

## Problematizing Translation of Cultural Metaphors in the Poetry of Mahmoud Darwish

Randa Kullab,<sup>1</sup>  
Universiti Malaya, Malaysia

Looi Wai Ling,<sup>2</sup>  
Universiti Malaya, Malaysia

Emily Lau Kui-Ling<sup>3</sup>  
Universiti Malaya, Malaysia

### Abstract

Metaphors illuminate the cognitive processes of human minds. They have been treated as a translational dilemma for decades, as their translatability along with the procedures utilised to translate them have been problematic for researchers. This present study problematizes the translation of cultural metaphors in Mahmoud Darwish's poetry by applying the Conceptual Metaphor Theory as the chief framework and links it to postcolonial theory to provide some evidence of cognitive differences between the source metaphor and the target metaphor. This paper gives an account of how the meanings of Mahmoud Darwish's cultural metaphors are lost in translation due to the host culture, that is, the coloniser culture. Findings reveal that the cultural and historical values of some metaphors have been eliminated. The trajectory of this elimination lies in the disparity between coloniser and colonised cultures. This paper advocates the retaining of the source language cultures and values as a form of resistance to the colonial impact that has overshadowed the culture of the colonised.

### Keywords

Cultural metaphors, translatability of metaphors, postcolonial influences, translation of poems, Mahmoud Darwish

---

<sup>1</sup> **Randa Kullab** is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, Universiti Malaya (UM). She holds a Master's degree in Translation Studies from UM (2016). Kullab translated sections of *Dreaming of Freedom: Palestinian Child Prisoners Speak* (2018) from English into Arabic. Email: randahkullab@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> **Looi Wai Ling** obtained a PhD in Translation Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. She is Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, UM. She coedited *The Mousedeer and the Crocodiles: A Malaysian Folktale in 111 Languages* (2017). Email: looiwl@um.edu.my

<sup>3</sup> **Emily Lau Kui-Ling's** career as an academic began in 2005 upon the completion of her MA in English Literature. Since she completed a PhD at UM in 2013, she has served as Senior Lecturer at the Department of English Language, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, UM. Her core research domains include Discourse Studies, Multimodality, and Language in Literary Texts. Her published works include "Anchee Min's *Red Azalea*: Memoir as an Enterprise to Self-Discovery" (2019). Email: elkl@um.edu.my

## Introduction

The source text (henceforth ST) is a collection of poems from a Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish (1941–2008). His poetry is marked by the use of metaphors which encapsulates his remembrance of the struggle and loss of Palestinians (Celik 273). It has been commonly assumed that his poetry is a real manifestation of the Palestinian-Israeli struggle over Palestine (Hamoud Yahya et al. 7). Therefore, his metaphors are mainly utilised as a call for a universal action on the unfortunate events that took place against the Palestinians. His seminal literary production has inspired many to translate his poetry into several languages including English and French. However, the metaphoric nature of his poetry has been received as a viable epitome of untranslatability (Mahasneh 77).

The translated text (henceforth TT) in the English Language is drawn from *Selected Poems: Mahmoud Darwish*, translated by Ian Wedde, a New Zealander poet, critic, and novelist, and Fawwaz Tuqan, a Palestinian-Jordanian poet, novelist, and professor. Wedde's literary production contains poems published in enormous anthologies and journals and more than 13 poetry collections. He was New Zealand's 2011-2013 Poet Laureate. Wedde himself states that this work, co-written with Tuqan was written in Jordan where Wedde experienced Arabic culture and was introduced to the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish for the first time (17). Tuqan received MA and PhD degrees from Yale University. He has translated many works from Arabic to English, including this book. He was a professor of Arabic literature and language and the history of Islamic civilisation. The translated book choice is two-pronged: firstly, the cooperation between Wedde and Tuqan is an apt choice where one is an expert in English while the other in Arabic, and thus they are familiar with both cultures; secondly, the translators of this book are poets themselves so they understand the ST and TT poetic equivalents.

The translation of a word in the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish of وعن ارض التي تحملها في حبه تين in back translation (henceforth BT) “about the land she carries in a fig” into “& about the earth she carries *in aspirin*” has intrigued researchers. The fruit fig, like an olive tree, symbolises Palestine. Almost every family in Palestine has a fig tree growing in their farms. The metonymic use of “fig” is also made clear, relating the “land” to the “fig” in the verse. Symbolically, the meaning is that when a Palestinian leaves their country, they carry a fig to represent Palestine, the homeland they are forced to leave. The homeland, Palestine, is thus metonymised into a fig. However, in the translated version the word, “aspirin,” which is a generic painkiller, does not at all reflect the intended meaning of the source. The use of the translated word, “aspirin,” has not only changed the denotative meaning and connotative meanings, but it has also prevented the source culture from being made known in the target culture. When a “third world” literature, from a politically less powerful culture, is translated

into English, a politically dominant culture, it is said that the identity of the politically less powerful culture may be distorted (Spivak 399-400). The example highlighted here reflects this phenomenon.

The translation of a text is not just a mere conveyance of its linguistic realisation from one language to another, but rather it engages more comprehensive extralinguistic factors that include the text's cognitive experience and culture. Generally, each language provides a plethora of culturally specific linguistic devices such as metaphor, symbolism, irony, and so forth. These linguistics devices may demonstrate a translational dilemma when translating a text between unrelated cultures such as Arab and English (Al Rushaidi and Ali 202; Al-Sohbani and Muthanna 422). Based on this background, this paper postulates, to a certain extent, the influence of postcolonialism on altering the ideological perception of the ST. In that sense, it renders a definite picture of how the translators may frame the STs differently in favour of the readers and cultures of TTs.

### **Conceptual metaphor**

In recent literature in cognitive linguistics and applied linguistics fields, the conceptual metaphor has been one of the most interesting issues (Khakipour and Amjad 50). For decades the salient meaning of the conceptual metaphor was rendered as a figurative linguistic device. This was so until the 1980s when George Lakoff and Mark Johnson proposed their revolutionary theory known as the conceptual metaphor theory. In their seminal book, *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson say that the metaphor functions as a tool that helps us to understand our human experiences within one cultural group. A metaphor embodies the description of one conceptual domain by employing another conceptual domain (5). Lakoff and Johnson argue that these conceptual domains are not just fundamental and natural in human experiences but are the results of the cooperation between our bodies and our interaction with the physical environments and with others within the same culture (119). Since these conceptual domains are dependent on human nature which is affected by culture, some conceptual domains are universal while others are distinguished from one culture to another. Moreover, Zoltan Kovecses remarks that the target domain is more abstract and the source domain, more concrete (Metaphor 17). For instance, in the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY, the abstract target domain "love" is understood in terms of the more concrete domain "journey." The language user may express such conceptual metaphors through a variety of metaphorical expressions such as "we should go our separate ways" to relate the less delineated domain "love" to the more physically experienced domain "journey."

It is crucial to state that the major concern of cognitive linguists does not include the hearer perception of the lexical meanings of words which can be

easily found in the dictionaries, but rather they are more interested in how one understands their own experiences. For example, if one looks for the meaning of the lexeme “love,” they may find words like “fondness” or “devotion.” Conversely, one will not find how love is rendered through such a metaphor as LOVE IS A JOURNEY. To put it differently, no dictionary will define how love can be seen in terms of a journey. Cognitive linguists view language as a means that sets one’s main principles of understanding. Such principles do not rely on individual words or concepts, but they depend on the whole systems and experiences of those concepts. In addition, cognitive linguists are interested not solely in how one understands a concept but also in how one reacts and functions with it. Thus, in metaphors such as LOVE IS A JOURNEY, the source domain “journey” helps one to determine how one should handle love and how one can function with it.

### **Culture and the translatability of metaphors**

Metaphors are reflected through one’s thoughts and mirrored in one’s usage of language. Being exposed to a plethora of languages and cultures, a translator’s mission is made more complicated when faced with metaphorical expressions (Eweida 1). The extended studies tackling the metaphor, such as Al-Zoubi et al., Al-Hasnawi, Ewieda, Maalej, and Ghazala, have established a substantial relation between the dominant conceptual metaphors utilised in certain communities and the cultures shared by them, starting from Lakoff and Johnson, who posit that the most significant cultural structure values will be mirrored in the metaphorical structures of the important concepts of that culture. According to Abdulla Nasser Khalifa Al-Harrasi, the relationship between cultures and metaphors can be studied from different dimensions, the most significant of which is the effect of cultures and values of a certain community on the conventional metaphors used in that community (84). It can be concluded that metaphors are related to one’s own experience, which is connected to their culture which, in turn, varies from one nation to another (Tabakowska 66).

In a conceptual metaphor context, Kovecses defines culture as “a set of shared understandings of the world where one’s understandings, represented through language, are mental representations structured by cultural frames” (*Language, Mind and Culture* 135). The broad term “frames” here is equated to source domains and target domains. For instance, Zouheir Maalej shows how the metaphor of “knowledge” and “the learning process” is conceptualised in two separate cultures. According to his study, the United Kingdom has assorted conceptualisations of “knowledge” and “the learning process” such as LEARNING IS A CLICK, LEARNING IS LIGHT, LEARNING IS MOVEMENT, and LEARNING IS A JIGSAW (*Metaphors of Learning and Knowledge* 218). On the other hand, in Tunisian Arabic, an analysis of the official document known as “Program of the Programs” exhibits some relatively different

conceptualisations of “knowledge” and “learning process” which are as follows: LEARNING IS BUILDING, LEARNING IS ECONOMY, LEARNING IS A JOURNEY, and LEARNING IS AN ECONOMIC BUILDING JOURNEY.

It has been widely assumed that correlations between metaphor and culture have depicted metaphors as an unsurmountable translational ordeal since each linguistic group represents its own culture through language differently (Mahasneh 77). It is undeniable then that the cultural differences between languages cause difficulties in translation, especially in cases where the two languages belong to dissimilar language families and cultures. An example in point, the Arabic language belongs to the Semitic language family and represents Eastern cultures whereas the English language comes from the Indo-European language family and represents Western cultures.

The deep anatomy of this complex relation between metaphor and culture has led Mary Snell-Hornby to conclude that such complexity is grounded on the density of the differences between cultures and languages (56). The direct influence of this would result in an inevitable divergence in conceptualising the symbols embedded within them. In that sense, the translatability of metaphors becomes highly dependent on the extent to which these metaphors are embedded in their own culture. Consequently, to analyze the metaphor and examine its meaning, one must understand the “hidden aspect” of one’s ingrained hegemonic ideology and culture (Lakoff and Turner 10). However, the fact that we have distinguished culturally rooted metaphors does not negate the thought of universal metaphors shared among most distant cultures. Studies such as Lakoff and Turner, and Kovecses have provided seminal insights into the universality of some conceptual metaphors like TIME IS MONEY. On the other hand, most conceptual metaphors hold some ad hoc connotations which are distinguished from one culture to another; unsurprisingly on such occasions, the universality of such metaphors will be hindered (Lakoff and Turner 6).

The translatability of the metaphor has been a matter of debate for years. Mildred Larson recapitulates that the untranslatability of metaphors as stemming from two main causes: firstly, the identification of the metaphoricality of the SL expression (277-279). Secondly, the ability to find the appropriate TL equivalence of that metaphor. Finding an equivalence is difficult especially in cases when the culture of both SL and TL is radically different. Hence, the translation mission would be easily guaranteed only in those cases where ST and TT share a close culture or language.

Translation of cultural metaphors is, in itself, a formidable task due to cultural differences between two languages. On top of that, the translatability of cultural metaphors becomes even more complicated with the hegemonic relationship between coloniser and colonised cultures as explicated in the following section.

### **The postcolonial influence on translation**

Translated cultural metaphors, more often than not, lose the essence of their cultural and historical values. This occurrence is not as innocent as differences in source and target cultures; rather its disparity lies between the hegemonic nature of coloniser and colonised cultures. Pier-Pascale Boulanger looked at the use of conceptual metaphors on media coverage of the American subprime crisis of August 2007 among French and English readerships and found that conceptual metaphors are not as harmless as they seem, in that they help to disseminate a neoliberal ideology of economics (144). Díaz Marina Peralta et al. researched the ideological use of the metaphor and found that the translator used metaphors to accentuate the negative traits of Montezuma, one of the Aztec rulers, in its Spanish version (261-262). In this article, we will view the translation of metaphors as influenced by postcolonial domination.

Looking at it from the points of view of postcolonialism and racism, in his maiden book, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon found that, being colonised the non-white communities in the world wish to be white. He argues that “for the black man, there is only one destiny. And it is white” (12). This quote is based on the existential approach which encompasses the idea that “a black existence” equates inferiority, which further implies that “a white existence” equates superiority. The work of Fanon has influenced the renowned Palestinian-American scholar Edward Said. In *Orientalism*, Said shows how the Orientalists or the Western scholars who study the Asian cultures and languages, based on their wrong perceptions and misrepresentations of Eastern culture, depicted and represented Arab Islamic society in the nineteenth century. This in turn would affect how the imperialists perceive their colonies and may lead to how the Imperialists treat their colonies. Said warns of imperialism of past and present, which, under the guise of bringing civilisation to the people, actually plunders their resources.

The study of the relation between the colonised and the coloniser has attracted several scholars in the field of linguistics. The term postcolonial theory as proposed by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak compresses a close examination of the clash between the SL and TL cultures during the translation. It further examines the history of the previous colonies, colonisers, and the resistance of the colonised. More specifically, it studies the impact of the unequal power relations between the coloniser and the colonised (Munday 292). Thus, the main concern of the postcolonial theory of translation is how the translation takes place between the unequal SL and TL cultures in terms of power, or according to Talal Asad, how power is manifested in translation (163). This observation is shared by Paul F. Bandia who posited that “postcolonial translation studies is mainly concerned with investigating the impact of translation on a colonized source culture, and the consequences for homogenizing or colonizing language culture” (129). In the article, *The politics of translation*, Spivak indicates that her major

concern is to study the change of ideology when translating the literature of the Third World into English and the possible elimination of the third world's cultures taking place in the translation to satisfy the TL English reader (400). For example, when translating cultures such as the Bengali culture into the Western culture, the translators – in her terms – have “othered” the SL by changing several cultural features in the text to fit the dominant culture's readers, in other words, the English reader.

What is meant by “otherness” here can be exemplified in the cases whereby a translator of an ST follows the TL linguistic and cultural norms. Cultural translatability inevitably generates some kind of clash between our essential notions of the “self” and the “other”: what we think about ourselves and what we do not; therefore, any attempt to seek cultural uniqueness and identity necessarily entails “otherness”, which in turn can bring exclusion or isolation (Camps 79). In this light, translators are seen as culture constructors (Lefevere and Bassnett 10).

In considering the superiority of the hegemonic languages over third world cultures, several scholars such as Tejaswini Niranjana, Spivak, and Sherry Simon have looked at the relations between colonised and coloniser cultures to identify the reasons for the superiority of some (Western) cultures. The reason behind this superiority in Niranjana's worldview is due to the attitude of translators who are Western-oriented (47). She proclaims that translators follow the West because they lack the prescription of the imbalanced power relations among languages and cultures in the field of translation studies which are naively based on unproblematic theories of language (48). In the light of that, Spivak, in turn, blames Western feminists who are required to show genuine solidarity with women in postcolonial contexts through learning the language they use in speaking and writing (407).

These debates have encouraged scholars such as Homi Bhabha to propose a group of concepts to mediate between the SL and TL cultures such as “in-betweenness” and “hybridity” which imply a neutral culture that falls in between the SL and TL cultures. In other words, it does not follow the cultural norms of either language. These concepts have been confronted by the claims of other scholars such as Sathya Rao who introduced the concept of non-colonial translation theory whereby the ST is considered as “a radical immanence indifferent to the colonial world performance” (89) and therefore, it is considered a non-translation.

As regards the discourse of imperialism in translated texts, Simon posits that in terms of postcolonialism, translation is depicted not as a mere transfer of linguistic representations of a language but rather what he calls a trans-linguistic practice (10-15). Such a definition of translation highlights Simon's worldview of postcolonialism, as its map transcends the map of geographical powers to draw attention to history, power, and ethical relations. Translation, in that sense, is

understood through the frame of a dynamic exchange by colonialism and its consequences.

In sum, postcolonial theory expounds on the relation between the coloniser and the colonised. From the colonised to the coloniser, it is said that many expressions are watered down, causing source culture or idea to not fully pass on to the coloniser, as the coloniser's hegemonic preference prevails. This may affect how the coloniser perceives the colonised and may distort the colonised culture.

### The application of the framework

The ST examples are taken from *The Collection of Mahmoud Darwish* by Mohammad Dakroob while the target text, translated by Ian Wedde and Fawwaz Tuqan, is collected from *Selected Poems: Mahmoud Darwish*. The translated examples with "interesting" issues have been elaborately analysed. What is meant by interesting issues is that the focal point is on the elimination of significant cultural or historical messages of some metaphors. As stated in the introduction, the meanings of these metaphors are analysed using Lakoff's and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

- (1) ST: إسمُ ريتا كان عيداً في فمي  
 BT: *Rita's name* was an *Eid* in my mouth.  
 TT: *Rita's name* was *with me* in my mouth.

This line is taken from a poem titled *ريتا والبندقية* (Rita and the Rifle). Rita here is an Israeli citizen with whom Darwish was in love. A while after they met, she joined the Israeli military, an event that forced the poet to terminate his relationship with her. Such a love story, where a Palestinian falls in love with an Israeli, is highly stigmatised; this reality, however, urged the poet to defend himself and his love story to his readers. His defence is evident in this line where he describes how innocent and sweet the Rita he loved was before she joined the army; therefore, he compares the old Rita to one of the most joyful occasions delineated in people's minds, that is, "Eid." Rita's name is mapped into Eid (a religious festival), a peaceful celebration that Muslims celebrate twice a year. The lexical choice of Eid in the ST is functional. It compares Rita positively with this very special occasion of Eid: "Rita's name was an Eid in my mouth." The conceptual metaphor here is, RITA'S NAME WAS AN EID where "Rita's name" is the target domain and "Eid" is the source domain. It ties it with the cognitive experience of the SL reader who celebrates Eid – on occasion when folks of the same faith gather to celebrate together in the spirit of peace and joy. This is how the source culture conceptualises "Eid." By indirectly comparing Rita's name to Eid, it metaphorically means that Rita's name brings joy, peace, and happiness to those who know her. It is commonplace for Arabs to compare



people or things to Eid, referring to the joyful attributives they associate with this occasion and to indicate a joyous attitude. This is found in expressions like كان ذلك الشخص كالعيد (that person was like an Eid) or when one is asked about an experience or their attitude, impression or perception towards something, one may reply كانت كالعيد (it is like Eid) or حلوة كالعيد (sweet like Eid, or as sweet as Eid).

However, Eid is perceived as an odd concept to the cultural cognitive experience of the TL reader. It is hard for that reader to relate “Eid” to joy and peace. In the translation, the imagery of the cultural metaphor “Eid” is eradicated. This could be a manifestation of the hegemony of the source culture exerted by a more dominant (Western) culture as embodied in the English language. The translation transfers the lexical item “Eid” to a mere “Rita’s name was with me” where the phrase “with me” dismisses the message of peace and joy of the Eid celebration that the poet is trying to project. The closest experience of Eid in the target culture is “feast”. Instead of obliterating the essential lexis of “Eid” and translate it as “feast”, perhaps the message of this metaphor could be retained.

- (2) ST: يداه سلتان من ريجان  
 BT: *His hands are two baskets of basil.*  
 TT: *His hands are like two baskets of sweet basil.*

This a mourning poem titled, وعاد في كفن (And He Returned in a Shroud) that depicts the unfortunate death of an innocent young man who, due to the unfair occupation of his country, has to flee it seeking asylum and a living elsewhere. Shockingly, instead of finding haven, his life is ended, and he comes back to his country in a shroud. The poet here is revealing one of the extremely horrible consequences of occupation on civilians such as the young man in the poem. This young man never joined the military, he was not carrying a gun or fighting back, and in fact, he never stretched out his hands but with goodness and peace, just like two baskets of basil. With all his kindness and goodness, he came back from exile as a corpse. In this line, the phrase, “his hands” (of an innocent young man whose life was taken by the Israeli soldiers) are compared to “two baskets of basil.” Through this metaphor, Darwish depicts with pathos a weaponless young man taken by the Israeli forces although his hands were only stretched out for peace, just like “two baskets of basil.” The conceptual metaphor here is HIS HANDS ARE TWO BASKETS OF BASIL where “his hands” and “two baskets of basil” are the target domain and the source domain, respectively.

Such an image is not regularly used in Arabic and English cultures. Indeed, the image of “basil” itself is conceptualised differently in these cultures. Thus, it is vital here to establish the meanings of this image in the two cultures. When referring to “basil,” the salient meaning or part of “basil” that an Arabic language user will recall is its flowers while the Westerner will immediately think of basil leaves. In Western culture, the leaves of this plant or the variant of this

plant “sweet basil” are used solely for cooking purposes. In Arabic culture, on the other hand, basil flowers are used to decorate houses. In addition, the image of “basil” is used to reflect the attributes of this type of flower which is known for its peaceful and refreshing fragrances. In line with this context, “basil” is used to describe the young man to express his youth and peacefulness. Accordingly, the SL reader will conceptualise the image of “basil” in this example as a flower whereas the TL reader will only think about it like a herb or spice.

The TT translation followed dominant cultural norms where “basil” is conceptualised as a spice, and this has marginalised the colonised SL culture. Being socially fragile compared to the coloniser, the translation suppresses the culture of the colonised as if it does not have the right to exist. The use of the adjective “sweet” as a pre-modifier of the noun “basil” is just an example of such a case since sweet basil is culturally acknowledged by the TL as a type of “the spice basil” which may include other types such Italian basil, Thai basil, and so on and so forth.

Thus, in translation, it is preferable to shift the focus on the attributes that both the “basil” and the young man have in common by translating this metaphor as “his hands are two baskets of fragrant basil flowers.” This, in a way, preserves the source culture’s significance.

- (3) ST: والشمس بيّارة في المغرب  
 BT: And *the sun* is a *private farm* at dusk.  
 TT: *The sun* is a *pomegranate* at dusk.

This line is extracted from a poem titled مطرٌ ناعمٌ في الخريف (A Soft Rain in Autumn) where the poet expresses nostalgia during exile. This nostalgia is frequently triggered by the simplest of phenomena such as a sunset. During the sunset in his exile, he captures the colour of the oranges and pomegranates the Palestinians plant in their private farms. The colour does not remind him of the sun; rather, it calls up a dear memory of the times when he used to roam around the orange and pomegranate trees in the private farms back in Palestine. The conceptual metaphor THE SUN IS A PRIVATE FARM is expressed with the very culturally specific metaphorical expression بيّارة (private farm). In this metaphor, the source domain is “private farm” while the target domain is “the sun.” As a way of proving his right to the land, the poet describes the sun as a private farm. It is traditionally acknowledged in Palestinian culture that there are some areas or lands known as بيّارة (special farm), usually dedicated to one kind of fruit, such as oranges, pomegranates, etc. Palestine here is shown as a private asset belonging to the Palestinians because they own not only the homeland but every aspect that may be compressed in that concept including the sun and nature. In that sense, the poet claims that Palestinians are the only rightful landowners of Palestine where the sun is considered as their private farm.

The TL and culture do not host the expression of “private farm”. Similarly, the concept “private farm” itself is not used by SL users to refer to the sun, but nevertheless, they can predict the message of this metaphor. The concern here is the TL reader who will find it very difficult to infer the message of this metaphor, from *بيارة* “private farm” to “pomegranate.”

Constructing a world based on what the Western world would perceive, the translation has put the source culture in a box. “Pomegranate” is famous in the region. In addition, the sun is round and red, and if it were to be equated with pomegranate, it should be considered a fairly good translation. However, the cognition of the target reader would not be able to connect the sun as a private farm. In this type of authoritative poem in which the imagery plays a very important part to capture the essence of the source, the “private farm” cannot be changed. Thus, as this metaphor is not to decorate the poem, the marginalisation of the SL culture is an indication of being overshadowed by dominant postcolonialism.

### **Conclusion**

When it comes to the translation of poems of such a significant poet as Mahmoud Darwish, cultural metaphors are of stylistic and historical values, and therefore warrant preserving them as closely as possible instead of eliminating them completely. From a postcolonial perspective, the knowledge provided by Palestinian culture and values have been othered in the present examples where cultural words like “Eid” have been eliminated; “basil” in the translation, due to the pervasive influence of Western culture, has been framed in the Western worldview as a spice while it should rather imply a message of peacefulness related to the flower “basil;” and cultural words like “private farm” are shifted to another Western orientation of what Eastern culture is.

It is to be questioned here whether such ignorance stems from following the norms and values of the more dominant or hegemonic (English) culture, or from the lack of such cultural experiences in the cognitive system of the host culture. Knowingly or not, the “politics of translation” is palpable in the translated work. The translators perhaps who aim to have a more natural reading on the part of a reader have opted for dynamic translation or domestication, but in turn, have done damage to the nuance of the source. The core culture and beauty of the source poem, which relies very much on the culture and beauty of a race, is made subservient in the name of smooth reading to cater to the ease of reading of the target reader. Something worth reflecting on is whether smooth reading is what the target reader craves or whether a richer cultural representation of the source is more welcome. This should be the question to help the translator to advocate either the dynamic translation or domestication.

Indeed, the British Empire led to the power of the English language permeating throughout the world. We call for resistance to colonialists. We call

for translators to be a gatekeeper of any form of control over the minds of the people. While the retention of the coloniser source information may continue the mental colonisation, the retention of the colonised source information may empower the weak by introducing their culture to the TL reader, thus forcing the coloniser to confront the source culture even if it seems bizarre or unrecognisable. It is time that we awaken to the fact that no culture should dominate other cultures by way of imposing its own codes. Cultures should mutually understand one another and accept the differences and/or similarities. Blinding the TL reader to other cultures will lead to a close-minded world where each culture is enclosed within its norms and values. The omission of source information and the change of source information do not only result in othering the source culture but also shortens the view of the TL reader who will not be open to new cognitive experiences that other cultures provide.

To sum up, the translation goes beyond the linguistic level. It is inextricably intertwined with extralinguistic contexts, in particular, the complex cultural sensibilities in communication (Chironova 16). This communication usually takes place between two different cultures where the role of translation bridges the gap between two different cultures as claimed by Michael Cronin. So, without separation or difference there will be no connection or similarities (Cronin 50). Cronin implies that it is only if there is a difference between the SL and TL cultures that the translator will mediate to communise the differences, and this is how translation is supposed to work in bringing two different languages and cultures together (Cronin 50). Thus, if a translation is a form of exchange and a form of interaction between the colonised and the coloniser, these cultural terms must not be distorted or obliterated. We live in a universe where different parts of the world are globally connected via communication. Translation, in its turn, is an essential means of such communication. Therefore, it should shrink the gap between the colonised and the coloniser by introducing one culture to another.

### Works Cited

- Hamoud Yahya, Ahmed, Ruzy Suliza Hashim, Zalina Mohd Lazim, and Ravinchandran Vengadasamy. "Identity and Land in Mahmoud Darwish's Selected Poems: An Ecopostcolonial Reading." *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English literature*, 1.6 (2012): 7-19.
- Al-Harrasi, Abdulla Nasser Khalifa. *Metaphor in (Arabic-into-English) Translation with Specific Reference to Metaphorical Concepts and Expressions in Political Discourse*. 2001. Aston University, PhD dissertation.
- Al-Hasnawi, Ali R. "A Cognitive Approach to Translating Metaphors." *Translation Journal* 11.3 (2007), <http://translationjournal.net/journal/41metaphor.htm>. 15 June 2020.
- Al Rushaidi, Sultan Muhammed, and Holi Ibrahim Ali. "Translating Food Menus

- from English into Arabic: Linguistic and Cultural Dilemmas.” *AWEJ for Translation & Literacy Studies* 1.1 (2017): 201-212.
- Al-Sohbani, Yehia Ahmed, and Abdulghani Muthanna. “Challenges of Arabic-English Translation: The Need for Re-systematic Curriculum and Methodology Reforms in Yemen.” *Academic Research International* 4.4 (2013): 442-450.
- Al-Zoubi, Q. Mohammad, Mohammed N. Al-Ali, and Ali R. Al-Hasnawi. “Cogno-cultural Issues in Translating Metaphors.” *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology* 14.3 (2007): 230-239.
- Asad, Talal. “The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Social Anthropology.” *Writing Culture: the poetics and politics of Ethnography*. Eds. James Clifford and George Marcus. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986. 64-141.
- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Bandia, Paul Fadio. “Postcolonialism and Translation: The Dialectic between Theory and Practice.” *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series – Themes in Translation Studies* 2 (2003): 129-142.
- Boulanger, Pier-Pascale. “When the Media Translate the Crisis: The Metaphors Used by the General Press during the Subprime Crisis” *Meta* 61 (2016): 144-162.
- Camps, Maria Assumpta. “The Self and the Other: Translatability and Cultural Mediation in Global Times.” *Transfer* 1.1 (2006): 76-88.
- Celik, Azime. “Alternative History, Expanding Identity: Myths Reconsidered in Mahmoud Darwish’ Poetry.” *Mahmoud Darwish: Exile’s Poet*. Eds. Hala Khamis Nassar and Najat Rahmat. Massachusetts: Olive Branch Press, 2008. 273-292.
- Cronin, Michael. *Translation and Identity*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Díaz Peralta, Marina, Gracia Piñero-Piñero, María Jesus Garcia Dominguez and Geraldine Boylan. “Metaphor and Symbol: The Portrait of Montezuma II in the Work of W.H. Prescott and its Translation into Spanish by J. Navarro.” *Babel* 61.2 (2015): 242–264.
- Dakroob, Mohammad. *The Collection of Mahmoud Darwish*. Beirut: Dar Al-Awdah, 1971.
- Eweida, Sara. *The Realization of Time Metaphors and the Cultural Implications: An Analysis of the Quran and English Quranic translations*. Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2007.
- Fanon, Frantz. *Black skin, white masks*. Translated by Charles Lam Markmann, London: Pluto Press, 1986.
- Ghazala, Hasan Said. “Translating the Metaphor: A Cognitive Stylistic Conceptualization (English–Arabic).” *World Journal of English language* 2.4 (2012): 57-68.

- Khakipour, Saber, and Fazel Asadi Amjad. "Conceptual Metaphor in Literary Discourse: A Case Study of Shakespeare's Macbeth and its Three Persian Translations." *Skase Journal of Translation and Interpretation* 12.2(2019): 50-65.
- Kovecses, Zoltan. *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.
- . *Language, Mind and Culture: A Practical Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphor We Live by*. Chicago: Chicago University, 1980.
- Lakoff, George, and Mark Turner. *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Larson, Mildred. *Meaning-based Translation: A Guide to Cross-language Equivalence*. New York: University Press of America, 1984.
- Lefevere, Andre, and Susan Bassnett. "Introduction: Proust's Grandmother and the Thousand and One Nights: The 'Cultural Turn' in Translation Studies." *Translation, History and Culture*. Eds. Andre Lefevere and Susan Bassnett. New York: Cassell, 1990. 1-13.
- Maalej, Zouheir. "Metaphors of Learning and Knowledge in the Tunisian Context: A Case of Re-categorization." *Metaphors for Learning*. Ed. Erich A. Berendt. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2008. 205-223.
- . "The Heart and Cultural Embodiment in Tunisian Arabic." *Culture, Body and Language: Conceptualizations of Internal Body Organs across Cultures and Languages*. Eds. Farzad Sharifian, Eené Dirven, Ning Yu, and Susanne Niemeier. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2008. 395-428.
- Mahasneh, Anjad. *The Translatability of Emotiveness in Mahmoud Darwish's Poetry*. 2010. University of Ottawa, MA dissertation.
- Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. 3rd ed. Abingdon: Routledge, 2012.
- Niranjana, Tejaswini. *Siting Translation: History, Post-structuralism, and the Colonial Context*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.
- Rao, Sathya. "From a Postcolonial to a Non-colonial Theory of Translation." *Translation, Biopolitics, Colonial Difference*. Eds. Naoko Sakai and Jon Solomon. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2006. 73-94.
- Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Random House, 1978.
- Simon, Sherry. "Introduction." *Changing the Terms: Translating in the Postcolonial Era*. Eds. Sherry Simon and Paul St-Pierre. Canada: The University of Ottawa Press, 2006. 9-29.
- Snell-Hornby, Mary. *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin's Publishing Company, 1988.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "The Politics of Translation." *The Translation Studies Reader*. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. New York: Routledge, 1993. 369-388.

- Tabakowska, Elżbieta. *Cognitive Linguistics and Poetics of Translation*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1993.
- Wedde, Ian. "Mahmoud Darwish 1941-2008." *Ka mate ka ora: A New Zealand Journal of Poetry and Poetics* 13.7 (2009): 54-64.
- Wedde, Ian, and Fawwaz Tuqan. *Selected Poems Mahmoud Darwish*. Cheshire: Carcanet Press Limited, 1973.