of self, others and the world can be understood through the lens of the notion of intersubjectivity. For some literary critics and writers the self is conceived as a “dynamic interaction” between subjectivity and intersubjectivity. For Beauvoir, a theory of the literary work is a theory of intersubjectivity in which “we are separate yet intertwined” (Goodman 2015, p.15). Beauvoir argues that intersubjectivity relates to one’s experience of existence: “existence is necessarily intersubjective”. She asserts that intersubjectivity is “the relation of dependence between the self and the other” characterised as “possibilities that can be expanded in creation and action” (Bjork 2008, 27). In addition, the existential aspect of intersubjectivity in a literary work, in Beauvoir’s view, depicts the conditions of intersubjective experience that “the work makes possible” which prompts the reader to undergo “imaginary experiences” that are “as complete and disturbing as real experiences” (de Beauvoir 2004, p.272). Literature, as she notes, provides an intersubjective space to express the issue of one’s relationship to the other “in all its real complexity”, “sociality”, or “the way intersubjective relations and actions both affect and depend on a larger political community” (Bjork 2008, p.163). Thus, Beauvoir suggests that to realise one’s individual existence would not merely allow for, but also require, a “plurality of intersubjective identifications and relations” (Bjork 2008, p.175), individually and collectively. Beauvoir’s perspective can be crucially linked to how relations between events and actions (for example, what is shown in clause combinations) can engender relationships between people, thus a clause combination analysis can become an analysis of interdependency and belonging, as we shall see from the analysis.
of Adnan’s way of combining clauses in her life writing text and what meaning it gives rise to.

Also relevant to our discussion of intersubjectivity in life writing is the recognition of intersubjective relation between writers and readers. The autobiographical “I” can develop intersubjective relationships with those in the outside world beyond the world of an individual lifewriting text. Edwards (2011, p.19) suggests that with respect to the concept of relationality or intersubjectivity – the relationship established by the author between her self and others, and how others “impact upon her developing selfhood” – readers are allowed to play a “productive role” in the creation of the autobiographical self thus establishing an “intersubjective space” in which author and reader, as Kuckelman (2013, p.41) observes, “intend each other as fully creative subjects” and the process of writing becomes a “communal process”. In the same vein, Hejinian (2000, p.203) notes that the existence of self which is determined by intersubjective relationships with others is “the exercise of that possibility that one inescapably acknowledges others”.

Thus, in a broader sense, incorporating notions of interdependency and intersubjectivity in the act of life writing in general, and Adnan’s text in particular, enables the creation of a range of social relationships. In the following sections we will see how Adnan makes a motivated choice to manipulate interdependency relations in English grammar as a resource for constructing an alternative narration of selves as interdependent and intersubjective.

7.3 Clause complexing and interdependency relations in SFL

One of the aspects of language complexity in Adnan’s text is her selection and building up of specific patterns of clause complexes. From an SFL perspective, Thomson notes (2013, p.185) that “the clause is the central resource for making meanings” and the clause complex “enables us to produce more complex configurations in which two or more clauses are joined into a larger whole”. The combination of two or more clauses into a clause complex in a text manifests itself in taxis and logico-semantic relations that “link clauses, typically one pair at a time, as interdependent on one another” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.367). These relations are outlined below.
7.3.1 Interdependency (taxis):

From an SFL perspective, the two possible types of logical dependency by which clauses are combined into a clause complex, namely dependence (hypotaxis) or equality (parataxis), can represent a logical combination of clauses in an on-going development or an open-ended sequence,\(^{47}\) as in the following examples:

**paratactic relations**

(1) Some people eat bio-foods \(\parallel\) but other people die of hunger.

1 2

(2) The friend says, \(\parallel\) “war is an atrocity”.

1 2

(a) hypotactic relations

(1) I was walking through the park \(\parallel\) while the sun was coming down.

\(\alpha\) \(\beta\)

(2) The friend said \(\parallel\) that war was an atrocity.

\(\alpha\) \(\beta\)

The four examples above demonstrate that as as opposed to a single independent clause forming a “clause simplex” (a clause that stands by itself, e.g. ‘The woman wrote a letter.’), the combination of several clauses together forms a larger unit.

The separate clauses in a clause complex are linked together by either expanding one clause with another (as in examples (a1) and (b1)) or where one clause quotes or reports another (as in examples (a2) and (b2)). Paratactic and hypotactic relations can intersect between any of the semantic relations outlined below.

7.3.2 Logico-semantic relations between clauses

In terms of relational logico-semantic structure, one clause is related to another by means of projection or expansion but the clauses are not constituent parts of a unit; in the case

\(^{47}\) In SFL theory, the clause complex can be expanded as much as the speaker/ writer wants as a limit to the number of times a clause complex can be expanded by another clause may not occur simply because “the structure of the clause complex is serial: one clause is related or linked to another step by step. A clause complex is thus like a chain- it can be expanded indefinitely (Martin 1997, p.207).
of expansion, this relationship will often be marked by a structural conjunction (and, then, if, when, besides, etc.) (Matthiessen 1995, p.124). Expansion relates phenomena as being of the same order of experience, while projection relates phenomena to phenomena of a higher order of experience (semiotic phenomena – what people say and think) (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, 377).

7.3.2.1 Expansion

The system of expansion enables speakers and writers to elaborate on the experiential meanings of a clause in certain ways to create sequences of two or more clauses (clause complexes). Expansion manifests itself in three main semantic relations: elaboration, extension and enhancement.48

In elaboration, one clause elaborates on the meaning of another by further specifying or describing it. Elaborating clause complexes include expository, exemplifying, and clarificatory options (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.396-404). For example,


\[ \begin{align*}
\alpha & \quad \beta \\
\end{align*} \]

In extension, one clause extends the meaning of another by adding something new to it, such as an additional action. Extending clause complexes include addition (also adversative), variation and alternation (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004, 405-410). For example,

[1] I aligned some books on the shelf [2] and threw away quite a few.

\[ \begin{align*}
1 & \quad 2 \\
\end{align*} \]

In enhancement, one clause enhances the meaning of another by qualifying it in one of a number of possible ways: by reference to time, place, manner, cause or condition (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.410-421). Enhancing clause complexes include the various circumstantial relations recognized in English (spatio-temporal, causal-

48 With these three main semantic relations a variety of conjunctions can be used; however, conjunctions are not always textually present but can be inferred.
conditional, manner, and matter in the context of clause complex) (Matthiessen 1995, p.148). For example, the temporal relation below:

[1] We spoke of the weather [2] then we moved to war news.

Thompson (2013, p.194) argues that the central examples of each type of expansion relationships are “fairly easy to identify”. However, he notes that there are “borderline cases” which are “more difficult to pin down, not least because the same conjunction may be used to signal different semantic relations, or there may be no explicit signal”. These “borderline” cases are of particular interest with respect to Adnan’s text as we shall see below.

7.3.2.2 Projection

Projection achieved by mental or verbal processes is one of the major kinds of relations by which clauses may be combined in a clause complex. Projection is concerned representing speech or thought as either direct or indirect. A process of saying (verbal process) or sensing (mental process) projects onto the content side of language rather than the expression side.

Projection is very commonly deployed in narrative to construe dialogic passages and to represent the characters’ process of consciousness or interiority – characters’ inner struggles, thoughts, feelings, and reactions to a situation. Projection is referred to as “reported speech” by Leech and Short (1981, p.2007) that portrays linguistic choices of modes of speech and thought presentation. A writer who decides to let her readers know “the thoughts of a character at all, even by the mere use of thought act [or speech act] reporting, is inviting [her readers] to see things from that character’s point of view” (Leech & Short, 2007, p.271). Thus, the subtle interaction between the presentation of speech and thought and point of view is one of “the richest and most open-ended areas of interpretative significance [in a literary narrative], and thus constitute an extremely fruitful aspect of the study of style in [that narrative]” (Leech & Short, 2007, p.281). As we shall see below Adnan uses projection but in a manner that is not typical of life writing or narrative more generally.
Projection relations between clauses can co-occur with parataxis or with hypotaxis. A paratactic relation holds when one clause quotes another (direct speech/thought), for example,

(a) [1] She says,                ||  [2] “the day is beautiful”  (direct speech (locution))
    1 (projecting clause)            2 (projected clause)

and a hypotactic relation when one clause reports another (‘indirect speech/thought’), for example,

(b) [1] We think                  ||  [2] that war is everywhere. (indirect thought (idea))
    α (projecting clause)          β (projected clause)

Projected clauses – i.e. quotes or reports – represent the wording or meaning of the speaker – ‘she’ or ‘we’ in the above examples – represented in the projecting clause.

Ideas are typically projected “indirectly” (as in (b)) reports through hypotaxis rather than “directly” as quotes (as in (a)) through parataxis. Quoted locutions cover the full range of clauses, both major clauses and minor ones (calls, greetings, exclamations); while reported locutions are more restricted; their range corresponds only to that of major clauses (Matthiessen 1995, pp.144-45).

7.3.3 Embedding: the ‘rank shift’ – neither paratactic nor hypotactic

In addition to systems of interdependency and logico-semantic relations, embedding constitutes part of the organization of logical meaning. Embedding, also called the “rank shift”, is a mechanism “whereby a clause or phrase comes to function as a constituent within the structure of a group” inside a clause (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.426). This means that it functions as though it had the rank of a group or word, and it does not enter into interdependency (paratactic or hypotactic) relations. For example,

(a) The woman [[who came to dinner]] was a journalist. (simplex clause with embedded clause qualifying the noun ‘woman’)
Punctuation as spacing device

Crucial to the analysis of how events and actions are sequenced in Adnan’s text is an investigation of how punctuation is used in the text. Punctuation involves the use of spatial signs to signal boundaries between clauses. Punctuation can play a double role of connecting and splitting the flow of thought and action in a text as well as the direction of reading the text. In the case of paratactic extension, it can be either signalled by an explicit use of a marker (conjunction) – e.g. ‘and’ – or it can also be signalled by punctuation marks – e.g. comma and/or semicolon. In Adnan’s text these marks run through entire paragraphs where ‘and’ is realized implicitly to stand particularly for extension by addition. However, in some instances extension or enhancement is left implicit, and the only explicit connection is made by way of the punctuation marks (commas and/or semicolon).

Punctuation, thus, can be realized as a further resource of clause complexing. It is a resource to connect and/or separate (interrupt) the continuation of the states of the mind or the events described. By means of punctuation, long sequences of text can be seen as connected in more complex chains of actions. The chains are connected by commas and/or semicolons, with or without ‘and’ as a signal of long extension by addition so as to create a continuous flow of discourse or to support the temporal sequence of events happening at relatively the same point of time (Thompson 2014, pp.186-7). In addition, the punctuation marks used to connect a long stretch of text may be suppressed by means of other punctuation such as ‘full stop’. Accordingly, punctuation can indicate how the writer wants her readers to read the text, as we shall see in Adnan’s text.

Having explained the notion of interdependency in literary criticism and the system of clause complexing in SFL and how the clause combination of experiential meanings are construed by the system of INTERDEPENDENCY and LOGICO-SEMANTICS, I shall devote the rest of this chapter to analysing how events and actions are sequenced in Adnan’s text in terms of Adnan’s options of taxis and logico-semantic relations, embedding and punctuation relations and their semantic features, in order to identify how the writer sequences inner and outer experience and why that sequence is seen as unusual in some instances. The next section will show initial analysis and observations.
7.4 Overview of interdependency relations in Adnan’s text

The central argument in this chapter is that Adnan’s use of logical meaning – clause complexing – parallels her ideas about belonging and self as understood through the negotiation of war, responsibility and human relations in terms of the phenomenon of interdependency. Chains of clauses in the text display a series of process configurations that vary across the text. The grammatical patterns help establish key themes – belonging, intersubjective relations, dissociation, de-centeredness of the self – that run through Adnan’s text.

Adnan’s chapter consists of 53 sections set out as paragraphs. A scan of the layout of Adnan’s chapter that displays these section boundaries is provided in Appendix E. These sections show that the chapter follows a rhythmic shift between writing styles and tone within these styles. The shifts of styles are predictable and flow by way of a ratio based on the number of sections preceding and following. One of the key shifts in style is displayed by specific patterns of clause complexing.

The dominant patterns of clause combination in Adnan’s text are shown in the diagram in Figure 7.1 below:

Figure 7.1 A map of Adana’s selections of clause combination in the analysed text

As seen from the diagram in Figure 7.2, in general, the 53 sections or series of clauses making up the whole chapter studied in this thesis can be realized by two main patterns:
Pattern 1 and Pattern 2. Pattern 1 consists of 7 sections (paragraphs: 1,2,3,4,5,6;19). These sections show single clause complexes (CCs) which run through two sub-patterns: Pattern 1a comprises 3 single paratactic clause complexes – running through paragraphs 1 and 2, and it shows up in paragraph 19); Pattern 1b comprises 4 single paratactic clause complexes – running through paragraphs 3,4,5, and 6 – with a few number of hypotactic clause complexes. The first pattern (Pattern 1) which consists of 7 clause complexes can be seen at the beginning of the text and it is realized by two sub-patterns displaying an ongoing series of clause complexes. Each clause complex (CC) in this pattern is construed as a separate section or a paragraph that runs through a number of clauses ranging from 31 to 47 clauses. These clauses are connected by punctuation (mainly comma) and coordinate conjunctions (and, then, but, or); and subordinate conjunctions (if, when, that).

Pattern 2 consists of 46 sections (paragraphs: 7-53) which comprises a dominant pattern showing a series of clause simplexes with a small number of paratactic and/or hypotactic clause complexes. The second pattern is noticed when the first pattern of a clause complex is disrupted by a clause simplex (CS) structure – a single clause structure. The majority of clauses in this pattern are clause simplexes separated by punctuation (although there is an occasional clause complexes and verb group complexes (VGC) within this pattern). How these patterns are distributed/presented across Adnan’s chapter is shown in Table 7.1 below:

Table 7.1 Distribution of patterns of clause complexes and clause simplexes in Adnan’s Chapter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections#</th>
<th>Patterns</th>
<th>Number of clauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>70 clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 6</td>
<td>1b</td>
<td>180 clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>360 clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>2 clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 53</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total: 53 sections</strong></td>
<td><strong>Patterns:</strong> 3</td>
<td><strong>Total: 1361 clauses</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(P1a repeated; P2 repeated)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following example sections from Adnan’s chapter shows how the two patterns of clause complexing are construed in the chapter:
Table 7.2 Example section showing a variant of pattern 1 (a continuing clause complex (CC) structure in Adnan’s text) (Adnan 2005, p.99)

Section 2 – Illustrating Pattern 1a (39 clauses), 1 Clause complex (across 1-39 clauses)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cl#</th>
<th>Cl Complex#</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To look at the watch, the clock, the alarm clock,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to listen to the ticking,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to think about it,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to look again,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to go to the tap,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to open the refrigerator,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to close it,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to open the door,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to feel the cold,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to close the door,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to feel hungry,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to wait,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to wait for – dinner time,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to go to the kitchen,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to reopen the fridge,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to take out the cheese,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to open the drawer,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to take out a knife,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to carry the cheese,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>and enter the dining room,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to rest the plate on the table,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to lay the table for one,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to sit down,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to cut the cheese in four servings,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to take a bite,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to introduce the cheese into the mouth,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to chew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>and swallow,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to forget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to swallow,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to daydream,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to chew again,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to go back to the kitchen,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to wipe one’s mouth,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to wash one’s hands,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to dry them,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to put the cheese back into the refrigerator,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to close that door,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to let go of the day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In Table 7.2, (CL#) – This numbering refers to section number followed by clause number. (Cl Complex #) – This numbering refers to clause complex number indicating that all the 39 clauses form one paratactic clause complex, linked by punctuation (commas) or conjunctions (e.g. and).
As discussed in section 7.2.1, paratactic relations are the relations of juxtaposition, and are very similar to the category of coordination in traditional grammar. The example text in Table 7.2 displays Pattern 1a where a sequential order of events is built up through paratactic clauses.

In Table 7.2, the clauses that depict each event are connected by a punctuation mark (comma), and by the coordinate conjunction (and) for few clauses (as underlined in the example above). Pattern 1 is clearly seen at the beginning of the text. It runs through 6/53 sections (1-6) and accounts for 11% of the whole chapter (89%). However, although the table shows that the events seem to be sequentially connected (to go, to open, to close), the semantic relations (extension, elaboration, or enhancement) are less clear with non-finite clauses. This suggests Adnan’s narrative style is similar to Camus’s in that through omitting conjunctions “a world of successive, isolated events” (Caffarel-Cayron, 2006, p.48) rather than a world of sequentially connected events is revealed.  

As shown in Figure 7.2, the whole chapter discussed in this thesis comprises 53 sections (or paragraphs). 6 sections out of 53 sections comprises the pattern exemplified above being made up of one clause complex (CC). For example, section 1 consists of one clause complex with 31 clauses, followed by section 2 which comprises one clause complex (CC) with 38 clauses, shown here as section 2 above, and so on until the end of section 6.

Thus in Pattern 1, the writer appears to be using parataxis with extension to juxtapose contiguous independent ideas, thoughts, feelings, events and actions portrayed in a dynamic and fluid framework of clauses. It also creates a sense of “a piling up” Butt (2009, p.379) between independent clauses (clauses showing paratactic relations between clauses of equal status).

Also interesting is Adnan’s use of hypotaxis along with parataxis in Pattern 1b, which is a variant of Pattern 1. Pattern 1b also employs some hypotaxis nested within the paratactic

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50 Caffarel-Cayron (2006) examines clause complex system across (literary) text types (composed in French), and she observes that in Le Bavard (1947) by Louis-René des Forêts the use of “a succession of extensive clause complexes” foregrounds “the dynamic and fluid nature of talk [in the novel]” which is central to the theme of the text: the main character is someone who “talks a lot, a chatterbox” – although the text is “highly literary”, it depicts “a logical structure very similar to that of casual conversation”) (Caffarel-Cayron 2006, p.49). However, in Albert Camus’s L’Étranger (1942), Caffarel-Cayron notes that the use of different complexities such as a sudden occurrence of simple clauses (and clause complexes) creates “a world of successive, isolated events” rather than sequentially connected events, thus the main character is portrayed as “an outsider, detached from the reality and society in which he lives” (Caffarel-Cayron, 2006, pp.48-49).
framework. For example, in section 6 of Adnan’s text a clause complex is construed with sequences of both paratactic and hypotactic clauses. Thus this structure enables not only the juxtaposition of events among the sequences of various types of clauses but also allows transition or movement from one group of ideas, thoughts, emotions, events and actions to another, as Table 7.3 shows below:

Table 7.3 Example section showing a variant of pattern 1 (a continuing clause complex (CC) structure in Adnan’s text with various clause types) (Adnan 2005, 99)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cl#</th>
<th>Cl Complex#</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 196</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To rise early.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 197</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to hurry down to the driveway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 198</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to look for the paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 199</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(to) take it out from its yellow bag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to read on the front-page WAR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 201</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>to notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 202</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>that WAR takes half a page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 203</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to feel a shiver down the spine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 204</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>to tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 205</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>that that’s it,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 206</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>to know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 207</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>that they dared,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 208</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(and) that they jumped the line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 209</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>to read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 210</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>that Baghdad is being bombed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 211</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to envision a rain of fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 212</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to hear the noise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 213</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to be heart-broken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 214</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to stare at the trees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 215</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>to go up slowly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 216</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>while reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 217</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to come back to the front-page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 218</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(to) read WAR again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 219</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>to look at the word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 220</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>as if it were a spider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 221</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to feel paralyzed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 222</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to look for help within oneself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 223</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to know helplessness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 224</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to pick up the phone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 225</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to give up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 226</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to get dressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 227</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to look through the windows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 228</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to suffer from the day’s beauty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 229</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to hate to death the authors of such crimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 230</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>to realize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 231</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>that it’s useless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 232</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>to think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 233</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to pick up the purse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 234</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to go down the stairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 235</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to see people [[smashed to a pulp,]]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 236</td>
<td>α</td>
<td>to say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 237</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>yes indeed the day is beautiful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 238</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>not to know anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 239</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to go on walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 240</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>to take notice of people’s indifference towards each other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The excerpt text in Table 7.3 displays the second sub-pattern (Pattern 1b) of the clause complex series in Adnan’s text. The grammatical structure of Section 6 shows that one clause complex consisting of 46 clauses dominates. The majority of clauses in this structure are paratactic (independent), numbered 1, 2, 3, …, e.g. ‘1To rise early, 2 to hurry down to the driveway, 3 to look for the paper, …’. However, the structure of Section 6 also comprises a number of hypotactic (dependent) clauses (underlined in the example text above and marked by α and β), e.g. ‘α to realize β that it’s useless to think’. The two types of clauses are juxtaposed by punctuation (comma) and conjunctions (e.g. ‘that’, and ‘as’ in hypotactic clauses, and an ‘and’ that is not textually present in paratactic clauses). This juxtaposition with short pauses between the linked clauses allows transition from one group of ideas or events to another, foregrounding a dynamic design with which the text begins as opposed to the static depiction of events and actions later in the text (see section 7.5.2). In other words, although parataxis links clauses with short pauses, creating a percussive effect and a steady beat of ideas, hypotaxis creates stronger pauses and additional “degrees of depth (complexity)” (Butt 2009, 366) within some ideas, going further into an idea and getting further away from the ‘surface’ beat of events joined in the fairly simple relation of sequence. This shift in “clausal architecture” from one sequence of ideas/events to another adds to the literary complexity and contestable and indeterminate nature of Adnan’s text.

It is important to highlight that various kinds of logico-semantic relations are evident in the text along with paratactic and hypotactic relations. It is partly the parataxis and the hypotaxis and partly the semantic relations themselves – the logico-semantic relations of projection and expansion – that enhance the depiction of experience through different layers of depth in Adnan’s text. For instance, hypotactic projection gives insights into the interdependency of events (connection or disconnection between events/relations) she exactly wants to alert us to, and whether the sequencing of events such as “to pick up the purse, to go down stairs, to see people, etc.” is part of her project of linking grammatical patterns of routinely events to her main argument about horrendous war happening far away and how people respond to it, indicating again lack of agency and intersubjective relations due to an apparent “people’s indifference” towards each other during a time of conflict, so it is as though Adnan is saying “it’s useless”, then, to see “people [[smashed to a pulp]]” (using an embedded structure which indicates a downranking of the status of event), thus engendering a pessimistic attitude about the world, yet paradoxically interposing that negative picture of the world between subsequent clauses portraying a positive attitude “[6_236] to say [6_237] yes indeed the day is beautiful”.

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51 In Table 7.3, (CI Complex #) – This numbering refers to clause complex number indicating that all the 46 clauses in section 6 form one paratactic clause complex, within which there are sub-sequences of paratactic and hypotactic structures linked by punctuation (commas) or conjunctions (e.g. and; that; while; as if)
52 Interestingly, in Table 7.3, clause [6_235] here Adnan creates for readers an ambiguity of knowing what interdependency of events (connection or disconnection between events/relations) she exactly wants to alert us to, and whether the sequencing of events such as “to pick up the purse, to go down stairs, to see people, etc.” is part of her project of linking grammatical patterns of routinely events to her main argument about horrendous war happening far away and how people respond to it, indicating again lack of agency and intersubjective relations due to an apparent “people’s indifference” towards each other during a time of conflict, so it is as though Adnan is saying “it’s useless”, then, to see “people [[smashed to a pulp]]” (using an embedded structure which indicates a downranking of the status of event), thus engendering a pessimistic attitude about the world, yet paradoxically interposing that negative picture of the world between subsequent clauses portraying a positive attitude “[6_236] to say [6_237] yes indeed the day is beautiful”.

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mind of the character (interiority), and hypotactic temporal enhancement – such as using ‘while’ – reveals how things (events/actions) are happening at the same time. This shows that there is an intersection of taxis and logico-semantic relations, as will be shown later (see section 7.5).

However, the pattern where events and actions in Adnan’s text are depicted as dynamic is disrupted by a locally dominant pattern of clause simplexes (single/simple clause structure) which starts from section 7 and onwards in the text, as the example text in Table 7.4 shows below.

Table 7.4 Example section showing pattern 2 (clause simplex (CS) structure interspersed with clause complexes (CC) in Adnan’s text) (Adnan 2005, 101)

Section 7 – Illustrating Pattern 2, CS (24 simplex clauses), CC (4))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cl#</th>
<th>Cl Complex#</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7_242</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To have lunch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_243</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>To ask for some beer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_244</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>To give one’s order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_245</td>
<td>4 CC 1</td>
<td>To drink, eat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_246</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>and pay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_247</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>To leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_248</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>To reach home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_249</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>To find the key.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_250</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>To enter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_251</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>To wait.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_252</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>To think about the war.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_253</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>To glance at the watch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_254</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>To put the news.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_255</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>To listen to the poison [[distilled by the military correspondents]].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_256</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>To get a headache.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_257</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>To eat dry biscuits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_258</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>To put the radio back on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_259</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>To hear bombs [[falling on Baghdad]].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_260</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>To listen to ambulances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_261</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>To go out on the deck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_262</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>To look at the lengthening shadows on the grass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_263</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>To count a few dead flies on the pane.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_264</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>To wish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_265</td>
<td>24 CC 1</td>
<td>To go to the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_266</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>and look at the mail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_267</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>To feel discouraged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_268</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>To drink some water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_269</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>To not understand the wind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_270</td>
<td>28 CC α</td>
<td>To wonder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_271</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>if the human race is not in chaos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_272</td>
<td>29 CC α</td>
<td>To wish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_273</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>to blow up the planet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7_274</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>To admire those [[who are marching against the war]].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen from Table 7.4, the majority of clauses (24 clauses) in the example text are arranged as simple clauses (one sentence=one clause separated by punctuation (full stops) and showing no logical relations). This grammatical arrangement in the example text produces an impression of separateness between events and actions. However, this simple clausal arrangement may also create “a list-like accumulation” (Butt’s 2009, p.380) of paratactic clauses with logical relations. For example, the first 8 clauses could have been construed as ‘To have lunch, to ask for some beer, to give one’s order, to drink, eat, and pay, and then to leave and reach home’, using punctuation and conjunctions. Thus, through the use of non-finite and an absence of conjunctions Adnan makes the logico-semantic relations vague, which serves Adnan’s overall agenda about interdependency relations. This is because despite a sense of parataxis felt particularly between events that display daily routine, while trying to comprehend war Adnan still implies that events and relations in the whole are successive yet isolated, indicating a feeling of discouragement (“to feel discouraged”) coupled with anger (“to wish to blow up the planet”). Adnan seems to ask us whether this is because “the human race is [or is not] in chaos”. But Adnan also alerts us to the “hope in action” or agency – although deeply ‘embedded’ – portrayed by “those [[who are marching against the war]] (see clause [7_274]).

Further, within this simple clause set-up a structure consisting of a few clause complexes (4 clause complexes with logical relations) and comprising paratactic clauses, e.g. “to go to the table, and look at the mail”, and hypotactic clauses, e.g. “to wonder if the human race is not in chaos”, is observed. These clauses (underlined) are all linked by punctuation (commas) or conjunctions (‘if’, ‘and’). This clausal taxis (interdependency relations) displays the building of a “sub-complex” known as ‘nesting’ (see section 7.5). It is meaningful that this ‘break’ in the pattern – i.e. including some hypotactic projection – comes at the end of the section, not scattered through it. This predominance of separated simple clauses in the example text above creates a static effect in the text and a strong sense of detachment that dominates the rest of Adnan’s text, except for a few complex clauses.

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53 In Table 7.4 (Cl Complex#) – This numbering (1,2,3,…) refers to clause simplexes (one clause), except for CC4, CC24,CC28,CC29 which refer to clause complexes displaying tactic structures (sequence of either paratactic or hypotactic clauses) linked by punctuation (commas) or conjunctions (e.g. and; if).

54 It is worth to note that in ergative terms, Adnan’s selection of process “march” shows middle voice (intransitive verb of movement), meaning that even if Adnan sees hope or action in people “marching against the war” this action by them does not display agency (that is, it does not impact on others), which amplifies Adnan’s critique of interdependence of people and the world.
Thus, the options for combining/separating ideas/events as a series of clauses are taken up in several ways by Adnan: combination with conjunctions, combination without conjunctions entirely, and combination with punctuation. However, although punctuation is used in a text as a strategy to juxtapose two or more paratactic clauses, the case that when no explicit conjunctive signals are used to define the boundaries of such a clause complex makes it rather difficult to decide on the nature of the expansion. Adnan’s options of taxis relations display the use of many paratactic clauses which suggest many thoughts/events as not dependent on one another but independent of each other – they have equal status, as seen from Pattern 1a.

Adnan’s option to use independent clauses with no explicit conjunctive signals allows the reader the possibility of providing the missing connections such as using ‘ands’ to smooth the shift from one independent thought/event to the next. However, independent clauses structured as such in Adnan’s text create a sense of things piling up across a fast-moving narrative which can be both ironic and lyrical. It is ironic because Adnan paradoxically portrays thoughts and events as mutually connected while she is critical of how a sense of dissociation and detachment is felt as dominating the external world. It is lyric because it resembles lyrical poetry as along with the repeated use of non-finiteness (infinitive), that is, although producing a sense of monotony and tediousness, it portrays a lyrical transition from one clause to another, which suggests a sad recognition of how tragic events repeatedly occur and how our sense of self is unshifting.

On the other hand, the same practice of combining series of clauses involves hypotactic clauses, as seen in Pattern 1b and Pattern 2. These clauses are dependent and insist on hierarchy in the sense that hypotaxis builds several dependent clauses upon one another, forming one complete thought. It assigns order to the clauses and subordinates one idea to another, with the use of explicit conjunctions, as is the case in Adnan’s text. This practice of combining clauses in terms of interdependency (independent/dependent) in previous sections is disrupted in the subsequent sections of Adnan’s text as the majority of clauses are construed as single, thus the clauses are not given priority nor hierarchy, except in a few instances. This disruption in the pattern creates a sense of “detachment” of the text persona from her environment or a “world devoid of logic and transcendence”, and a de-centralization of events and ideas (see Caffarel-Cayron 2006, p. 48).

In the next sections, I will elaborate on patterns of interdependency and logico-semantic relations in Adnan’s text to highlight the effects they have and why they are important.
7.5 Intersection of interdependency relations and logico-semantic relations in Adnan's text: the specific patterns of grammatical selections

The present section examines in more detail the intersection of paratactic/hypotactic relations and logico-semantic relations in Adnan’s text and asks what implications these grammatical patterns have for the literary interpretation of the text.

While the system of Taxis organizes the relation between clauses according to their interdependency, the system of Logico-Semantics organizes clause combinations according to relations of either projection or expansion (see section 7.3). The system of clause complexing and the intersection of taxis relations with logico-semantic relations, and clause complex structures are in principle indefinite – i.e. they allow for ‘recursion’ which organizes the choices to add further clauses or not as “stop” and “go on”. Table 7.5 below shows examples of intersection of taxis relations and logico-semantic relations where an expanding clause complex and a projection clause complex can be construed with both paratactic and hypotactic relations. Note that paratactic projection and hypotactic projection map onto the concepts of direct speech and indirect speech respectively in literary analysis and traditional grammar (there is no general equivalent for paratactic vs hypotactic expansion):

Table 7.5 Intersection of taxis and logico-semantic relations in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taxis</th>
<th>Logico-semantic</th>
<th>Expansion</th>
<th>Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expansion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>parataxis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She went out and bought the newspaper.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1_She said, 2_“the day is beautiful.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1_She thought to herself, 2_“If I can just stop this noise.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hypotaxis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She heard about the war, while she was reading the newspaper.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>α She said β that she was feeling unwell.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>α She thought β that it is useless to think about the war.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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7.5.1 Hypotactic/paratactic clause complexes and logico-semantic relations

As mentioned in the previous section, clause simplex dominates Adnan’s text, while clause complexing occurs frequently and displays specific patterns of interest. Table 7.6 below exhibits some of these patterns from Adnan’s text such as expansion relations which are used more frequently than projection relations in the clause complexing structure of Adnan’s text.

Table 7.6 Number of occurrences of expansion and projection clause complexes across taxis in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taxi</th>
<th>Projection</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Expansion</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parataxis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>[None found]</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>[49_670_1210]To forget the world’s age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotaxis</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>[17_220_531]To believe</td>
<td></td>
<td>[17_220_532] that the future will escape the diabolical schemes of the enemy.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also, it can be seen from Table 7.6 above that the majority of expansion relations are construed as paratactic (independent), while the majority of projection relations are construed as hypotactic (dependent) in Adnan’s text. This shows how ranks/statuses are frequently shifting between clauses once they are intersected with semantic relations, giving rise to questioning how Adnan uses this process of shifting statuses/ranks along with semantic relations as a crucial method for her “worldmaking” – I use the term to refer to Adnan’s creation of a world of interdependent actors/relations through writing – and how this impacts readers’ understandings of how these relations are made and preserved. These points on the intersection of taxis relations with logico-semantic relations will be discussed in greater detail in the following sections.
7.5.2 Logico-semantic relations and taxis

This section explores the intersection of taxis relations – paratactic relations and hypotactic relations – with logico-semantic relations – expansion and projection – at different levels of grammatical structures in Adnan’s text and the effects this intersection produces on the flow of events and ideas in the entire text.

7.5.2.1 Paratactic and hypotactic expansion

Expansion is used frequently in Adnan’s text to juxtapose two or more clauses with or without explicit conjunctive signals that define the boundaries of a clause complex. This use of expansion produces a sense of accumulation of “atomistic structures” (Butt 2009, p.379)\(^{55}\) of events and actions. The frequent use of parataxis dominates clause complexes combined by expansion, as shown in Figure 7.2 below:

![Taxis & Expansion in Adnan's text](image)

As can be seen from the figure above, Adnan prefers parataxis which is a means to ‘arrange side by side’ over hypotaxis as a means to ‘arrange under’. In other words, in terms of interdependent relations, the text displays a preference for arranging the majority of clauses (and, in turn, events/relations) as independent of each other: one clause initiating an event/relation and the other continuing event/relation. According to Butt (2008, pp. 74-77) parataxis is “suggestive of a loose structure” in a text. Correspondingly, this choice by Adnan suggests that events and relations are is loosely connected, 

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\(^{55}\) Butt (2009) uses this expression to refer to an accumulation of paratactic relations between clauses of equal status, e.g., between independent clauses.
monotonous and linear. This ‘loose’ structure repeatedly seen in the text contributes to how Adnan alerts us to be attentive to the necessity of interdependent relations.

Nevertheless, this linear sequence of events/relations is disrupted by hypotactic relations which, although used with lower frequency, still contributes to Adnan’s specific ‘world building’. The choice to use hypotaxis (clauses are of unequal status with a clause being dependent on – or subordinate to – on another) serves Adnan’s critique of interdependence of people and the world. According to Halliday & Matthiessen (2014, p.441) a subordinate clause can be only “brought in to support its main clause”. This choice gives rise to a sense of social hierarchy and allows for contextualizing the events in a more contestable mode. This suggests that hypotactic relations in Adnan’s text portray sequences of events/relations as dominant and subordinate, thus they display hierarchical classification which generates a sense of social divide or dissociation. Adnan seems to say that predominantly human relations in the world prioritize either an independent, individualistic sense of self or a belonging to a dominant ideology or privileges, which both need to be re-thought and re-produced.

In addition to dependency relations, a more in-depth analysis of Adnan’s choice of taxis reveals further layers of complexity such as nesting and embedding. Adnan uses tactic relations across a sequence of clause complexes with expansion relation to create the “sub-complex” known as “nesting” – a logical property of logical structure whereby a clause complex is a mixture of hypotactic and paratactic sequences, either of which may be nested inside the other (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.376). Paratactic and hypotactic clause nexuses – which portray linear sequences, e.g. 1+2 or αxβ – are often found within layers of internal bracketing, or nesting, in Adnan’s text. For example, the clause complex in Figure 7.5 below consists of three clauses and has three layers of both paratactic and hypotactic relations. Adnan here alerts readers to the notion that relations are more complex than linear: they have different layers of complexity and degrees of depth, as illustrated by the examples from Adnan’s text in Figure 7.3 below. Speaking of complexity and indeterminacy in language, Halliday asserts that “human experience, and human relationships, are much too complex and many-sided to be captured in categories that are well-formed, bounded and stable” (Halliday 2005, p.194). This means that with more degrees of complexity/depth it can become even harder to establish an intersubjective space to express the issue of one’s relationship to the distant other or re-
reproduce social relationships that are deeply rooted in or influenced by social or political biases.
Figure 7.3: Clausal taxis (interdependency relations) with nesting in three examples representing clause sequence from Adnan’s text.
In examples (a), (b) and (c) in Figure 7.5 above the process of “nesting” is manifested by taxis and logico-semantic relations in different ways. In (a) the primary clause (1_initiating) is a paratactic single clause linked to the secondary (2+3 continuing) clauses by the relation of paratactic expansion (‘then’ and ‘and’), displaying a linear sequence. In (b) the secondary clause (+3continuing) is connected to a hypotactic sequence of clauses (α_dominant) and (β_dependent) linked by the relation of hypotactic expansion (in this case ‘while’). In (c) the sequence of clauses (1α_dominant) and (1β_dependent) is linked by the relation of projection (‘that’), and is connected to a sub-complex consisting of paratactic clauses of expansion (‘and’) and hypotactic clauses of projection (‘that’). Examples (b) and (c) display layers of internal nesting which parallels Adnan’s perspective on how events being interdependent gives rise to an interdependence of human actors. Notably, a frequent occurrence of the process of nesting manifested along with taxis and projection (including expansion) can be seen in Adnan’s text. Nesting is a pattern repeated throughout the text and used by Adnan as an effective strategy foregrounded to draw readers into seeing relations not only as bound by ranking (equal/unequal) but also as encompassing different degrees of depth or layers of experience, thus provoking readers to consider notions of being and belonging accordingly. In this way, readers are encouraged to think of relations as not only pertaining to the text persona’s local experience but to the interdependency of the local and global around the self.

Importantly, paratactic and/or hypotactic expansion across Adnan’s text are mainly revealed by three levels of structure which are part of the depth of complexity of Adnan’s selections. These are: clause complexes, nominal groups, and verbal group complexes, as Figure 7.4 shows below:
As Figure 7.4 shows above in Adnan’s text expansion accounts for 237/1361 instances realized at different levels of structure. At the level of clause complexes (CC), expansion with taxis in Adnan’s text is used with a higher frequency (143/237). At the level of nominal groups (NG), expansion is realized non-tactically in embedded (rankshift) clauses comprising 66/237 clauses across the text. At the level of verbal group complexes (VGC), expansion with taxis occurs across 28/237 verbal group complexes. Due to time and space limitation, I will limit my analysis to clause complexes and nominal groups. The ordering of events through shifts between hypotaxis, parataxis and rank-shift in these experiential levels of structure creates particular themes and effects in the analyzed text. How these levels of realization are logically construed and what themes/effects they produce in Adnan’s text are discussed below.

**Clause complexes (ranking clauses)**

As well as looking at the amount and location of expansion, it is important to discuss how different types of expansion work in the text. As mentioned before, from an SFL viewpoint, expansion in clause complexing is used to elaborate, extend, and/or enhance, Figure 7.5 below shows the frequency of types at the level of clause complexes across the analyzed text:
Figure 7.5 Expansion across its various functions in clause complexes in Adnan’s text

(a) Enhancement

In Adnan’s text, the majority of expanding clauses are used to “enhance”. Enhancement is the most frequently used semantic relation among other semantic relations of expansion in the text, occurring across 72/143 clause complexes. From an SFL perspective, enhancement occurs when one clause or series of clauses expands another clause by qualifying it with some circumstantial feature of time, place, cause, concession or condition (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.378); note the similarity to ‘adverbial clauses’ in traditional grammar.

Paratactic enhancement is very close to basic coordination – i.e. extension, (see below) – but with a circumstantial aspect to the relation.

In Adnan’s text, paratactic circumstantial enhancement is used to flag parallel meanings across different scales, often using conjunctions such as ‘then’ or conjunction groups such as ‘and then’ and ‘but then’. These elements are often employed by the writer to establish a picture of events in the text as taking place in a temporal sequence, as in the following examples (conjunctions of enhancement bolded):

(1) [13_135_415] To think about history || [13_135_416] then reject that thought.
(2) [43_595_1086] To dream || [43_595_1087] and then return to a heart-wrenching reality.
In hypotactic clauses temporal enhancement is seen especially with conjunctions such as ‘while’ and ‘when’ as in:

(1) [17_210_518] To feel guilty [17_210_519] **when** thinking of hunger”

The use of both paratactic and hypotactic temporal enhancement creates a sense of variation in the text’s temporality. It thus influences how we understand the temporal unfolding of events. In this way, temporal enhancement helps construct Adnan’s argument about events/relations in a world of interdependent associations, because it offers a temporal dimension through which we see relations logically undergo a change of state. This gives rise to a sense of immediacy in the text – enabling the involvement of readers in simultaneous or successive time relations, thus establishing an intersubjective space. In other words, Adnan uses this mechanism to depict overtly ‘when’ events/relations happen so as to make up for a lack of time reference or temporal related events due to the overuse of infiniteness (infinitive). This suggests that circumstantial features construe a different picture from how events/relations could be alternatively constructed. Nevertheless, these depictions of events in Adnan’s text located in time only through tense, or with tense and conjunctions of time, remain for the most part unanchored at their base due to the overall infinitival framework of the life writing text.

In hypotactic clauses circumstantial enhancement is also deployed by other conjunctions construing other types of enhancement, including place, manner, cause, and concession, as in the following examples (conjunctions of enhancement bolded):
Nevertheless, these types of circumstantial enhancement such as causal or spatial relations between experiences are sparsely used (for example, across the entire text causal linkers such as “because” occur only 4 times, and spatial linkers such as “where” occur only 3 times). This means that Adnan’s text is given only light framing in terms of time, space or cause. For example, a lack of causal relations depicting ‘why’ events happen diminishes a sense of responsibility and agency on the part of actors in these events. Caffarel-Cayron (2004, p.554) argues that lack of causal links gives a text “a very local focus” which explains the main character’s “behaviour rather than the world around him”.

In the logical world, we talk of ‘a’ causing ‘b’ to happen, or ‘a’ happening, so ‘b’ happens (see Halliday & Matthiessen 1999), which indicates that our experience is not independent of one another. Adnan’s text points to the absence of this logic, such that one thing does not lead causally to another, and this affects how our interdependent relationships are constituted.

Adnan’s construal of events as sparsely related creates a sense of the absence of causality and agentiveness within the text’s local environment and persona’s behaviour. But the absence of time and cause relations also engenders a sense of the absence of cosmopolitan obligations. One aspect of these obligations is to think about the ‘why’. Yet this absence of the ‘why’ in the text arguably comes to the reader’s notice, and where this happens it can enable readers to intervene regardless of social or national affiliations. Thus, the rare use of circumstantial relations of enhancement in the text serves to produce a sense of a world of isolated events and selves – that needs to be re-configured, a sense which contributes significantly to conveying Adnan’s view of the interdependency of events and social actors in a time of war.
(b) Extension

Expansion in Adnan’s text is also used as a strategy to extend events. Extension occurs when one or more clauses expands another by adding some new event [using ‘and’], giving an exception to it [using ‘but’\(^{56}\)], or offering an alternative [using ‘or’] (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, 378). Adnan’s use of extension consists mostly of addition, creating a continuous picture of event/relations. Often when Adnan uses the ‘and’ relation this is not explicit but presupposed in the text – or implied by punctuation marks (comma and semicolon). This pattern of extension occurs across 63/143 clause complexes in Adnan’s text. The largest single clause complex with extension as its principle of expansion consists of 47 clauses. The smallest clause complexes using extension consist of 2 clauses and this is the more typical pattern, as in the following examples from Adnan’s text (conjunctions of extension bolded):

(1) [52_707_1256] To notice || [52_707_1257] that mirrors shine during the night ||
[52_707_1258] and that the mail is waiting [[to be answered]].

(2) [9_58_306] To find a path || [9_58_307] and walk on wet grounds.

(3) [20_239_556] To not eat || [20_239_557] or keep time.

(4) [30_401_800] To not worry, || [30_401_801] but be bored.

This text design produces a sense of the accumulation of events, relations, ideas and actions that are not seen as explicitly ordered in time, cause or other logical relation, resulting in clause complexes that are only loosely connected. In this way the grammar points to Adnan’s worldview and calls for an acknowledgement of the interdependency of actors by creating for readers an awareness of the absence of these expected logical relations between events and social actors.

Notably, an overall shift from this dominant text design will surprise readers in later sections. The text transforms from the linear but loose clausal combinations illustrated above to a succession of clause simplexes (separate simple sentences) then later taking on layers of clausal depth and complexity. These changes contribute further to how readers’ expectations of a life writing text are disrupted.

\(^{56}\) The conjunction ‘but’ is basically defined as ‘enhancing conjunction’ and in the present analysis in this chapter I incorporated it within the results on enhancement.
(c) Extension and punctuation

It is useful here to elaborate on Adnan’s use of punctuation in relation to the construal of paratactic extension and enhancement. In the text, punctuation by commas and semicolons is incorporated as a further resource of complexity especially in conveying a sense of interdependent relations between events, actors, and lines of thought. Punctuation is manipulated by the writer to connect as well as to separate (interrupt) the continuation of states of mind and events described. Interestingly, at the very start of the text we can see that long stretches of text are intended by the writer to be understood and read as connected in more complex chains of ideas and events by means of punctuation. The chains are connected by commas and/or semicolons, with or without the conjunction ‘and’ as a signal of long extension by addition. This strategy can be seen in the first six sections (paragraphs) of the chapter, where a continuous flow of discourse is created that helps convey not only the temporal sequence of events happening supposedly at the same point of time, but also how the writer wants her readers to read the text and what she is drawing her readers attention to.

Adnan uses punctuation as a strategy to enable readers to recognize how they normally “rely on the [conjunctive] signals of interdependence to identify boundaries within [clause complexes]”, but as Thomson (2013, p.187) points out many clauses are combined without having these signals explicitly shown, and this lack of explicit signalling through conjunctions is common in Adnan’s text. However, there is still a fuzzy line in the way Adnan combines equal (paratactic) clauses through punctuation rather than through conjunctions. This is because it becomes ambiguous whether to treat the clauses – that are connected only by punctuation – as part of one clause complex, or if one decides to split these clauses, then where to start that split. Nevertheless, a shift towards separating such a long extended clause complex into smaller chunks by means of punctuation marks is observed as a pattern towards the middle and the end of Adnan’s text where the use of full-stops to separate the flow of ideas and events (the daily actions) in the subsequent sections (paragraphs). So punctuation here plays a double role of connecting and splitting the flow of events/relations and displaying, but at the same time, blurring (confusing) boundaries between events/relations, which reinforces the contestable and indeterminate nature of Adnan’s text.
(d) Elaboration

Expansion is used by Adnan to elaborate on events. Elaboration occurs when one or more clauses elaborates on another in order to restate it in different words, specify in greater detail, comment, or exemplify (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.378). The use of elaboration by Adnan is observed in less density in the text, compromising 8/143 clause complexes, as shown in the following examples (clauses of elaboration bolded):

(1) [14_150_435] To create terror, || [14_150_436] that’s war.
(2) [45_617_1127] To water the palm trees with fire, || [45_617_1129] that’s a barbarian’s job.
(4) [44_604_1103] To pervert language. [44_604_1104] pervert the children’s eyes.
   [44_604_1105] corrupt [44_604_1106] and destroy, || [44_604_1107] that’s the new order.

Semantically, the clauses bolded in the examples above function as relational identifying clauses that are used to introduce explanatory or evaluative comments. I treat them grammatically as clause complexes because of the internal apposition in these two clause complexes, as in example (1) ‘that’s war’ which is construed in apposition to the preceding clause – ‘to create terror’. Elaboration is used by Adnan as a way of expressing events/relations of equivalence between something and its character or value. In other words, these two-clause identification structures act to symbolize events/relations in which the nature of the entity has already been established (as it were, the Value in a Relational Identifying clause), then its specific embodiment (as in a Token) is stated. Adnan uses these links of elaborating clauses to produce an evaluation or coding of war events amid her construal of the interdependence of daily events and human participants. More interestingly, although this pattern is used with low frequency to function as elaboration, it serves symbolically to back up the primary arguments the writer has made across the text as a whole, such as the unfair representation of the “Iraq war” in the mainstream media and how western viewers react to it, in contrast with what war really is or does to a nation from the perspective of this life writer as witness.
Nominal groups (embedding – rankshifted clauses)

Expansion is also used by Adnan at the level of the nominal groups. This level of expansion does not enter into interdependency relations or logico-semantic relations with other clauses. Instead it is seen in embedded clauses which are distinguished from ranking clauses. Because embedded clauses (comprising 66/237 clauses across the text) are used rather frequently in Adnan’s text this rankshifting structure plays a crucial role in how Adnan designs her text and establish her themes. The embedded clauses in the analysed text are constructed either as finite clauses (examples 1, 2, and 3) with a relative pronoun expressing an explicit Subject, or in non-finite clauses (examples 4 and 5) where the Subject is implicit, as illustrated below (embedded clauses bolded; nominal groups underlined):

(1) [53_736_1295] To look at the narrow and long road [[which leads the world to the
slaughter-house]]
(2) [45_612_1122] To inhabit the city [[which has been conquered by murder.]]
(3) [34_468_899] To revolt against the torture [[to which it is being submitted.]]
(4) [28_365_758] To look at pictures [[glorifying war.]]
(5) [22_267_609] To read a lot of trash [[mixing the blood of war with business’s
stench.]]

The embedded clauses (shown in square brackets in the examples above function as postmodifiers and according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, pp.399-428) they are used essentially “as a strategy for introducing into the discourse background information, a characterization, an interpretation of some aspect of the dominant clause, [or] some form of evaluation.” The embedding in these clauses displays a shift in Adnan’s clausal architecture from non-embedded to embedded events and relations. This shift breaks readers’ expectation because it prompts them to consider a different layer of complexity relating to their ideological beliefs or sense of belonging and may therefore invoke questions about the events and happenings in the text. In other words there is sudden splash of evaluation of humans and their institutions, but these entities and institutions

57 According to SFL theory, the information given to characterize the entities in the nominal groups can be categorized as perfective (-ed), or imperfective (-ing), and the Subject can apparently be presupposed in the non-finite clauses (see Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, pp.429-30).
58 In SFG these postmodifiers are also called Qualifiers (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.428).
are depicted without (or with little) responsibility or agentiveness – partly because they do not show a direct involvement in the event or experience expressed by the clause but instead are embedded within the description of some other entity in the clause. But if ‘de-embedded’, there is a potential for increasing agency in the embedded clause or relations. This can be understood in relation to embedded layers/ideologies of social structure which determine interdependent or agentive relations. According to Hasan (1996, p.133), ideology is “a socially constructed system of ideas which appears as if inevitable, as it leads us to the essential principles governing the social structure in which the ideology is embedded and for which it provides support”. Although Hasan is not speaking directly of clause embedding here, the burying of contestable claims and evaluations as presuppositions inside the post-modification of nouns, rather than presenting evaluations as propositions that can be more openly accepted or rejected, plays a part in constructing the inevitability of systems of ideas that Hasan discusses. Thus, Adnan’s selection of embedding serves to imply an evaluation of interdependent relations, that is, it is not that they are entirely absent, but they are so deeply embedded and hard to access or see, which impacts and complicates the actions one might take. However, although this grammatical pattern gives rise to a sense of frustration and difficulty of relationships between people, it demonstrates that the act of writing gives agency and engenders relationships between social actors by raising fundamental questions for readers about the nature of the actions and engaging them to think.

7.5.2.2 Hypotactic Projection

From an SFL perspective, projection is used in clause complexing to refer to the representation of the speaker’s thinking in a dialogue and/or the representation of a character’s consciousness (interiority) in narrative.

With respect to interdependency relations, all projection in finite or non-finite clauses in Adnan’s text is hypotactic occurring across 120/1361 clause complexes. There is no pattern of paratactic projection observed in Adnan’s text. This shows a preference to report indirect thought and indirect speech over direct speech or thought. However, aside from having more no examples direct quotation, Adnan’s text largely follows the distribution patterns of projection in English as a whole (see Matthiessen 2006).

Figure 7.5 below shows the types of projection in Adnan’s text:

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59 For example, in his analysis of the systemic options in the systems of clause complex in English based
As seen from Figure 7.9 projection of interior content (ideas) is seen more frequently in Adnan’s text than projection of exterior content (sayings). These patterns of projection generate certain effects and themes in Adnan’s text. One of the themes established by Adnan’s projection choices is intersubjectivity and belonging.

One way of looking at how projection sets up a view on intersubjectivity is to relate clause complexing to primary, secondary and tertiary intersubjectivity. Psychologists observe how the principle of intersubjectivity develops in human children. ‘Primary intersubjectivity’ develops in expressive body signs “before speech from protoconversations with two-month-olds”, while ‘secondary intersubjectivity’ or ‘cooperative awareness’ and protolanguage develop “at the end of the first year” Trevarthen (2004, p.13). This shows that communication of experiences, intentions, and feelings is “the foundation on which conscious use of experience and the precise references and recollections of language are built”. Similarly, a distinction is made between “the mutual gaze” of primary intersubjectivity (I see you), shared attention (I see that you see X) and joint attention (I see that you see that I see X, and vice versa)” (Zlatev 2008, p.229). This ‘tertiary intersubjectivity’ acts as a resource for negotiating engagement, and requires an understanding that the sign “has [roughly] the same meaning for the addressee as for the sender” (Zlatev 2008, p.229). Also, psychologists notice that “dynamic negotiation of states of interest, purpose and emotion [through the principle of

on the analysis of a corpus of texts from a varied range of registers (n= 6,500 clause nexuses involving over 16,000 clauses), Matthiessen’s (2006, p.116) findings reveal that the projection of type “idea” is overwhelmingly more common in its “hypotactic” manifestation – that is reported rather than quoted.
intersubjectivity] is predicated on humans having their own ‘sense of belonging’” (Trevarthen 2004, p.26). As we will see below, the pattern of projection Adnan uses appear to be chosen in order to create particular effects in the text that raise questions about intersubjectivity and belonging.

(a) Mental projection

Adnan’s frequent use of projection to present reported thought arguably creates a context of shared experience for the writer and reader as it engages the reader in the projected world of persona’s consciousness and in the persona’s processes of thinking and feeling. This engagement through projecting what people think (rather than what they say) enables internal thoughts, experiences and feelings to be accessed and shared – either by the reader, or by the persona and other characters within the text. This suggests that Adnan’s mental projection works to build intersubjective relationships between people and events not only within the text’s world created by Adnan, but between Adnan and her readers. Examples of Adnan’s mental projection are illustrated below (projecting clauses underlined; projected clauses bolded):

1. [4_4_134] to see \(\textit{\text{if the clouds are moving}}\)
2. [17_220_531] To believe \(\textit{\text{that the future will escape the diabolical schemes of the enemy.}}\)
3. [9_69_325] To regret \(\textit{\text{that evil exists.}}\)
4. [18_231_550] To be\textsuperscript{22} sure \(\textit{\text{that someday, no one knows when, justice will prevail.}}\)
5. [11_103_367] To hear \(\textit{\text{that the Blacks are overwhelmingly against the war, and that the Iraqis are resisting.}}\)

These clause combinations disrupt the usual local pattern of infinitives in Adnan’s text, in that they display a finite element (tense and modality). Importantly it is mostly the projected clauses (bolded in examples) that have this finite element. Adnan’s pattern of hypotactic projection with finite thus sets up an intersubjective reality that departs from the overall framework of the writing. The construal of mental projection in finite structures as an infrequent but noticeable pattern can be understood to mean that the writer wants to give her ideas a point of reference in the here and now and to make these arguable. For example, in “to notice that war takes half a page” putting “that war takes
half a page” in finite (present tense) relates the argument to its context in the speech event. When ideas are expressed in clauses that lack this kind of contestability or ‘arguability’ (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014) this makes it harder for readers to decide how to evaluate what is being said and whether they agree with it. This suggests that sharing intersubjective relationships and events through projection located in temporal reference can provide a better understanding of the shared thoughts. Also, examples (4) and (5) displays nested mental clauses, and in (4) the process (be) projects and is used as a way of construing agency with mental action (Moore 2004, p.109). The usual intersection of mental projection and taxis produces a construal of reality where mental reactions are more associated with dependency of social subjects or other people or things that create the response, rather than interdependency of actors in relation to others. However, this type of mental projection conveys the agency of the thinker and allows, at the same time, an agentic role for readers to engage in mental activities thus engendering a sense of intersubjective self through language choices (see Moore 2016).

(b) Verbal projection

By contrast with mental projection, and unlike many fictional or autobiographical narratives, Adnan’s text contains little or no verbal projection or other mode of representing human spoken interaction. Where it is present, verbal projection in Adnan’s text is always hypotactic and appears to be used to convey a sense of frustrated human exchange/connection. This hypotactic projection of speech represents what is said as indirect (reported) speech, as in the following examples (projecting clauses underlined; projected clauses bolded; verbal processes bolded):

(1) [16_187_488] To hear her say [16_187_489] that war is an atrocity, point.

(2) [24_322_685] To read an invisible line [[that says || that in Baghdad people die ferociously]].

(3) [53_730_1289] To hear the friend say [[53_730_1290] that a Palestinian newsman has been cold-bloodedly shot by some earnest monotheist.

(4) [25_331_695] To be informed, by a phone call, [[25_331_695] that Turkey is stirring over Iraq.

(5) [36_494_933] where some reporter affirms [36_494_934] that to bomb Guernica, Rotterdam, Baghdad or New York ends up being as many crimes of war.
Adnan’s preference for the use of hypotactic projection for speech, combined with other aspects of the construal of verbal interaction, creates a sense of detachment and leaves human relations largely outside the realm of exchange. The grammatical role of ‘Sayer’ in theses clauses is usually a human or human-like speaker but in some examples above, the indirect speech involves semiotic processes that do not necessarily represent speaking. In the majority of examples of hypotactic verbal projection, the language event is represented directly and the speaker of the text is presupposed to be the writer’s persona because of the established use of the infinitive. However, there are a few instances in the text where the writer also reports indirectly what someone else said which the reader infers as occurring at a different time from the present, as in examples (3) and (5) where “the friend” and “some reporter” act as human speakers. Yet, the speaker in still other clauses is an inanimate symbol source as in examples (2) and (4) where “an invisible line” and “a phone call” respectively act as a metaphorical speaker.

Notably, examples (1) and (3) display nested mental and verbal processes and these examples could be read as (I the persona hear that she says something; I the persona hear the friend says something) which signals a sense of intersubjectivity, or more specifically a situation of “tertiary intersubjectivity” whereby a shared and/or joint attention is built. Taken together, what we see in Adnan’s text is that the sense of human interactivity and intersubjectivity through verbal interaction is suppressed by the restricted use of verbal projection. The typical meaning and role of verbal events in narrative is undermined first by using them sparsely and then by giving them only hypotactic status (as dependent clauses) and additionally by making the speaking subject either not textually present or present but inanimate. However, the potential for intersubjectivity is still present in the text through the use of mental and verbal projection.

As shown above, Adnan favours mental projection over verbal projection which gives priority to the interiority of the character’s experiences over human interaction. However, the combination of hypotactic with both types projection downgrades the status of how Adnan wants projection be understood. By using this combination repeatedly Adnan avoids representing different characters engaged in a direct negotiation of meanings as one might expect from passages of direct speech in narrative to be showing (notwithstanding unreliable narrators). This combination works to help destabilise any

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60 This might seem unusual because employing hypotactic projection is a resource for representing human exchange in a text so that Adnan’s use of this resource goes against what a reader might expect.
sense of lively and sustained human relations constituted through spoken interaction. It has the effect prompting questions from the reader about how reality is intersubjectively constituted.

(c) Embedded projection

Embedded projection of facts is also used by Adnan to develop the theme of intersubjectivity. This type of projection is realized when the projected element is the noun that is functioning as ‘thing’. This type of projection is used with low frequency (6/120 instances of projection only). Such instances can all be seen as metaphorical. Examples of embedded projection of facts include (nouns of facts/attribute of assessment bolded; embedded projected clauses underlined):

(1) [20_241_570] To live with the knowledge [[that the Americans, the English, their allies, want the people of Iraq, the children, the men of Iraq, [[to be destroyed]]]].

(2) [41_571_1048] to avoid the idea [[that it could be different]].

(3) [46_634_1156] and with the realization [[that things aged and changes occurred in our own body]].

In the above examples, embedded projection is construed with nouns of facts (knowledge, idea, realization in examples (1), (2), and (3) respectively which are used to state ideas/arguments. These examples of embedded projection are important here because they function metaphorically to label events or states of affairs projected by the act of consciousness. These fact clauses can be all treated as mental rankshifted clauses of “semiotic objects” in Moore’s (2005) terms. To Moore (2005, p.110) “a social participant (animate or not) is considered a semiotic Agent … if they are construed semantically as causing or facilitating some event, where either the event or the means of facilitating it is construed as semiotic action.” This type of projection – although it is non-tactically realized – engenders a semiotic agency through mental activity and supports or participates in the process of engaging in mental activity as well as argumentation and complexing in Adnan’s text.

Importantly, Adnan’s use of embedded facts as a resource to create and/or play with a sense of intersubjectivity can be seen in example clause (1). In this example, the mental
processes ‘know’ and ‘want’ are nested to represent a situation of presupposition, as in: ‘I know that you know what the Americans want’. Such representations of ‘tertiary intersubjectivity’ could work to provoke attentiveness and engagement and engender a sense of belonging between writer and reader. But at the same time these patterns may prompt the reader to question or reject what is being presumed on their behalf – especially if they are members of the groups whose desires are being depicted.

**7.6 Discussion**

This chapter explored the complex network of interdependency relations and logico-semantic relations in Adnan’s Chapter and the effects these relations have overall on the meanings available in the chapter and their role in developing its major themes.

The complex network of clause complexing relations in Adnan’s chapter indicates that the writer chooses to ‘denaturalize’ the discourse of the self through the various grammatical choices she makes, signalling a distinctive linguistic politics of the self. These choices draw on various patterns of English grammar whose conventions the writer chooses to break on many occasions and to keep at other times. Patterns that appear to be dominant in the text are also disrupted possibly to draw readers’ attention to what has been elided elsewhere, and to the active role of both text patterns and reader engagement in interpreting in a text.

For instance, projection is deployed commonly in narrative to enact verbal exchange among human speakers and to represent the central character’s processes of consciousness, usually involving a mental or verbal clause projecting its own content of sensing or saying as a separate clause (Martin et al. 1997, p.167). However, in Adnan’s chapter, such verbal projection as a resource for human interaction through speech is used very sparingly, which would be unusual for a conventional discourse of life writing in English. Thus, the text is dominated by a sense of frustrated human communication – one of the major themes of the work. On the other hand, mental projection dominates the majority of projection clauses in Adnan’s text meaning that the writer emphasizes interior thoughts over verbal interaction which generates a sense of intersubjectivity and shared worlds of thoughts between writer and reader. Another example is expansion. In Adnan’s text, expansion is used initially in long chains of clause complexes to construe semantic sequences in the flow of events and ideas that together make up the episode. Yet, in Adnan’s text expansion connects monotonous sets of events that do not seem to have
much relation to each other or the relation is odd or hard to decode which resonates with the frustrated sense of human communication. However, this pattern of expansion may also point to the role of the reader as an active creator of meaning along with the text itself which can be understood as producing the effect of a dynamic flow of actions and ideas.

This dynamic view can make more sense when it comes to creating logical recursive constructions that can be expanded continuously in a running text. However, there are instances in Adnan’s text where clauses, despite being combined in a logical construction, may be semantically incoherent – due to an incompatible flow of events or ideas – as in the following examples: “To wait for the mail while thinking who cares?” and “To notice that mirrors shine during the night and that the mail is waiting to be answered”. This incoherence makes it difficult to interpret the overall meaning of the complex but this ambiguity or ambivalence acts to create an important intersubjective relationship between writer and reader by requiring more agency from readers to produce a cohesive reading than readers might normally expect. Even when taxis and/or logico-semantic relations are construed between clauses in an explicit way, it is still unclear whether and how the clauses build up a coherent meaning, which in turn brings within a dominating sense of confusion, frustrated communication with others and loneliness. This indicates that meaning – as well as grammatical structure – is also undergoing frequent disruption in Adnan’s text.

In fact, from an SFL semantic point of view, the effect of combining clauses into a clause complex rather than treating each one as a single sentence is one of ‘tighter integration in meaning’: the sequences that are realized grammatically in a clause complex are constructed as being sub-sequences within the total sequence of events that make up a whole episode in a narrative (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.365). In addition, this integration of a series of events into a sub-sequence is a feature of narratives in general, where past experience is constructed, and it could be a feature of casual conversation rather than of written discourse. For Adnan there is clearly a choice here. The writer organizes the first section of her chapter grammatically as a singly, long clause complex consisting of 47 clauses, with relations between clauses indicated largely through punctuation but also some use of temporal sequence. This construal seems intricate because it is less used in the written discourse of life writing, and perhaps because the development of this construal of clauses is not anchored in real time – the majority of the clause complexes are construed in the infinitival form which can indicate distance and
detachment from reality, or a lack of agency, or the absence of location in time and space. However, although the dominant pattern of infinitives is disrupted by the use of temporal enhancing clauses which have a bearing on the temporality of the ideas and events being discussed, these moments of reference to time and space are realized in only small quantities of the text, and on few occasions.

Looking from the point of view of taxis, in Adnan’s text, clause complexes are given the status of dominance and/or dependency according to the context in which those clauses appear. In the majority of Adnan’s chapter, independency relations – equal statuses among clauses – is given prominence which is evident in the high frequency of paratactic relations. However, this type of tactic relation works together with hypotactic relations – unequal statuses among clauses – in a relatively smaller frequency. The construal of taxis in terms of ranking clauses is also disrupted by the choice to use a quite high frequency of rankshifting (embedding) constructions as opposed to clause complexes. Adnan’s construal of interdependency relations and logico-semantic relations might relate to the writer’s response to a big event in terms of the ideological functions of the discourse of self and what agency the writer intends to establish. The movement from extending parataxis to clause simplexes, nesting parataxis, and hypotaxis indicates how Adnan’s text can be seen as a “latent gestalt” having many “depths of complexity”, to use Butt’s (2018) words. In terms of experiential meaning, the shift from the preference for linking clauses paratactically to the use of hypotaxis and embedding in the main clause instead of projecting or expanding it can be seen as a way of portraying even more unequal relations between events and participants in events, given that embedding is arguably an even more “radical form of inequality between elements, since it involves rankshifting” (see Li 2018). These shifting semantic ensembles open up different possibilities for readers to interact with the text and invites readers into a particularly active role in construing what the text is saying. It may also relate to the writer’s perspective on how a social hierarchy is constructed – equality is one way preferred by Adnan; inequality is another most frequently encoded in the ‘real’ world, which can produce a sense of separateness and isolation. Further, it might relate to how the writer wants her practice of writing be read against the conventional and stereotypical parameters of reading a genre of life writing – namely that she allows readers to have an active role in the creation of meaning in her life writing.
Adnan’s style of patterning of English grammar in her text undergoes a movement of ebb and flow and this movement has an impact on how the text can be unravelled. The movement can be seen on a larger scale from two different perspectives that intermingle. This movement can pertain to the representation of the self as constructed and coherent as well as detached and splitting. The coherent self, at times, is in harmony with the surrounding environment so it is capable of interacting, functioning, responding, negotiating and evaluating. On the other hand, that same self, at many other times, is represented as detached, divided and in a state of self-blame and hesitation. The ramifications of Adnan’s representation of the self makes the practice of writing seem perhaps incongruent and disassociative. On one occasion Adnan says, “We are the scribes of a scattered self, living fragments, as if parts of the self were writing down the bits and ends of a perception never complete” (1993, p.54). Thus, the movement of self is paralleled by a movement in English writing that Adnan initiates which exemplify how Adnan symbolically articulates her themes, and we have seen this in this chapter in terms of different aspects of the logical function being manipulated by Adnan in different ways and at different points in the text in ways that bring out her overarching themes of belonging, interdependency and intersubjectivity.

Patterns of clause complexing that enact and negotiate the engagement between the local and global in relation to socio-political events, and our role as readers and writers in relation to these events, instantiate Adnan’s worldview and consciousness regarding human rights issues and the relationship between self and other. As Butt (2009, p.372) argues “any account of verbal art will become grounded and defensible only in so far as it demonstrates the agency of art in bringing these wider patterns of social and personal behaviour into a dynamic, open system – namely, into the system of the text.” Adnan’s text has the power to alter readers perception of self and the world around that self through utilizing mechanisms of logical meaning to talk about the illogical act of war. Adnan exclaims “how can we turn our back on that?” and how can ‘war’ not then become “the substance of one’s writing” (Adnan 1998, p.1).

7.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has discussed patterns of clause complexing in Adnan’s text. It analysed how Adnan designs her text using grammatical patterns of taxis and logico-semantic relations. These patterns are achieved through multiple layers of logical meaning which portray
how language actively creates reality. That is, in Adnan’s text language enables our perception of how the things and events in the world are intersubjectively connected. The interaction between interdependency relations and how events and ideas are arranged by the writer in terms of their status and content through patterns of projection and expansion portrays a mode of reality whose possibility and potential Adnan alerts us to and prompts us to engage in. The shift in Adnan’s text between connectedness and separateness symbolically supports the writer’s primary arguments about how humans react to local and global conflicts. The next chapter, Chapter Eight, explores the construal of interpersonal relations in Adnan’s text by looking textually at grammatical patterns of mood element including choices of Subject, Finite, and modality.
Chapter 8
The Construal of Interpersonal Events in Adnan’s Text

8.1 Introduction
This chapter explores the construal of interpersonal relations in Adnan’s “To be in a Time of War”. In particular it examines writer/reader relations in terms of how they are construed through grammatical patterns of the kind that SFL cluster together as ‘interpersonal’. These focus on how the interpersonal metafunction that is realized in the grammar of the clause as an ‘exchange’ in terms of the system of MOOD and include choices of Subject, Finite and modality. This chapter explores Adnan’s ideologically “motivated selections” of Mood and Modality. Adnan’s choices can be seen to entail ideological attitudes, claims and judgements associated with how she constructs an interpersonal picture of the social world and our relations and roles inside it and towards others. Investigating shifts in interpersonal meaning occurring at different scales can help us understand how in Adnan’s text the writer construes interpersonal relations that the writer has with the audience – which may not be fixed – and what the writer wants to give or get from her language choice and the effects of this construal on the overall meanings and themes of the text.

From an SFL perspective, language is a social practice where meanings are exchanged in interpersonal contexts (Halliday 1978), and one of its key functions is to “enact our personal and social relationships” with the other people around us. Adnan’s particular portrayal of the interpersonal relationships between the self and the other in her life writing is associated with the clause as exchange and how it is initiated and responded to. Adnan’s grammatical construction of interpersonal relations relates to the concept of “relational” self in life writing – the self which implies aspects of self associated with one’s relationships with significant others consists of the feelings, behaviours, attitudes, and ideologies that the subject adopts and develops based on interactions with others (see Smith & Watson 2001, p. 201): in other words, visioning the self in relation to others and the social world, entailing the subject’s feelings and attitudes that are shaped by past, present and future relationships. Consequently, defining the self in terms of its relationship with others based on specific references to speech events is one of the most fundamental aspects of the grammatical construal of interpersonal relationships in Adnan’s life writing text. These choices in the interpersonal aspect of meaning provide
one form of evidence regarding the nature of the social exchange between the writer and her reader and between social subjects depicted within or implied by the text. Adnan’s text is a testimony whose language enables the bridging and re-production of fragmented interpersonal relations. It offers the reader a potential to share that particular testimony and witness ‘back’, thus enhancing the agency of the act of life writing as ‘mediator’ between social subjects and the role of readers and authors in that mediation. Thus, the social self can be explored through looking at Adnan’s use of interpersonal grammatical choices. Observing how Adnan creates her particular construal of mood and modality components of the clause helps us understand how in Adnan’s text an interpersonal self is constructed and what message Adnan wants to encourage readers to pay attention to through that construction.

Collecting and using this evidence requires an understanding of the grammatical resources within the English language that have evolved to convey these interpersonal meanings. According to SFL, as well as representing experience, language functions as a form of exchange between people. This is modelled in the interpersonal metafunction which is concerned with

**interaction** between speaker and listener – with the enactment of intersubjectivity. The interpersonal part of the clause grammar gives the speaker the resources for interacting with the listener by establishing and maintaining an ongoing **exchange** with him/her – by assuming and assigning speech roles such as questioner and answerer – and by giving or requesting attitudes, comments and evaluations. The notion of exchange is the basis for interpreting the interpersonal semantics of speech functions (Matthiessen 1995, pp.381-2) (Emphasis is original).

As outlined in Chapter 4, section 4.2, the concept of “exchangeability” is associated with the interpersonal semantic system of move (‘initiating’/‘responding’) as its point of origin, serving as the resource for giving or demanding information or goods- & -services in an exchange (Matthiessen et al. 2010, p.202). Typically, therefore, with the interpersonal metafunction, the act of writing can be viewed as an ‘interact’: it is an exchange of meaning that assures the reader’s potential verbal role in the interactive event. The semantic function of clause in the exchange of information (proposition or
proposal) is an interactive event that involves writer and audience, and this exchange can be primarily realized by the grammatical mood and modality options.

In Adnan’s writing, the social exchange between the writer and reader of the text is constructed with features of fluidity and indeterminacy through an ensemble of specific mood choices in the text. As we shall see in this chapter, this is largely because in most clauses the Mood element (Subject and Finite) is construed in an atypical manner. For example, the grammatical Subject – the entity that according to SFL carries the argument forward in a clause and makes a message negotiable (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.111) – is very often only implied in Adnan’s text rather than textually present. For this and other reasons the Subject becomes multivoiced and is not restricted to performing one function, which I will expand on later in the chapter. This kind of social exchange that occurs without the Subject textually present can allow the reader a choice of role in the social exchange. This effect is achieved through specific combinations of choice of Subject with choice of tense – the category that expresses time with reference to the moment of speaking/writing. For example, Adnan’s clause combination “To think of the morning news, to be horrified.” (Adnan 2005, p.102) depicts a social exchange that occurs without the Subject or Finite textually present which may appear ambiguous for readers. However, this social exchange can allow the reader a choice of role in the social exchange. In this construal the act of writing is expected to enable the writer and reader to enact interpersonal relations/interactions. Nevertheless, this might also raise the question of what salient role the reader can contribute, which, in turn, can raise an interesting challenge for the reader and create reader’s agency as well as agency of the writer through the text. 

As we will see in this chapter, Adnan’s grammatical construal of interpersonal relations in her text can be established as atypical and equivocal and can be linked to her concern with social exchanges that may arise between people in particular circumstances, creating certain kinds of connection between speaker and listener, or writer and reader. Before detailing the grammatical analysis of Adnan’s construal of interpersonal relations, the

\[61\] It is worth noting that this kind of question a reader might always ask even when the Subject is present, but here Adnan’s interpersonal choices make it much harder for readers to work out the missing interpersonal elements so as to understand what is being exchanged or negotiated with them by the author.

\[62\] In this chapter the word ‘speaker’ will be used to mean speaker/writer/signer – as the theory applies to all modes of linguistic interaction. Similarly, ‘listener’ here also implies ‘reader’.
The concept of interpersonal relationships in literary criticism – life writing in particular – and offer a description of the SFL model of interpersonal relations.

### 8.2 Interpersonal relations in literary criticism and life writing

This section discusses the work of some theorists on the concept of interpersonal relationships in life writing. The concept of interpersonal relationships is associated with the notion of experience. According to theorists of women’s autobiography, one of the ways to explore and revalue women’s experiential histories as essential to women’s experience is through investigating the concept of “relationality”. In Joan W. Scott’s essay “Experience” (1992, p.25), “experience” is defined as a “process...[b]y which subjectivity is constructed...It is not individuals who have experience...but subjects who are constituted through experience”. In order to understand autobiographical subjectivity – how the autobiographical subject is constituted – it is important to understand the basic concept of interpersonal relationships or ‘relational’ theory in life writing. This concept is one of the essential aspects of the construction of internal and external subjective experience. It is also associated with how the process or the practice of subjectivity construction – the construction of selves as social beings – is established and maintained by the writer in her text. It is worth mentioning that the social subject and the grammatical subject are two separate concepts.

To start with, interpersonal relationships can be seen in the light of “that process [in which] one places oneself or is placed in social reality, and so perceives and comprehends as subjective (referring to, even originating in, oneself) those relations – material, economic, and interpersonal relations – which are in fact social and, in a larger perspective, historical” (de Lauretis 1984, p.159). The process is “continuous, its achievement unending or daily renewed” therefore, subjectivity is seen more as an “ongoing construction” than a “fixed point of departure or arrival” from which a person then “interacts” with the social world (de Lauretis 1984, 159). It is “the effect of that interaction” that is called experience; and thus it is generated “not by external ideas, values, or material causes [themselves], but by one’s personal, subjective, engagement in the practices, discourses, and institutions that lend significance (value, meaning, and affect) to the events of the world” (de Lauretis 1984, p.159).
In her exploration of the consciousness of the self and its constitution in women’s autobiographical writings, Friedman (1998, p.79) recognizes the significance of interpersonal relationships and community in women writers’ self-definition. She argues that this consciousness of the self is constituted against the “individualistic paradigms [which] do not take into account the central role collective consciousness of self plays in the lives of women and minorities” (Friedman 1998, p.79). This autobiographical self, as Friedman sees it, “often does not oppose herself to all others, does not feel herself to exist outside of others, and still less against others, but very much with others in an independent existence that asserts its rhythms everywhere in the community” (Friedman 1998, p.79). Friedman’s emphasis on women’s “relationality” and community is pivotal, then, in understanding women’s autobiographical selves.

Also relevant to the importance of interpersonal relationships and a sense of community in the woman writer’s self-definition is the recognition of the connection to “significant others.” Smith and Watson (1992, p.69) posit that women life writers “delineate identity relationally, through connection to significant others”, and that “the self-discovery of female identity seems to acknowledge the real presence and recognition of another consciousness, and the disclosure of female self is linked to the identification of some ‘other.’ This recognition … [seems] to enable women to write openly about themselves.” This indicates that by positioning other voices in their autobiographies as an aspect of their interpersonal relationships, women life writers challenge the concept of individuality and separateness of lives in order to create “a consciousness of self in which ‘the individual [feels] very much with others in a social existence’” (Smith & Watson 1992, p.70).

However, it is believed that some autobiographical writings problematize the notion of relationality or the concept of interpersonal relations. These writings show relationality as “selective, and that narratives of relational lives are built upon exclusion and disrelation: silences, refusals, abandonments,” indicating that interpersonal relationships can be “unsustainable and have their conflictual aspects and moments” (Smyth 2016, p.256). Also relevant to relationality is the perspective of “unsociable sociability” of women’s life writing according to which there is a complex interplay of two conditions – singularity and community – in society human beings strive “contradictorily” for: that of “belonging to, and being separate from, social institutions” (Collett & D’Arcens 2010, p.2). Moreover, it is indicated that a model of relationality is not only concerned with
content but with form as well: “An autobiography, if it is to be a work of art, should not just narrate a relational life, lived by a relational self; but should do it in a relational way. The ‘interrelations and fusions’ of interpersonal experience are taken up into the geometry of the form, through the interrelation of each part” (Smyth 2016 p.265). Accordingly, interpersonal relationships can mean not only the ‘who’ of social relation but also “the where relation is located; and the how it is represented”. More specifically, these social interpersonal relations may be relations between people or how they talk to or about others. However, social interpersonal relations can be relations to almost anything else as well such as relations to “to health or illness, wealth or poverty, personal histories, education, war, social class, hints of personality, of type, physical similarities with other people, and so on. Or with works of art” (Smyth 2016, p.266).

The theories of interpersonal relations discussed above shows that the concept of interpersonal relationships is important to the study of women’s life writing in the sense that it is seen by many to be a defining characteristic. This concept can be noted in the expression of relating consciousness of the self to others. This is determined by women’s experience in social reality in relation to the other, owing to the fact that “During most history, women [writers] have not been self-centred and have tended to think of themselves through others. They experience their lives through interpersonal relations, and their sense of the self is interdependent and connected with the world around them” (Mason 1980, p.207). This suggests that perhaps women writers recognize the vulnerability and the strength of this – they acknowledge it where some men writers do not or are not inclined to do so.

However, this sense of interpersonal relationships is also challenged or broken down in some autobiographical writings by women writers. Adnan’s writing with its textually absent grammatical and ambiguous social Subject/subject is one such challenge as it conveys an absence of interpersonal relationships but works to problematize this at the same time. In addition, Adnan’s text seems to be one example of women’s autobiographical writings that “attempt to remove questions of [self-definition] from the exclusive ground of the psychological or interpersonal and to open questions about the relationship between psychic and social life, including intrapsychic, interpersonal, and political struggles” (Golley 2003, p.71). Such texts try to “unsettle the boundaries around [self-definition] not in order to dissolve them completely but to open them to the fluidities and heterogeneities that make their negotiation possible” (Golley 2003, p.71). In Adnan’s
text the emphasis is on the political and although the text portrays the interpersonal relations as apparently absent, it also suggests that interpersonal relations include the relationship between the social (interpersonal) self and political struggles. The apparent refusal in Adnan’s writing of interpersonal relationships both points to the absence of the social but also to its importance especially when it comes to human rights issues caused by political struggles that impact the other.

Looking at the linguistic construal of interactive events and the social role of relationships between communicative interactants by exploring the lexico-grammatical layer of the text can help understand the social self of the autobiographical subject and the relevant social context of Adnan’s text since in general language engages in expressing social roles and social relationships between communicative interactants so as to construe interpersonal meaning. In Adnan’s text, the social self of the autobiographical subject is represented in a distinctive and unusual way. Adnan’s social self is not textually present in the majority of the contexts and the subject’s social exchange and interactions with others are not made explicit. In other words, the construal of interpersonal relationships in relation to the political in Adnan’s text conveys a sense of detachment, alienation and abandonment and perhaps an inherent desire to not interact with others. This sense of the absence or non-existence of interpersonal relationships shown by the autobiographical subject is depicted grammatically in the text in a distinctive manner by Adnan, largely through the absence of grammatical subject and tense – which are the basic structures for construing interpersonal relations – as shall be demonstrated in detail through linguistic text analysis in the following sections.

8.3 Interpersonal metafunction in SFL: the clause as ‘exchange’

This section focuses on describing elements of interpersonal metafunction from an SFL perspective. It gives a general picture of how the grammar of interpersonal meaning construes relations between speakers/writers and audience to help us understand how apparently simple choices created by this grammar can construe quite varied and subtle social relations between language users, and how, in the case of Adnan’s act of writing, a set of preferred interpersonal choices that unfold across the analysed text might display an unusual construal of relationships between the writer and her readers, considering that social subjects may take on both roles in a text. The aspects of the interpersonal function that are most useful for analysing Adnan’s work include the grammatical resources
through which an exchange can be primarily realized are Mood and Modality elements of the interpersonal meaning. These grammatical resources are outlined below.

8.3.1 Mood

As noted in Chapter 4, section 4.2.3, interpersonal meaning is expressed by the system of MOOD, and the Mood element defines the mood option (for a graphic illustration of Mood options, see Chapter 4, Figure 4.11). In English, a selection in the system of MOOD is realized through the presence and sequencing of categories of the Subject and Finite which has a special significance in the English clause.

The Finite is a feature which can be present or absent in a verbal group. The Finite makes a proposition (a statement or a question) arguable by giving it a point of reference in the here and now, thus relating the proposition to its temporal context in the speech event. With primary tense, the dimension is that of time: primary tense construes time interpersonally, as defined by what is ‘present’ to you and me at the time of saying. With modality (modal verbs) the dimension is that of assessment: modality construes a region of uncertainty where ‘I can express’, or ask you to express, an assessment of the validity of what is being said (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.116). Thus, the Finite component is essential to the construal of an English clause because it specifies the domain of arguability through time (tense) or judgment (modality).

The Subject, from the concept of the clause as an exchange, is a “resting point” because, according to SFL, it supplies the rest of what it takes to form a proposition: namely, something by reference to which the proposition can be affirmed or denied (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.117). For example, in ‘The woman has given away her books’, the Finite ‘has given’ has specific reference to present time and positive polarity, while the Subject ‘the woman’ specifies the entity in respect of which the assertion is claimed to have validity. ‘The woman’ is the one that is, so to speak, “being held responsible” – responsible for the functioning of the clause as an interactive event.63 The speaker/writer rests her case on ‘the woman+ has’, and this is what the listener/reader is called on to acknowledge, i.e. “in a proposition this means the one on which the validity of the

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63 It is worth noting that this is normally the case even for casual conversation and non-expository writing – that most or at least many clauses will be ‘arguable’ in the sense readers/listeners could ‘take issue’ with what is being claimed if they wanted to – even though in many literary contexts it would not occur to readers to say ‘Did the text persona really reads the newspaper as has just been claimed’ (though in certain modes of fiction of course this is exactly the point of the work – e.g. unreliable narrator’s episodes).
information is made to rest” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.117). We will see in the next sections how Adnan manipulates the features of Subject and Finite and how this manipulation affects the realisation of the clause as exchange and writer-reader interpersonal exchange.

Figure 8.1 below exhibits the categories of Mood Block (highlighted in blue) in a typical English clause:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Finite</th>
<th>Predicator</th>
<th>Complement</th>
<th>Adjunct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>watching</td>
<td>the news</td>
<td>now.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8.4 Example of an English clause expressing categories of Mood Block

### 8.3.2 Modality

Modality is present in a clause when reality is depicted in terms of degrees of ‘modalisation’ which is associated with proposals (of obligation and readiness) or ‘modulation’ which is concerned with propositions (of probability and usuality). In a proposition, both probability and usuality can be expressed in three ways: (a) by a finite modal operator in the verbal group, e.g. ‘will’ in ‘She will leave the country’; (b) by a modal Adjunct of (i) probability, e.g. ‘probably’ in ‘She’s probably leaving’ or (ii) usuality, e.g. ‘usually’ in ‘She usually sits in that café all morning’; (c) by both together, e.g. ‘She will probably write a letter’. Probability is organized as a system of three values: a median value ‘probable’, and two outer values, high ‘certain’ and low ‘possible’ (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.149). In a proposal, both obligation and inclination can be expressed in either of two ways, though not, in this case, by both together: (a) by a finite modal operator, e.g. ‘should’ in ‘She should know that’, (b) by an expansion of the Predicator, (i) typically by a passive verb, e.g. ‘you’re supposed to know that’, (ii) typically by an adjective, e.g. ‘I’m anxious to help them’ (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.147). Modality is a notable feature of Adnan’s agenda on interpersonal relations because it depicts a region of indeterminacy and uncertainty in the writer’s construction of social reality.
8.3.3 Interpersonal Adjuncts

In addition to mood and modality elements, interpersonal meaning is also realized by (optional) interpersonal “modal Adjuncts” – Mood Adjuncts and Comment Adjuncts – in SFL. These Adjuncts express the speaker or writer’s judgment on or attitude towards a message. The distinction into Mood Adjunct (e.g. always, ever, never, probably, already) and Comment Adjunct (e.g. unfortunately, sadly, generally) within the system of “Modal Assessment” is made on this interpersonal basis: they represent different types of assessment of the proposition or proposal (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.126). For example, in ‘she would probably leave her home’, ‘probably’ is a Mood Adjunct that expresses a sense of indeterminacy representing an intermediate stance between the positive and the negative poles: it does not tell a definite stance of ‘either’ leaving ‘or’ staying at home; whereas in ‘unfortunately, the woman did not survive the traumatic event’, ‘unfortunately’ is a Comment Adjunct that tells about the writer’s attitude towards the fact that the woman did not survive the traumatic event. Choices of modal adjuncts are clearly important for the analysis of Adnan’s text in terms of whether, or to what extent, modal adjuncts demonstrate the writer’s (or text persona’s) attitudes or judgments in the narrative.

In summary, the mood element (Finite, Subject and (sometimes) modal Adjunct(s)) makes the clause “negotiable”. This negotiation, enabled by choices of Mood element, is crucial for creating and maintaining interpersonal roles and relationships. The Finite makes the clause negotiable by grounding it, either in terms of tense or in terms of modality, and by coding it as positive or negative through the system of POLARITY. The Subject is the element by which the claims in a clause can be negotiated. Modal Adjuncts add optional meanings related to the speaker’s judgment or to the positive/negative poles of the Finite. It is worth mentioning that interpersonal meaning can also be achieved through the interpersonal APPRAISAL (‘evaluation’) system (Martin & White 2005) which is not included in the present thesis due to time and space limitations.

The remainder of this chapter will be dedicated to the analysis of Mood and Modality choices in Adnan’s text in order to understand how and why Adnan chooses to include

64 For lists of adverbs serving as modal Adjuncts see Halliday and Matthiessen (2014[2004], pp.188-89).
this or that particular category of the Mood element and leave other categories mostly implicit and/or not textually present.

8.4 Overview and detailed textual analysis of patterns of interpersonal relations in Adnan’s text

The present section first gives an overview of the general patterns of interpersonal relations in Adnan’s text, and then presents more detailed results of Adnan’s selections of Mood and Modality.

To begin with, in Adnan’s text the Mood element is not textually present in the majority of clauses. More specifically, while construing interpersonal relations, features of Subject and Finite (primary tense) are avoided by Adnan, except for a few instances. Figure 8.2 below shows percentages of finiteness in Adnan’s text: the non-finite is predominant constituting (87%) of the entire text while the Finite element is used with less frequency constituting (13%).

![Distribution of Finiteness in Adnan’s text](image)

Figure 8.2 Distribution of finite and non-finite elements in Adnan’s text in proportions

Instead of a preference to use the Finite element to construe events and (inter)actions in the text, Adnan chooses to use non-finiteness for construing the verbal category, thus the Subject is most often implied. Adnan’s choice of non-finite creates a background against which foregrounded meanings are observed and a break in the background pattern will be weighed up as significant in the text. The example clause in Figure 8.3 below illustrates how Adnan deploys the Mood element (highlighted in blue).
As seen from Figure 8.3, the option of Mood element is implicit. We can assume, however, the clause construes a ‘declarative’ option, but this is still indeterminate because of the choice of placing the information in this infinitival position and the absence of categories of the Mood element (highlighted in blue).

In addition, due to the overuse of non-finiteness in Adnan’s clauses, what specific speech function(s) is predominant in the text is not easily identifiable. However, we can assume that the majority of exchange in Adnan’s text (in most finite and non-finite clauses) is considered to be “giving information” in the structure of proposition, and that the predominant Mood option is ‘indicative’, as Table 8.1 and Table 8.2 show respectively below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Speech functions</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>goods &amp; services</td>
<td>proposal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>command</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>offer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td>proposition</td>
<td>1358</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>question</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.12 Distribution of speech functions in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mood types</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>declarative</td>
<td>1358</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interrogative</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1361</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 8.1, we can see that in the text’s exchange the speech function of ‘statement’ predominates compared to other speech functions. There are only three instances of

65 In Figure 8.3, the Predicator here is ‘non-finite’; the lexical selection (“one”) refers to an unspecified entity, which supports the prevailing sense of indeterminacy of interpersonal relations in Adnan’s text.
speech function of ‘question’, while no instances of ‘command’ or ‘offer’ are selected. However, the instances of ‘question’ (as in “How not to die of rage?”; “To wait for the mail while thinking who cares?”) do not represent typical questions. Rather, they can be understood as forming a ‘rhetorical question’ that does not expect an answer. This selection builds up a sense of fragmentation in interpersonal relations because social subjects might appear disengaged or to have no agentive roles in dialogue. Nevertheless, it has a literary effect of prompting readers to seek an answer, thereby engaging them in the author’s exchange.

From Table 8.2 we can see that the ‘declarative’ mood option (e.g. “On the way, to notice that the mountain is still there”) is preferred over ‘interrogative’ and ‘imperative’ mood options: only three instances of ‘interrogative’ clause are found and there is no imperative mood in the text. The purpose of selecting the declarative as a dominant mood option for Adnan’s text is not merely to introduce ideas or form a background correspondent to the readers’ perception of what a social world or a genre of life writing typically is. Adnan’s declarative option depicts a powerfully evocative structure that is formed into what is not congruent with our perception of how a social world or a genre of life writing might be construed.

From one perspective, this suggests that in terms of Adnan’s speech functions the text as exchange lacks some interactive features so there is apparently no one-to-one interaction in terms of taking turns or moves among participants or asking/answering questions or making offers/commands. Adnan’s choice of speech functions and mood options embodies an apparent avoidance of interpersonal relations and a lack of potential interaction between speaker and listener and hence a lack of enactment of intersubjectivity. Nevertheless, it can always be expected that generally in life writing there are not many questions, offers, or commands (except in reported speech). Yet, the debate here about Adnan’s choice of declarative mood displaying no “source of information” as Subject or a direct temporal reference as Finite can be understood as having implications for what Adnan wants to draw readers’ attention to.

Adnan’s mood choices affect the way the proposition can be negotiated because Adnan excludes a crucial part (Mood element) of the clause from the dialogic process. The

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66 This example represents a clause complex (of projection) of declarative type which exists in both clauses, the projecting clause and the projected clause.
absence of Subject and Finite embodies a prevailing sense of fluidity and indeterminacy. This suggests that the text is not dominated by one single voice or agentive role. This also suggests that a sense of social hierarchy between social subjects (such as writer and reader) is not given preference by Adnan, which creates the possibility of bringing in different voices/roles.

Also, Adnan’s choice of infinitive as a narrative tense rather than simple past or present impacts the temporal development of the text to the point that the text lacks “the social meaning of the tense” in Caffarel-Cayron’s (2004, p.543) terms. The use of a non-literary tense67 for a life writing text serves to construe a social world of a text persona as detached and a dialogic exchange as one-sided due to the major absence of speech roles. Thus, Adnan represents a grim interpersonal picture of the social world that suggests an apparent refusal of interpersonal relationships and a sense that the writer feels abandoned by others, her community, or the world. However, as we will see later from the results of the textual analysis of the text a shift in Adnan’s stance can be seen through an unexpected use of a few other tenses (foregrounded against that background of an incongruent representation of temporality) and the inclusion of some entities that are given the potential of being a Subject. The shifts in Adnan’s Mood (and Modality) choices and what effects these shifts create will be discussed in detail below.

8.4.1 Subject choices

The category Subject in the majority of clauses is avoided in Adnan’s text. This means that the Subject role is inferred in the analysed text. However, against this background of implied Subject, there are certain places in the analysed text where we can see the category Subject explicitly used although with low density as Figure 8.4 shows below.

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67 It has been hard to find data to compare Adnan’s use to writing in English in general or life writing in English in particular, so that I expect this is atypical of life writing or fiction.
As seen from Figure 8.4, Adnan’s construal of Subject role can be seen either as implicit in the majority of non-finite clauses (87%; 1189 out of 1361 clauses are Subjectless) or explicit in a few clauses (172%; 172 out of 1361 clauses have Subject) that are finite. The implicitness of Subject role in Adnan’s text suggests a breakdown in interpersonal relations so that human participants appear to be without much agentive role or responsibility, which builds up grim picture of the social world constructed by Adnan. However, the shift in Subject position suggests a sense of mobility and fluidity, and a potential for enacting relations. That is, it creates the possibility for agentiveness and intersubjectivity. This can be achieved through developing the reader’s agentive role to recover the missing Subject category, thus promoting the reader’s participation in the process of retrieving the linguistic patterns central to Adnan’s negotiation. This means that Adnan’s text enables the enactment of interpersonal relations between social subjects.

However, in Adnan’s text certain entities are observed to function as Subject, although found with low density, which breaks the reader’s expectation because in the text’s background the social world is predominantly revealed by Adnan as ‘subjectless’. But, with the presence of few Subjects Adnan might want her readers to infer how this social world might alternatively be constructed. Adnan’s choices of Subject role being present implies a potential for participants to affect and change the social world around them. This is enabled not only by the presence of Subject role but also by combining it with a temporal reference (finite) – both are crucial features of the negotiation between social
subjects (including writers and addressee). Interestingly, with respect to Adnan’s choices of Subject, we can see that these choices are depicted in different patterns characterising various types of entities. These entities functioning as Subjects are placed by Adnan in multiple positions distinguished by clause status and logico-semantic relation (see Chapter 7), as Table 8.3 illustrates below (Subjects in bold, finite italicised).

68 It is worth noting that most of the clauses that are foregrounded in Adnan’s text by their choice of Subject and tense selections are clauses of projection relation (dependent, projected clauses typically realized of ideas) and embedded clauses. Adnan’s preference to provide mood element through projected clauses can be viewed as interpersonal because it inherently mirrors the author’s attitudes, thoughts or feelings, thus establishing social relationships with readers. However, a few clauses of expansion relation include the choice of Subject and tense in Adnan’s text, as in clause no. [46_635_1157] in the table above. More examples of expansion clauses (as well as projection clauses) having mood element are provided in Table 8.4 below.
Table 8.3 Examples of common patterns of Subjects in Adnan’s text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject in rank-shift clauses</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Example of ranking clause (dependent/independent) with Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>[48,651,1185] To remember the different wars [that we've one's life]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>[34,462,891] To still love those [one has loved]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>[33,149,870] To answer the phone [which inadvertently stops the nightmare]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>[41,570,1045] To be puzzled by the enormity of [what is happening]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>things</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>[31,427,840] To mix the dance with the deep-seated knowledge [that things have gone wrong]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>[24,322,683] To read an invisible line [that says that in Baghdad people die ferociously]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>[16,196,502] if it is permissible [that some eat bio-foods while others die of hunger]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>[16,196,502] if it is permissible [that some eat bio-foods while others die of hunger]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Americans, the English, their allies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>[20,241,570] To live with the knowledge [that the Americans, the English, their allies, want the people of Iraq, the children, the men of Iraq, to be destroyed]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>127/172 Subjects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen from Table 8.3, Adnan selects various nominal groups – nouns or pronouns – to construe a human entity (e.g. “that they are war criminals”) or a nonhuman entity (e.g. “that the sun go(es) down”) as Subject. From an SFL point of view, within the interpersonal structure of the clause, the nominal group “enacts the interpersonal universe with the interactants as part of the dialogic centre” (Matthiessen 1995, p.687). This suggest that Adnan’s selection of nominal groups as interactants within dialogue is important and foregrounded against a background of indeterminacy and refusal of Subject role. This selection of Subjects plays a major role in the text because it enables the creation of “reference chains of Subject participants” (Caffarel-Cayron 2006, p.162) so that these meanings become negotiable because they are given “modal responsibility”. This implies that human and nonhuman participants mapped on the Subject role have “more staying power in discourse” (Matthiessen 1995, p.331) than those not grammatically positioned as Subject, and thus Adnan’s Subjects have a particularly important effect on the whole work and its interpretation. However, within Adnan’s selection of Subjects there is a sense of ambiguity associated with what identity some entities might represent. For example, form Table 8.3 above we can see that in some instances the lexical selection of “it” – a dummy pronoun – or the existential “there” which although it functions as Subject, cannot function as an ordinary Subject participating in the event. Also, the lexical selection of “one”, “some”, interpersonal pronouns “they”, “we”, and “those”, or “things” all specify a non-definitive entity. This indicates that Adnan’s lexical choices for Subject indicate mostly unspecified/non-definitive entities, thus creating a particular effect of the implicitness of the Subject role and its social responsibility. However, lexical choices construing nonhuman entities (e.g. “mountain”, “sun”, “ocean” in the table above) are “glossed” as Subjects are thereby likely to enact change compared to ‘human’ Subjects.

In Adnan’s text it is clear that there are scarcely any definitive entities as Subject and there is no one determinat addressee or audience. This means that the persona’s argument has a strong orientation towards the outside social world. With respect to the status of clauses where Adnan’s Subjects are positioned, Table 8.3 above displays that

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69 It is worth noting that there are no non-finite clauses with a subject, and that among the 172 Subjects, a few Subjects are known as implied because of the use of passive voice. Sometimes entities which are implied as Subject of a clause in passive can be inferred from context. See Table 8.4 below for an example of an inferred Subject role, more examples of different entities as Subjects.
Adnan places most of her Subjects in either a downranked (dependent, often projected) clause or a rank-shifted (embedding) clause (see Chapter 7). This suggests Adnan’s Subjects which are expected to contribute to the exchange of interpersonal meanings create a sense of social hierarchy or social distance which decrease agency among social actors for change. It also suggests that Adnan’s ‘human’ Subjects (e.g. “we” and “people” in the table above), if they are present at all, are largely located in nested and/or embedded clauses and thus these ‘human’ Subjects are either deeply inaccessible or buried (concealed) in the text and not in arguable/negotiable statements – they are just presupposed.

These Subject selections by Adnan suggest that the argument in the text shifts from one Subject to another from among the numerous entities that are construed as participants in the speech act. This indicates that there is no one general pattern for the Subject in Adnan’s text. Consequently, the abrupt shifts of orientation from one proposition to another using a different subject role give a rather fragmentary character to the text as an interactive event or a dialogue as a whole.

### 8.4.2 Finite and non-finite choices

The low proportion of all clauses in the analysed text (13%) containing Finite element includes instances of a variety of primary tenses and modal verbs distributed in different proportions: present (72%); other tenses (28%) – past (9%), present perfect (9%), future (8%), and modal verbs (2%), as Figure 8.8 shows below. Examples of Adnan’s selections of finite are provided in Figure 8.5 below.

![Distribution of Finite element in Adnan’s text](image.png)

Figure 8.5 Distribution of finites (primary tenses) in proportions in Adnan’s text
Adnan’s occasional inclusion of a finite clause runs counter to the expectation set up by the text’s background of non-finiteness. This occasional foregrounding of finiteness shows that the semiotic exchange of interpersonal meanings/relations is not always bounded by tenselessness in Adnan’s text. That is, Adnan’s choice of finites provides a stable temporal reference to some situations, actions, entities, or speech events in the text through a verbal operator, thus the clause becomes negotiable. This implies that interpersonal relations having the Finite element can be understood as particularly relevant to our expectations about how a ‘real’ social world might be experienced.

On the other hand, Adnan’s decision to avoid a temporal reference or Subject in the text does not only make the clause ‘unusual’ or non-negotiable but also makes it sometimes not possible to determine/realize/understand/presuppose a plausible Subject from the preceding or subsequent discourse. This sense of indeterminacy created by Adnan might raise for readers the question of ‘which Subject is to be understood if none is textually present?’, or ‘which tense or modality can be presupposed if the Finite element is not supplied?’ so as to affirm or deny a proposition.

At this point, the reader of Adnan’s text is likely to presuppose that the Subject ‘I’ – although implicit – might be the Subject that equals the writer or the text persona. Yet, this inference cannot be applied to all the instances where the Subject is absent because it is not always possible for the missing Subject to be interpreted as such, as the following excerpts from Adnan’s text show:

(a) To rise early, to hurry down to the driveway, to look for the paper, take it out from its yellow bag. (Adnan 2005, p.101)

(b) To pervert language, pervert the children’s eyes, corrupt and destroy, that’s the new order. To distribute evil with specially built machines. (Adnan 2005, p.113)

When supplying the missing pieces of information – the mood element (Subject+Finite (the primary tense)) – in example (a), a Subject could be understood as ‘I’ and the writer could have said it differently as in example (a1):

256
(a1) I rise (rose) early, (then) I hurry (hurried) down to the drive way, (I) look (looked) for the paper (and) (I) take (took) it out from yellow bag...

But it would not sound plausible for example (b) to be interpreted by the reader as such if the missing pieces of information in the second example (b1) are supplied in the following way:

(b1) (I) pervert (perverted) language, (I) pervert (perverted) the children’s eyes, (I) corrupt (corrupted) and (I) destroy (destroyed), that’s the new order. (I) distribute (distributed) evil with specially built machines.

One possible way to understand this loss of information where the majority of clauses have no explicit Subject or temporal reference is to recall that non-finiteness (infinitive with or without ‘to’) in English is considered either imperfective or perfective. The imperfective “represents the real, or actual, mode of non-finiteness (‘realis’) [(ing )], while the perfective represents the potential, or virtual (‘irrealis’)” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.424). Nonetheless, it is noted that the meaning of the two aspects is very “fluid and indeterminate” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.424).

So we can apply the theory of “irrealis” to Adnan’s use of non-finiteness, that is, we can say that the text creates a sense of “irrealis” through the infinitival structure. This is because the non-finite in Adnan’s text depicts the potential – ‘a goal to be attained’, which either expresses a purpose, or a result. However, the sense of purpose (‘irrealis’) may shade into result (‘realis’) (see Halliday & Matthiessen 2014, p. 485). In other words, the non-finite in Adnan’s text can mean “starting off to going on” – both a purpose and a result or a potential consequent action. What is obvious is that Adnan’s text is composed so as to depict initial states or actions, goals or intentions to be achieved, or attempts leading to success or failure so it foregrounds irrealis and potential. On the other hand, the text portrays states and actions that are in their final stages or are still maintained and can be realized as real or pointing to reality, which the writer herself might want the reader to ponder, as when she suggests that, “To discover that the infinitive is a delusion. To lose one’s footing” (Adnan 2005, p.113). Here it is also obvious that Adnan knows what she is doing with the English language and what sense of purpose this brings – readers are being manipulated so they seem to ‘lose their stability’ by entering an unsettling or precarious situation the text creates. Or, this acts as an indication that the writer wants the
reader to consider multiple interpretations for the grammatical patterns of her text. This structure produces a sense of ‘de-familiarization’ because the reader expects to be familiar with the temporal world of the text, yet this temporal world is observed by the reader as unstable and often undergoes shifts from finite to non-finite. These shifts and ambiguities of structure offer multiple layers of interpretation and thereby allow the writer to embed in her text many possible readings that might prompt social change.

With respect to Adnan’s selections of finite occurring in 172 clauses out of 1361 clauses (13%), these selections are construed in a variety of tense patterns summarized in Table 8.4 below (finites bolded; Subjects italicized):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finite (primary tenses and modal verbs)</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Example clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>[10_86_349] that war is everywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>[5_5_183] when the tea arrives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>[11_110_381] that the Arab states feel uncertain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is/are -ing</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>[22_275_623] war is devastating Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[29_377_774] that Bassorah's inhabitants are dying of thirst under the returning British.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>[27_360_747] why the trees are still without leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is being -ed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>[6_6_210] that Baghdad is being bombed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is/are -ed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>[11_108_377] that they are moved by their own moral sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>did</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>[6_6_207] that they dared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was/were</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>[27_359_741] [(To go to the Saigon Grill a few hours later)] was a pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has/have -ed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>[42_573_1054] that democracy has become a charade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has/have been -ed</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>[53_730_1289] that a Palestinian newsman has been shot cold-bloodedly by some earnest monolithist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has/have been -ing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>[20_242_573] what has always been going on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>[18_232_554] that the world will take revenge [(for having been fooled)]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modal verbs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>[27_360_750] how high the surrounding building can be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>could</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>[41_571_1048] to avoid the idea [(that it could be different)]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.4 Summary of common patterns of finites in Adnan’s text

As seen from Table 8.4, although used with low density, Adnan’s tense selections offer the speech event a temporal anchoring which contributes to turning the clause into something that can be argued about. These tense selections create a break in the general
pattern that impacts on the reader’s recognition and interpretation of how one’s interpersonal experience in the world is constructed. Adnan’s tense selection establishes a preference for the ‘then’ and ‘now’. The aspect of time that is foregrounded in Adnan’s text is present and past. The selection of present tense enhances the domain of interpersonal relations – impacted by absence of tense – between social subjects, giving the speech event a strong sense of the present time and its immediacy. Adnan stresses her preference for present time saying, “I am the [writer] of the here and now” (Adnan 2005, p.7). Adnan considers “the present time as sheer lead” (Adnan 2005, p.103). Thus, Adnan’s sense of present time brings an immediacy and closeness that enables readers to “encapsulate the present” (Adnan 2005, p.111). In other words, the present tense selection gives the text a time that is built in to what Halliday (1982, p.158) calls “the everyday give-and-take dialogue” so becoming part of “the ordinary, taken-for-granted world” that readers can engage in. These grammatical choices brings readers close to the writer’s direct experience, allowing them to witness how “disasters accumulate and become daily experience”, in Adnan’s words.

Contrary to this sense of closeness engendered by the selection of present tense, Adnan’s use of past tense generates a sense of ‘temporal distance’, thus depicting a picture of a social world ‘at distance’. Past tense in Adnan’s text triggers a sense of detachment from experience in the reader which can contribute to undermining the text persona’s “accountability” for actions/events.70 Nevertheless, this distancing effect can still be seen as crucially linked to readers’ understanding of the social events/relations that happen in the present. It can also be associated with a “semiotic distance” between “the inner context” of a work – the context that constructed by the author’s linguistic choices, and “the outer context” of the addressee’s world (Hasan 1979, 1996). This indicates that Adnan’s text is a ‘mediator’ between the writer and readers of ‘distance’ in time, place or culture. It also suggests that this mediation can also ‘externalizes’ the ‘inner context’ of Adnan’s text to the reader’s ‘outer’ social world.

Interestingly, these effects of closeness and distance are further entangled through Adnan’s choices of future tense. The selection of future tense is associated with Adnan’s consideration of a possible future change in interpersonal relations between social subjects. Future tense is linked to a sense of probability. Adnan seems to imply that

70 See Tilney (2018) for a discussion of tense and accountability.
actions and events that happen in past or present tense have potential consequences for a future social world, so that social actors are required to develop an acute awareness of and a sense of accountability for these effects. This suggests that readers are prompted to see the interpersonal relations unfolding in a world of real time: we initiat(ed) (or respond(ed) to) events in the past and present and wish for future change.

However, because the dominant background pattern is tenseless, the tense patterns described above generate a sense of indeterminacy in the text’s temporality and set up a counter expectation for the reader. Adnan’s time selection is fairly evenly distributed across different tense categories, but tense/time changes are sequenced across the text in a way that appears almost random which goes against what we might normally expect in a life writing text – perhaps a whole passage in the present tense then another in the past tense. Because Adnan’s tenses are sequenced in an unusual way each tense does not depict a sequence of events that are defined by a particular temporal reference. Therefore, Adnan’s finites cannot then be referred to as providing a “relative time” – in SFL terms “a way of subcategorizing events” as “before, at, or after a defined time reference” (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004, p.346) – nor can they be used as the point of departure for other tenses or a temporal basis for the entire text, leaving no clear sequence of interaction between social subjects or shared understanding of a timeline of events. Thus this fragmentary character of finiteness in Adnan’s text is associated with a sense of fragmentation within the interpersonal relations between social subjects, and points to the absence of social engagement and social support but also to its importance. This is achieved through Adnan’s selection of language as “a tool that acts on us, collaborates with thinking, [and] is not neutral. So the language affects your thinking, and you are a different person” (Adnan 2021).

8.4.3 Modality and Modal Adjuncts choices

Adnan’s modality selections inform the reader her attitude about interpersonal relations. The results of modality analysis shows that Adnan appears to be avoiding the use of modal expressions in the analysed text: there are only three instances of clauses of probability and no expressions of social obligation (e.g. must, should) are selected. The clauses of probability are construed with modal verbs “can” and “could”, as in the following examples:
Both example clauses of probability are part of a structure of mental projection (underlined) reflected in the verbs “\textit{admit}” and “\textit{avoid}” respectively, and foregrounded by embedding (bolded) with Subjects like “it” and “one” that refer to non-definitive entities. This use of modal verbs of probability with non-definitive Subjects creates a sense of uncertainty because it represents an area of meaning between the positive or negative, and locating it in an embedded structure renders it not easily accessible. However, it generates at the same time a sense of a probable social change or an expected repair in a social world of fragmented interpersonal relations, but this repair might take a huge effort. The scarce modality in the analysed text may display “an emotional detachment” (see Tilney 2018),\footnote{Elsewhere, scarce modality in a text has been interpreted in terms of “emotional detachment”, as it “distances the narrator from the events [she] narrates”, thus contributes to creating a “neutral tone” (see Tilney 2018), and we can see this sense operates also in Adnan’s text because of rare use of modality.} thereby distancing the text persona from the events in the text. This indicates, then, how the text persona (or the author) perceives in an ideological way the interpersonal events/relations through grammatical choices of modality and projects such ideological constructs into a writer-reader exchange. This perception suggests a sense of responsibility and agentiveness which runs counter to a prevailing lack of agency in the text.

Modal adjuncts in Adnan’s text are also used with low density. Although, according to SFL, they are optional elements in the interpersonal clause, if used in a text, modal adjuncts – Mood Adjuncts or Comment Adjuncts – can contribute to construe a sense of ‘expectancy’/‘counter-expectancy’ – an author sets up an expectation for readers and then counters it immediately (see Wegener & Lothmann 2018). In Adnan’s text, modal adjuncts occur in 24 (2\%) of all clause. These are realized merely by selections of Mood Adjuncts of temporality (12/24), intensity (7/24), and modality (5/24); no Comment Adjuncts are selected.

Temporality Adjuncts (12/24) are realized by the following adverbs: \textit{still} (as in “\textit{to still believe that the future will escape the diabolical schemes of the enemy}”); \textit{already} (as in
“to already think of the next war”), just (as in “to project the movie of things that just happened”), soon (as in “to read Heidegger, soon”), and not yet (as in “to inform the living that they aren’t yet dead”). The lexical selection of temporality Adjuncts, although used with low frequency, are set up against a background that lacks a temporal anchor, so they enhance the temporality of the text. In SFL terms, they serve to associate interpersonal relations either to a time reference itself which may be near or remote, past or future, relative to the speaker-now (e.g. soon, once, just); or to an expectation, being positive or negative, with regard to the time at issue (e.g. still, already, not yet). Accordingly, the text can still offer readers a sense of temporal anchoring to the speech events through a different set of grammatical choices – adjuncts of counter-expectancy of time which refer to past, present, or future.

Intensity Adjuncts (7/24) are realized by the following adverbs: just (only) (as in “to go to the window just to make sure that it’s very sad outside, like in Baghdad, under the bombs”), indeed (as in “to say yes indeed the day is beautiful”), really (as in “to discover that one has really loved”), actually (as in “with the feeling of being actually in [the place]”), almost (as in “to dream (almost) of canals and planted fields”), quite (as in “to align some books on the shelf, and throw quite a few”). These intensity Adjuncts serve to represent either a ‘high’ degree of intensity (e.g. ‘almost’), or a ‘counterexpectancy’ (e.g. ‘actually’) which contributes to stressing the writer’s assessment of events/relations and creates an intersubjective space.

Modality Adjuncts (5/24) are realized by the following adverbs: always (as in “To compare what’s going on with what has always been going on”), never (negative polarity) (as in “to never stop thinking about [war]”), usually (as in “to remember that it will snow unusually”). These modality adjuncts serve to represent the writer’s judgement, or her request of the judgement of the reader, on the status of what is being said. Here, Adnan’s lexical selection of modality Adjuncts (e.g. ‘never’; ‘always’) suggests that the writer rests her judgment or the validity of her statement on a probability of ‘high’ degree, which contributes to a sense of relationality.

Thus, in Adnan’s text, the assessment of propositions is enabled by the selection of a range of modal meanings realized by modal verbs as finite and mood adjuncts. These forms of realization – although used in low proportions – explicitly display the speaker’s subjective assessment or judgment of ‘what is happening’ so that the social subject becomes overtly responsible for that assessment. With respect to the notion of
relationality or relational subject, readers are also being modelled as social subjects since expressions of counterexpectancy - e.g. that an event is ‘still’ happening, or ‘actually’ happening or ‘has never stopped happening’ imply that the writer imagines the reader to be expecting that ‘the event should have stopped by now’, giving rise to a sense of surprise as well as a recognition of the need for accountability.

8.4.4 A break in Adnan’s Mood pattern

So far we have seen that Mood element (Subject and Finite), if textually present across Adnan’s text, is often located in downranked (dependent) clauses (mostly of projection) or rank-shifting clauses (of embedding). Interestingly, there is one example in the text which is singled out from the predominant non-finite structure. This example obviously breaks the background pattern. In addition to the significance of its embodiment of an explicit selection of Mood option and Mood Block, this example, surprisingly, does not show infinitival structure. This example is a clause complex that stands on its own to represent two independent (main) clauses linked by the conjunction “and”. This clause complex with its Mood elements (highlighted in blue) is illustrated in Figure 8.6 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memory</th>
<th>allows</th>
<th>that realization,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Finite +</td>
<td>Predicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood</td>
<td>Residue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and the interaction of all these elements with each other creates in our mind the notion – and therefore, the nature – of Time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Finite +</th>
<th>Predicator</th>
<th>Complement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mood</td>
<td>Residue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8.6 Mood elements in clause complex breaking general pattern of Adnan’s work

This selection of clause complex is a sudden breakthrough in the dominant pattern of temporality and Subject in Adnan’s text so it is perceived as significant. This is because it represents an unexpected shift to a typical structure of dialogue where interpersonal relations are explicitly realized by the textual presence of Mood option (declarative) and essential Mood categories (Subject and Finite) as Figure 8.5 shows above. This example structure represents a complete clause of interpersonal meaning and we cannot see an infinitival selection here. This structure comprises two independent clauses, each of which involves a Subject (an abstract entity) – “memory”; “the interaction” – and a
primary (present) tense – “allows”; “creates”, connected by the logico-semantic relation of expansion through the selection of the conjunction “and”. Thus this structure gives a sense of immediacy to the speech event through the presence of temporality and modal responsibility and it does not express social hierarchy or social distance. This structure creates, then, a sense of hope – given by Adnan to the reader – that the social world is not beyond repair. It suggests that through the act of writing, interpersonal relations between social subjects (writer and reader) can be enacted thus offering the possibility of a breakthrough in the grim picture of the social world and our agency and responsibility in it. It demonstrates that language is not only a mode to exchange information but also to intervene between personal and social roles and relationships and that literature enables building them anew. Butt (2016, p.51) remarks that “verbal art renews our potential to mean”.

8.5 Discussion

Adnan’s grammatical construal of interpersonal relations in her text is established as an ambiguous and atypical narrative of life writing. It informs about Adnan’s agenda of interpersonal relations between human individuals, their doings and the events happening around them in particular circumstances. The results of textual analysis in this chapter show that Adnan’s grammatical construal of interpersonal relations in “To be in a Time of War” is atypical in terms of the features of the Mood element within the clause of the text. This is largely a product of patterns in the verb subject and forms. The writer construes the world and relationships in the text with clauses that are predominantly non-finite. Most of the non-finite clauses have no overt Subject or tense (as in “to think about the war”). The Subject can be ‘understood’ although it is not textually present in the above example. There is a general principle of understanding that the missing subject can be determined by referring to a previous part of the discourse or from the context. However, with this clause, as with many other clauses, it is difficult to interpret the subjectless clause because the subject is not determinable from anywhere else in the text. Since there is no contextual determinate for the Subject to be understood, the meaning depends heavily on inference (and thereby confers agency on the reader). But as shown in section 8.4.2, when the reader tries to infer a particular Subject in one clause as ‘I’, their interpretation is often confused in the next clause which describes ferocious crimes of war, producing an incoherent interpretation and an apparent sense of failure of supplying
the missing Subject, which suggests that readers’ agency needs to be questioned and re-produced.

The repeated use of non-finite gives the text a dominant orientation to irrealis events, where ‘irrealis’ refers to ‘unreal’ or ‘potential’ events rather than events located in some specific time. The construal of interpersonal relations in Adnan’s text depicts her sense of the self which is shaped mainly by her experience and interaction with others in relation to specific settings and circumstances that are communicated to us through the text. Relevant to this construal is the question of why Adnan tends to portray the ‘relational’ or social self and its relationship to others in a text’s environment that expresses the ‘irrealis’ through her construal of Mood element (subject and tense). With this construal, the grammatical subject is implied and itself becomes multi-voiced so it is not restricted to perform one function and lends itself to layers of interpretations. In addition, this environment not only impacts the depiction of the self but also the social exchange between the writer and audience, making that exchange a fluid and indeterminate speech event. Importantly, it allows the reader a choice of role in the social exchange in order to supply the missing information thus giving the text multilayered interpretation. But the absence of Subject and tense and the associated responsibility for validating what is being stated/questioned, is left ambiguous which affects the form of exchange between the writer and the reader. The absence of primary tense and Subject – the entity that takes the responsibility for the exchange – can decrease the negotiability or ‘arguability’ of the clause. When ideas are expressed in clauses that lack arguability this makes it hard for readers to decide how to evaluate what is being said and whether they agree with it. Consequently, Adnan creates a daunting task even for the most accomplished native speaker of English – challenging them to decipher the full meaning of the text. But it is my contention that she does this to encourage readers to take part in the enactment of interpersonal relations. For, as the text unfolds, a shift from non-finite to the finite, and from one finite to another is observed. In addition, Adnan’s pattern of subjectless non-finite is disrupted by patterns of Subject textually present.

The significance of these elements is to give the proposition a point of reference in the here and now so as to make it arguable. With primary tense, the dimension is that of time: primary tense construes time interpersonally, as defined by what is ‘present’ to you and me at the time of saying. In relation to this point of view, a typical organization of an English exchange is one in which the clause is organized as an interactive event involving
writer and audience, so that the interactants in a dialogue engage in a symbolic exchange of meanings. Accordingly, at least for certain moments, the text’s environment is transformed from the ‘irrealis’ clauses to a few realis clauses, although these few clauses do not seem to undo the effect of the many irrealis ones. This indicates that the text goes through rapid changes of orientation, thus generating a sense of fragmentation and instability. This might produce a negative impression but it is actually positive in some ways in particular in terms of what these choices mean for Adnan’s text and the significance of these choices against other choices that could have been made.

Considering Adnan’s selections of interpersonal meaning, the act of writing continually undergoes a process of disruption and indeterminacy which impacts the establishment of social exchange between people and more specifically the kind of interpersonal meanings that may arise between people in particular circumstances. The particular circumstance for Adnan is the time of war and how it affects the social exchange between people in many ways. So writing as a social exchange acts to reproduce the ‘real’ impact of war through mediating between social subjects. In the act of writing Adnan adopts for herself a particular social speech role – a witness (survivor) of war – and in so doing assigns to her readers a complementary role – allowing readers to bear witness or share this act of witnessing and agency – which she wishes them to adopt in their turn.

The autobiographical subject’s experience, the construction of selves as social beings and the construction of reality seen through Adnan’s selections of interpersonal grammar indicate that they are not fixed and are liable to experimentation and transformation just like the act of writing. So this pattern in her writing might seem like a ‘negative’ result of war, but it might also be a positive.

In Adnan’s text the apparent refusal of interpersonal relationships – instantiated grammatically by the textual absence of Subject and Finite – points to the absence of the social but also to its importance especially when it comes to human rights issues, the loss of which has been caused by political struggles that impacted the other. These issues are seen through the lens of a circumstance of being in wartime which triggers a sense of social detachment and fragmentation, mirrored in a text that goes through shifts of orientation from one proposition to another – a proposition that lacks a temporal reference to the speech event and a nominal component in the Mood functioning as the Subject, then a proposition that has the Mood element present – making the text rather fragmentary and ruptured as well.
The text’s fluidity reflected by indeterminacy of subject roles, unstable selections of tense, shifts from out of powerlessness to agentiveness and vice versa does not only build on what Smyth (2016) refers to as “disrelation” or “refusal” of interpersonal relationships, a perspective pointed out by Smyth as a general feature in life writing amid socio-political struggles impacted the other. Adnan’s tendency to refuse interpersonal relations can be understood as a plea to ‘re-connect’. This is achieved by Adnan through highlighting the role of readers and authors as social subjects themselves. The text offers the opportunity of a shared testimony between social subjects beyond the texts’ local world and the personal experience of the author.

Adnan’s text, then, draws our attention to the ‘sociability’ in life writing and how Adnan negotiates this sociability in terms of the tension of “belonging to and being separate from” the social world or social institutions. This is achieved through Adnan’s selections of interpersonal relations which embody this inherent tension in their interplay. A sense of community of relationality is predominantly undermined, depicting “an agonized sense of relational self” that is “a part of social community but it stands ‘apart from them’” to use Collett and D’Arcens’s (2010, p.1) words. Nevertheless, if this same relational self placed in a social reality where interpersonal relations can be perceived in a process of ‘daily renewal’, it can prompt a self-definition beyond community or institutions: the realization of a self that exists independently but at the same time is engaged with the local and global. This sense of self calls for intersubjectivity to be developed in spite of boundaries of opposing identities, institutions, and ideologies, thus manifesting the power of its meaning although self is seen as displaced, fragmented, ruptured. This is what Adnan encourages us, as readers, to establish and develop: a sense of self connected to others amid political struggles. As Adnan states unequivocally, “Other people’s agony belongs to me” (quoted in Swenson 2014, p.378).

8.6 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has explored patterns of interpersonal relations in Adnan’s text. It analysed how Adnan negotiates the construction of social exchange between social subjects using grammatical selections of mood and modality. These selections are achieved through multiple shifts between finite and non-finite meanings and shifts in subject roles which portray how language not only enables us to perceive a reality of the social world but also to enact social roles and relationships in relation to that world. The interrelation between
the deployed interpersonal patterns, the shifts within them and the effects these shifts create draw our attention, through the act of writing, to the role of readers and authors as social subjects in promoting a social exchange even when that exchange seems to be absent or refused. Being aware of this role can reinforce our concept of a relational self and change our interpersonal attitudes and commitments towards others.
Chapter 9
Conclusion

This thesis has presented an examination of Adnan’s life writing text. This examination of Adnan’s work has addressed the thesis’s aims: to explore what Adnan’s cosmopolitan consciousness consists of, and how it is enacted in her life writing. The thesis has adopted an interdisciplinary practice to achieve these two aims. Through intertwining the useful resources provided by SFL for tracing, describing and interpreting language features and patterns of choices with contemporary approaches to literary criticism, this thesis investigates not only the social perspectives that language provides in Adnan’s text, but how an interdisciplinary analytical practice can broaden our understanding of Adnan’s work, inform the study of life writing more generally, and thus contribute to the fields of literature and linguistics. Using this interdisciplinary approach the thesis offers an in-depth understanding of how in this autobiographical text Adnan establishes a particular type of cosmopolitanism and agency through an ensemble of linguistic choices which themselves appear at first to be in turmoil – a turmoil that mirrors the political turmoil of war – but on further inspection are shown to be an illustration of a multitude of themes and meanings, such as agency, temporality, intersubjectivity. In this way the indeterminate boundaries of literary and linguistic disciplines can be exploded by unpacking Adnan’s writing techniques.

9.1 Reflections on Adnan’s cosmopolitan ethos

This thesis has demonstrated that linking Adnan’s choice of a lifewriting genre and English language to notions of nomadism, exile and cosmopolitanism is useful for understanding and unpacking the different threads of themes, meanings, narrative styles, and linguistic approaches in Adnan’s work. A particularly productive analysis has entailed the interrogation of how Adnan positions herself and her writing with regard to contemporary socio-political issues, and how along with this position she composes a work of life writing that continuously breaks textual and territorial boundaries, and displays the movement of self that is paralleled by – or also replaced by – a movement in English writing that Adnan initiates where a pattern seems to build and release or accumulate at a point of barrier or blockage and then continue to move and transform.
This happens across the whole text and across multiple literary and linguistic tropes including, for example, agency, timelessness, temporal location.

This thesis has embarked on this interrogation by identifying where Adnan’s work fits in the postcolonial debate over the use of the English language. The thesis has demonstrated that although English is not the language of the colonizer for Adnan she sees expression to that colonization from the perspective of her cosmopolitan stance, that is, she is affected by the other. This supports the argument of the thesis that Adnan’s cosmopolitan ethos is not a product of her multifaceted background but it is rooted in Adnan’s concerns and commitments to socio-political issues in the world. The linguistic and literary configuration of a point of dispute concerning the historically long struggle between the global and the local that haunts Adnan generates this ethos through an idiosyncratic style of textual and clausal structure and experimentation with the autobiographical subject.

Consistent with this stance is Adnan’s endeavour to give her literary text infinite possibilities to resist and transcend conventions of language and genre and how readers might understand a text created against a “horizon of expectation”. As the thesis has shown, readers are offered challenging tasks of interpretation and this can be seen as one way in which Adnan models readers as social actors in the active creation of meaning. Thus readers are invited to share the cosmopolitan consciousness Adnan establishes and enacts in her life writing.

This engagement of readers in Adnan’s text is demonstrated by the thesis through identifying her text to be an indicative example of a testimonial discourse which establishes “cross-cultural transactions” in the pursuit of social justice. Adnan’s pursuit in her text is dialogic, achieved through fostering a dialogue that appeals to “witnessing publics”. Thus readers are allowed the role of an active creator of meaning through a text that is dynamic and interactive. This is a cosmopolitan project that prompts us as readers towards an ongoing dialogue within ourselves and with the distant other, so that I become part of this project in my thesis, as do my readers.

Accordingly, although it can at one level be seen as representing the fragmentation and disruption caused by the traumatic experience of war and displacement, Adnan’s work creates more broadly a sense of engagement and solidarity with the distant other, which offers a radical understanding and restructuring of the experience of trauma through giving it ‘glocal’ perspective. Thus Adnan’s language and genre choice which generates
her cosmopolitan ethos links a text’s local environment to a wider socio-political environment. The thesis has shown that this cosmopolitan ethos is rooted in Adnan’s ethical and socio-political preoccupation with issues of precariousness across multiple sites of suffering. This perspective has the effect of opening up a deeper, broader inquiry into the relationship between the self and distant other, and achieving a transference of agency between writers and readers through allowing readers to themselves actively engage in that enquiry.

9.2 Adnan’s enactment of a cosmopolitan ethos through language choices

This thesis has shown that through the linguistic functional approach adopted for this examination of Adnan’s literary work which builds on previous applications of SFL to literary studies and on theories of life writing, this study provides the first close grammatical analysis of a memoir. The analysis has focused on the relation between Adnan’s themes and her mode of articulating these themes and has achieved a deeper understanding of the text at a micro level that supports a macro level appreciation of the work itself and of the value of such an interdisciplinary approach.

Using this interdisciplinary approach, the thesis has demonstrated that Adnan establishes a cosmopolitan ethics and glocal stance through using the grammar of English and a genre of life writing to represent the world, reality, agency, social relationships, in terms of single events at a clause level and multiple events at clause complex level, and through experimenting with the autobiographical “I”.

The thesis has shown how Adnan’s grammatical patterns set up a local system. As Butt (2009, p.372) argues “any account of verbal art will become grounded and defensible only in so far as it demonstrates the agency of art in bringing these wider patterns of social and personal behaviour into a dynamic, open system – namely, into the system of the text”. Adnan’s local system used to construe a response to war is not only the formal features but how she mixes the moments of beauty and a deep sense of detachment and apprehension where small daily happenings coupled with the beauty of nature and a flow of uninterrupted movement across different geographies are depicted as a way of construing and exploring tangled and complex events and feelings.

The thesis has also shown that in her life writing Adnan experiments with the autobiographical “I”, that is, Adnan’s sense of self is ‘displaced’ – that is, it is not only referenced by the “I” on the page and this “I” itself is not always textually present across
her book, and is completely absent in the analysed text. This experimentation enables the self to articulate a multitude of conflicting points of view juxtaposed at many different temporal and spatial levels and takes a prospective look at the past, present and future. Adnan’s experimentation with the “I” instantiates her work as an act of re-production and creation ‘anew’, and maintains the perspective that nothing is ‘fixed’. As Adnan says, “I am sometimes a first person and sometimes a third. My body takes over and moves like a planet on its own” (Adnan 2005, p.17).

Seen from the perspective of the movement of displacement, this study has made a significant contribution through its cross disciplinary approach. Adnan’s text creates a space of potential action where the subject and, potentially, the reader challenge the past and present social structures and politics. Thus, Adnan’s work can be seen as occupying a significant position in a larger context of notions of dwelling and displacement of land and self – although her work might be seen as liminal, detached and fragmented, this work can at the same time be seen as active, mobile and dynamic – enabled by a transformative act of writing. This has been demonstrated in the thesis through the interdisciplinary practice which provides a linguistic description of both the ‘dynamic perspective’ and the ‘synoptic perspective’ on the meaning-making resources used by Adnan.

In fact, the main contribution of this thesis in terms of stylistics is the observation of how patterns of language are not static in producing themes and meanings but they are dynamic. The thesis has shown that these linguistic selections are shifting and interactive, stressing the idea that “nothing is fixed”, thus the writer’s choices have the agency to destabilise the fixed meanings of being and belonging. This dynamic aspect has been revealed across the text through the excessive accumulation of different linguistic choices that convey opposing senses – the sharp shifts and the slow shading between linguistic features, combinations of similar meanings realized across different grammatical systems, and also the way theses meanings only become apparent through the sequencing of words and clauses. This inclusion of the ‘dynamic’ perspective as well as the ‘synoptic’ perspective in my study of Adnan’s work demonstrates how reporting the frequency of structures alone is not sufficient for comprehensive textual analysis, and makes this study particularly significant for the field.

Also, the thesis has demonstrated the importance of this disciplinary approach which reveals the originality of Adnan’s work in terms of how Adnan engages in symbolic articulation in her life writing and constitutes the first study using symbolic articulation
to examine life writing. In the broader sense, this study explores the engagement between the local and global in relation to socio-political events, and our role as readers and writers in relation to these events, and instantiates Adnan’s cosmopolitan worldview and consciousness regarding human rights issues and the relationship between self and other. This has been shown in the thesis through the linguistic choices Adnan uses to symbolically articulate her themes, which can be seen as a rather novel approach for a lifewriting genre and Adnan’s use of symbolic articulation can lay the foundation for a new linguistic and literary (symbolic) practice of life writing.

Adnan’s layers of textual production exemplify clearly Hasan’s (1985) notion of symbolic articulation – themes are not just stated explicitly in literature but are symbolically articulated on many levels through what Hasan calls “motivated selections” of language features. In other words, language selections across multiple systems in the grammar are consistently “motivated” by the overarching themes the writer intends the text to convey. We have seen this in the thesis in the different aspects of functions that are manipulated by Adnan in different ways and at different points in the text in order to highlight her overarching notions/themes of experience, agency, interdependency and belonging, and interpersonal relationships.

Through looking at Adnan’s selections of language and interpreting them using SFL tools and literary theories, a multitude of threads of meaning that are placed in an unusual “contrapuntal juxtaposition” and exhibit “dialectical” relationship are symbolically articulated revealed. For example, the thesis has shown how the writer’s complex testimonial experience and profound sense of detachment and precariousness in relation to what is happening in the world are asserted and linked to language patterns of transitivity which not only shows the unusual configuration of inner and outer experiential relations in the text but also the juxtaposition of the realities realised by these patterns. The paradoxical meanings and effects they convey generate an agentive sense of self that is rebelling and breaking the conventions of the autobiographical experience. Also, the thesis has shown the establishment of a more critical and ideological dimension to the genre of life writing through ergative patterns of language. These patterns which display the presence or absence of agency generate a particular urgency through the piling up of lexicogrammatical selections, combinations, effects that help understand the role of life writing in the witnessing of a devastating reality and in enabling impact, and therefore, a
potential for social agency and change that might apparently be restricted or not present in the external world.

In addition, the thesis has revealed how the shift in Adnan’s text between connectedness and separateness achieved through multiple layers of logical meaning symbolically supports the writer’s primary arguments about how humans react to local and global conflicts. This is, how these patterns of language portray and actively creates reality in the sense that it enables our perception of how the things, events, and relations in the world are intersubjectively connected, and how the interaction and the intersection between patterns of interdependency relations and patterns of projection and expansion and how events and ideas are arranged portrays a mode of reality whose possibility Adnan alerts us to and prompts us to engage in. Further, the thesis has shown how the negotiation of the construction of social exchange between social subjects realised through patterns of interpersonal meaning, in particular mood and modality, is achieved through multiple shifts between finite and non-finite meanings and shifts in subject roles which depict how language not only enables us to perceive a reality of the social world but also to enact social roles and relationships in relation to that world. The interrelation between the deployed interpersonal patterns, the shifts within them and the effects these shifts create draw our attention, through the act of writing, to the role of readers and authors as social subjects in promoting a social exchange even when that exchange seems to be absent or rejected. Paying a special attention to this role can strengthen our sense of a relational self and transform our interpersonal attitudes and commitments towards others.

Hasan explains that “the challenge of the creator of verbal art is that the symbolically articulated theme has to be capable of striking a chord in the reader across substantial distances in time and space, even though the roots of theme lie in the artist’s own ideological stance” (Hasan 2007, p.25). Adnan’s threads of meaning that are revealed through her use of the English language across different systems of grammar demonstrate one way in which it is possible to “strik[e] a chord” in readers through selections of language.

Adnan construes a self that is “dwelling” between daily pleasures that are felt as mundane but reveal privileged details of day-to-day living, the beauty of nature seen by “one’s incredulous eyes”, and the enjoyment of “the enormous variety of the shades of green on the mountain”. However, these moments of respite are interrupted by the consciousness of war and suffering of others, by that “heart-wrenching reality” generates a sense of a
social world that moves “forward into parading indifference”. While the persona’s body
does “the thinking about the war”, lives off sorrow, foresees “no personal action”, and
waits for the storm, for the unknown, and while the persona’s mind is filled with “the
apprehension of the war news” and with “memories of wars”, Adnan’s self, although it
appears to endeavour to “renounce both hope and surrender”, still lets her “believe that
things, later, will be much better”. Adnan’s self, or “[a]nother” heart, has a vision that
although oscillating between poles of pain and precariousness, that always return to the
positive agency of writing, a practice aims continuously to “go back to the typewriter. To
worry about the ribbon, to wonder if it needs to be replaced by a new one. To uncork the
inkpots. To fear the ink will evaporate. To cross the threshold. To alter one’s perceptions
by pain’s sovereignty”, to start anew. Adnan writes, “We need to drink and vomit, to
vomit an overused soul to make room for the possibility of a new one, something which
we are far from being sure to get” (Adnan 1993, p.55).

Although Adnan is described as a “pessimist” author when compared to her practice of
visual art that offers “sanctuaries of peaceful respite” from the turmoils she has witnessed
and described in her writings. But although her writing does not “yield easily. It has a
pure but darker side” (Nancy Haynes quoted in Marranca & Ruschkowski 2018, p.1), my
study of her life and work has led me to believe that Adnan is an eternal optimist and that
her practice of life writing offers a vigorous optimism that “yearn[s] for spectacular suns”

Among the few who have critiqued her writing, Adnan is often described as one of the
most influential writers and artists of the 21st century. Her work is “the opposite of
cynicism”, “it is pure oxygen in a world full of wars” (Obrist 2015, p.4). Since Adnan’s
work has been under-investigated and neglected, the significance of the present thesis lies
in the contribution of this research to literature and linguistic studies and to the scholarly
appreciation of Adnan’s writing. This seminal interdisciplinary study of Adnan’s work
has enabled a better understanding of her politics and attitudes toward the ethics of genre
and language which in turn points to the social and political value of her life writing
through its non-violent ethics of narration and peace activism.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Structure of Adnan’s chapters into recurrent headings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I IN THE HEART OF THE OTHER COUNTRY</th>
<th>II TWENTY-FIVE YEARS LATER</th>
<th>III FURTHER ON</th>
<th>V PRESENT TIME</th>
<th>VI TIME, DESIRE, AND FOG</th>
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Appendix B: Different aspects of Transitivity analysis

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<th>Clause</th>
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<th>Direct participants</th>
<th>Indirect participants</th>
<th>Circumstance</th>
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<td>To say nothing,</td>
<td>say</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do nothing,</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mark time,</td>
<td>mark</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to bend,</td>
<td>bend</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to straighten up,</td>
<td>straighten</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td></td>
<td>up (extent distance)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to blabber oneself,</td>
<td>blabber</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to stand,</td>
<td>stand</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to go toward the window,</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>toward the window (extent distance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>to change one's mind in the process,</td>
<td>change</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td>In the process (extent distance)</td>
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<td>to return to a chair,</td>
<td>return</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>to one's chair (location place)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>to stand again,</td>
<td>stand</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>up (manner quality)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>to go to the bathroom,</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>to the bathroom (location place)</td>
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<td>to close the door,</td>
<td>close</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
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<td>to then open the door,</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>then (location time-temporal)</td>
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<td>go to the kitchen,</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>to the kitchen (location place)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>to not eat,</td>
<td>not eat</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to drink,</td>
<td>drink</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to return to the table,</td>
<td>return</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>to the table (location place)</td>
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<td>to be bored,</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>Nontransitive attributive</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>to lie down on the rug,</td>
<td>lie</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>on the rug (location place)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>to come close to the chimney,</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>close (patient distance) to the chimney (location place)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to look at it,</td>
<td>look</td>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to be it out,</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>Nontransitive attributive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to turn on the main door,</td>
<td>turn on</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>to the main door (location place)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to come back to the room,</td>
<td>come back</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>back (extent distance) to the room (location place)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to hesitate,</td>
<td>hesitate</td>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to go on, just a bit, a little,</td>
<td>go on</td>
<td>Material</td>
<td>just a bit (extent distance), a little (extent distance)</td>
<td></td>
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Appendix C: Transitivity configuration of mental clauses

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### Appendix D: Ergative configurations of “war” in Adnan’s Text

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</table>
Appendix E: Sample of the layout of Adnan’s Chapter VII

VII TO BE IN A TIME OF WAR

To say nothing, do nothing, mark time, to bend, to straighten up, to blame oneself, to stand, to go toward the window, to change one's mind in the process, to return to one's chair, to stand again, to go to the bathroom, to close the door, to then open the door, to go to the kitchen, to not eat or drink, to return to the table, to be bored, to take a few steps on the rug, to come close to the chimney, to look at it, to find it dull, to turn left to the main door, to come back to the room, to hesitate, to go on, just a bit, a trifle, to stop, to pull the right side of the curtain, then the other side, to stare at the wall.

To look at the watch, the clock, the alarm clock, to listen to the ticking, to think about it, to look again, to go to the tap, to open the refrigerator, to close it, to open the door, to feel the cold, to close the door, to feel hungry, to wait, to wait for—dinner time, to go to the kitchen, to reopen the fridge, to take out the cheese, to open the drawer, to take out a knife, to carry the cheese and enter the dining room, to rest the plate on the table, to lay the table for one, to sit down, to cut the cheese in four servings, to take a bite, to introduce the cheese into the mouth, to chew and swallow, to forget to swallow, to daydream, to chew again, to go back to the kitchen, to wipe one's mouth, to wash one's hands, to dry them, to put the cheese back into the refrigerator, to close that door, to let go of the day.

To listen to the radio, to put it off, to walk a bit, to think, to give up thinking, to look for the key, to wonder, to do nothing.
to regret the passing of time, to find a solution, to want to go to
the beach, to tell that the sun is going down, to hurry, to take
the key, to open the car door, to sit, to pull the door shut,
insert the key in the ignition, turn it, warm up the engine, to
listen, to make sure nobody's around, to pull back, to go
ahead, to turn right, then left, to drive straight on, to follow the
road, to take many curves, to drive down the coast, look at the
ocean, to admire it, to feel happy, to go up the hill, to reach
the other side, then go straight, to stop, to make sure that the
ocean has not disappeared, to feel lucky, to stop the engine,
to open the door, to exit, to close the door, to look straight
ahead, to appreciate the breeze, to advance into the waves.

To wake up, to stretch, to get out of bed, to dress, to stagger
toward the window, to be ecstatic about the garden's beauty,
to observe the quality of the light, to distinguish the roses
from the hyacinths, to wonder if it rained in the night, to
establish contact with the mountain, to notice its color, to
see if the clouds are moving, to stop, to go to the kitchen, to
grind some coffee, to light the gas, to heat water, hear it boil-
ing, to make the coffee, to shut off the gas, to pour the cof-
fee, to decide to have some milk with it, to bring out the
bottle, to pour the milk in the aluminum pan, to heat it, to
be careful, to pour, to mix the coffee with the milk, to feel
the heat, to bring the cup to one's mouth, to drink, to drink
again, to face the day's chores, to stand and go to the
kitchen, to come back and put the radio on, to bring the vol-
ume up, to hear that the war against Iraq has started.

To get more and more impatient, to be hungry, to bite one's
nails, to wear a jacket, to open the door, walk down the hill,
to look at the Bay, see boats, notice a big sailboat, to go on
walking, to be breathless, to turn left, then right, to enter the
Sushi-Ran, to wait, to look at the waitress, to call her, to rest
one's elbows on the table, to pull them back when the tea
arrives, to order, to eat, to drink, to use chopsticks, to be
through, to wipe one's mouth with the napkin, to read the
bill, to count, to pay, to thank graciously, to exit, to start the
road uphill.

(100)
To rise early, to hurry down to the driveway, to look for the paper, take it out of its yellow bag, to read on the front-page WAR, to notice that WAR takes half a page, to feel a shiver down the spine, to tell that that's it, to know that they dared, that they jumped the line, to read that Baghdad is being bombed, to envision a rain of fire, to hear the noise, to be heartbroken, to stare at the trees, to go up slowly while reading, to come back to the front page, read WAR again, to look at the word as if it were a spider, to feel paralyzed, to look for help within oneself, to know helplessness, to pick up the phone, to give up, to get dressed, to look through the windows, to suffer from the day's beauty, to hate to death the authors of such crimes, to realize that it's useless to think, to pick up the purse, to go down the stairs, to see people smashed to a pulp, to say yes indeed the day is beautiful, to not know anything, to go on walking, to take notice of people's indifference toward each other.

To have lunch. To ask for a beer. To give one's order. To drink, eat, and pay. To leave. To reach home. To find the key. To enter. To wait. To think about the war. To glance at the watch. To put on the news. To listen to the poison distilled by the military correspondents. To get a headache. To eat dry biscuits. To put the radio back on. To hear bombs falling on Baghdad. To listen to ambulances. To go out on the deck. To look at the lengthening shadows on the grass. To count a few dead flies on the pane. To go to the table and look at the mail. To feel discouraged. To drink some water. To not understand the wind. To wonder if the human race is not in chaos. To wish to blow up the planet. To admire those who are marching against the war.

To hear a war from far away, for others. To bomb, eliminate a country, blow up a civilization, destroy the living. To exit from one idea to enter another. To go. To cross the Golden Gate. To enter San Francisco. To stop at the light. To enjoy the luminosity of the green. To be on Market Street. To see too many policemen. To be told to keep going. To see young men being arrested at the end of the march. To measure ten-
sion in the air. To seek Valencia. To go all the way to Connecticut Street and park the car. To enter through the gate of CCAC. To sit in a room which is dark. To listen to a poet, then to another, speak about a time gone.

To stop at the gas station and fill up the tank. To go uphill, peck at Mount Tamalpais. To take a rest, breathe, contemplate. To find a path and walk on wet grounds. To enjoy the enormous variety of the shades of green on the mountain. To raise one's eyes to the sky and bring them back on the horizon to compare the different greys of the sky. To try to speak to the clouds. To say yes, it's impossible. To linger on the mystery of communication, to bemoan its absence. To say it's okay, then not to believe oneself. To think of the morning news, to be horrified. To despise. To hate. To empty one's head of overflowing emotions. To regret that evil exists. To blame oneself for the existence of evil. To want to forget about it and not be capable of doing. To wrap oneself with death.

To turn the page without moving into a new life. To put on the radio. To listen and to be hit in the face with much poison. To curse the hour, the fire, the deluge and hell. To lose patience. To lynch misfortune. To prevent the trajectory of inner defeat from reaching the center. To resist. To stand up. To raise the volume. To learn that the marches against the war are growing in number. To admit that human nature is multifaceted. To know that war is everywhere. To admit that some do win. To drink some water. To turn in circles. To pretend that one is not spent out. To believe it. To pretend. To discuss with one's heart. To talk to it. To quiet it down, if possible. To curse the savagery of the technologically powered new crusades. To remain in doubt. To come out of it in triumph.

To run down for the Sunday paper. To read: "Target: Baghdad." Back to the radio, hear about the American dissidents. Hear that the Blacks are overwhelmingly against the war, that the Iraqis are resisting. Do some cleaning. To