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Translate or transliterate? When metonymic names are more than proper names

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Abstract: This paper investigates problems surrounding translating and/or transliterating, examines a case study, and discusses how a poet/lover uses different appellations to purposefully address his beloved, which include the beloved's actual name and three different heteronyms that are examples of metonymy. The repetitions of the actual name and metonymic processing are functionally effective in expressing the poet's feelings. As proper names, metonymic appellations possess the power of clarification, which not only establishes meaning-making but also the speaker's appeal and perspective, thus contributing nuance and salience. By conducting a comparative critical assessment of a corpus consisting of French and English translations, this study demonstrates how cultural and pragmatic losses are incurred in the process of conveying the verbal metonymic signs of the original culture to a different culture. The outcome is a misinterpretation of the source text's literariness and its pragmatic forces. As this study confirms, proper names are more than deictic symbols, and they also bear functional communicative clues that determine specific translation techniques through which they can travel.

Keywords: Literary translation; proper names; metonymy; pre-Islamic poetry; Mu'allaqāt

1. Introduction

Since culture is embedded in language, any act of translation would involve two cultures and not only two languages: translation is "a form of intercultural communication" (House, 2014a, p. 3). According to Lefevre, it is "the most obviously recognizable type of rewriting" and the most powerful because of its ability to "project the image of an author or those works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin" (1992, p. 9). As a cross-cultural activity, translation always leads to a confrontation between cultures because it reflects the stance that the receiving culture takes toward the source culture (Koster, 2000, p. 32). Therefore, translation is one of the most important channels through which cultures travel. However, such a journey becomes questionable when a translator deals with cultural inferences that are remote from their socio-temporal environment. In this case, the journey of cultural implicatures is brought into question: "translators, no matter what translating strategies they espouse, are nudged to navigate through the uncharted potentials that their languages open out, including meaning possibilities that bring into play cultural and ideological assumptions" (Benneghrouzi, 2019, p. 146). The meaning of a

text is "revealed by the reader, whose mental representations of the world are culturally grounded and founded" (Kenesei, 2010, p. xv).

According to House, translation enables "access to a different world of knowledge, traditions and ideas that would otherwise have been locked away behind a language barrier" (2014a, p. 2). Thus, a translator mediates not only between two texts but also two worlds; in essence, translations are "textual supplements" that serve as "substitutes for something written in a language [readers] cannot access" (Emmerich, 2017, p. 4). Explaining translations in this way, Emmerich concluded that translators themselves identify the meaning of a work, how it means it, and which features in it (such as syntax, rhythm, linguistic register, diction, sound patterning, material or visual tools, typographic form) are central for a specific interpretation that they wish to share with others (2017, p. 4). Emmerich also asserted that translators "decide how to account for those features in the new text they are writing" (2017, p. 4), which is consistent with Kenesei's argument that reading, interpretation, and translation are "equally receptive and productive processes, and they are never separable. Reading is the achievement of primary experience, translation can be seen as the rearticulation of the experience, and interpretation constitutes part of both" (2010, p. 43). Hence, the objective here is "to achieve perfect rearticulation at each level" (ibid.).

Meanwhile, House's investigation of a linguistic model of translation quality assessment distinguishes two types of translation that are considered "fundamentally different": overt and covert. Overt translation, being a source-text-oriented translation, does not in any way claim to be a "second original," whereas covert translation "enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture" (2014b, p. 252). House clarified that a "source text and its covert translation are pragmatically of comparable interest for source and target language addressees," as they are based on the "contemporary equivalent needs of a comparable audience in the source and target language communities" (2014b, p. 253).

House contextualized her typology within the domain of frame and discourse, which makes it relevant to this study's research scope. She asserted that translation involves the transmission of texts through time and space, and thus, "whenever texts move, they also shift cognitive frames and discourse worlds" (2014b, p. 253). In addition, she explained that a frame functions "unconsciously as an explanatory principle," which means that "any message that defines a frame gives the receiver instructions in his interpretation of the message included in the frame" (2014b, p. 253). Regarding the translation types, House argued that in overt translation, while the target text (TT) would acquire new frames in terms of genre, register, and language, its function is not guaranteed because the translator would make the target culture reader observe the text "from the outside" (2014b, pp. 253-254). In contrast, covert translation seeks to "reproduce in the target text the function the original has in its frame and discourse world" (2014b, p. 254). Hence, this translation targets functional equivalence but may deviate from language, genre, and/or register. In this case, according to House, "cultural difference should be carefully examined before any change in the source text is undertaken" (2014b, p. 255). Consequently, translation strategies need to be validated to accommodate for the target receiver norms.

This study addresses proper names as an instance of cultural assets in a text that may imply more details than they may in appearance do. Nyangeri and Wangari confirm that as proper names transcend their identification functions in literature, they transmit knowledge, captivate the reader, provoke feelings,

and also embody semantic, historical, social and geographical meanings (2019, pp. 348-349). This is made possible because readers and authors share a common cultural background. Hermans asserts that proper names embody a "minimal integration" into the language system and thus, they occupy an "exceptional position" in it (1988, p. 12). What makes a proper name problematic to him is its "potential to acquire a semantic load which takes it beyond the 'singular' mode of signification of the proper name proper into the more 'general sphere of the common noun" (1988, p. 12). From here, Hermans links the translatability of proper names in "function of their 'semanticization'" and he includes with a "greater force" the proper names used in literary works. These works, to him, "show a greater concentration of 'motivated' or consciously 'loaded' names than non-literary texts" (1988, p. 13). Hermans classifies the proper names used in literature into two categories: "conventional" and "loaded." The former are "unmotivated" as they are not semanticized; the latter are "motivated" for they bear a semantic value and are thus "suggestive," i.e. covert, and can even be "expressive" (1988, p. 13). The extent to which proper names travel in translation depends on the translator's awareness of their deictic features and functions, which can be cultural. This study follows Venuti's definition of literature as the "stylistically innovative text that makes the most striking intervention into a linguistic conjecture" (1998, p. 10). While a source text (ST) reader may perceive these functions, a translator and/or TT receiver may not. By examining proper names as cultural constructs, this study contradicts Weber's semiological claim that because a proper name is "an icon and a symbol" (2008, p. 348), it "invokes in the interpretant a knowledge that is not propositional" (p. 353). While such a perspective would apply in casual communication contexts that usually regard proper names as affectively neutral and hence unmotivated, this is not always the case when it comes to their use in literature. For instance, a poet may use a culturally rooted name and then make it semantically and semiotically affective and functional. In literature, proper names not unusually convey more than the object they refer to, which is consistent with Venuti's claim that language is "a collective force, an assemblage of forms that constitute a semiotic regime" (1998, p. 9).

Hermans suggests four techniques, governed by translational norms, to transfer proper names from one language into another: copying, transcribing, substituting and translating (1988, p. 13). Nyangeri and Wangari rather opt for a relatively different framework that ascends from foreignizing strategies to domesticating ones: preservation, addition, omission, localization and creation (2019, p. 350). When it comes to Arabic on the one hand, and English and French on the other as language combinations, copying as defined by Hermans would be impracticable because of script differences. From Hermans' list, thus, only translation, substitution and transliteration (transcribing) would be possible. To these, two more techniques could be added based on Nyangeri and Wangari's model: interpolation (addition) and omission. A translator's choice of translation technique usually depends on the communicative function(s) of the proper names and the translator's awareness of such functions. In addition, "communicative clue correspondence between an ST and a TT is not as important as the correspondence of the communicative dimension of this clue" (Lahiani, 2009, p. 43).

The loss of proper names' functions in translation would be classified as a loss of both ST–author intention and ST's cultural background. This study defines 'cultural losses' as losses in cultural norms and social customs and values, which are transmitted from one generation to another and thus are part

of the source culture. Such losses are incurred "during the process of correlating the verbal signs of one culture to another different culture and result mainly from misinterpreting the literariness of the source text and its pragmatic forces" (Al-Masri, 2009, p. 15). According to Al-Masri, cultural losses are of four types, which this study will use in its assessment of the translations: "explicit" cultural losses, which refer to the loss of cultural meaning at the surface and deep levels; "implicit" cultural losses, which come with the cancellation of cultural information; "modified" cultural losses, which are characterized by changes in ST readers' experienced realities; and "complete" cultural losses, which eliminate cultural characteristics specific to the source language (2009, p. 15). Therefore, one would expect a translator to reduce the risk of cultural loss by providing a certain background to facilitate the transmission of context-bound expressions. Reading, as Rylance and Simons argued, "is not a mechanistic occupation nor a passive one. The greater our awareness of the complexities involved, the more inventive and fulfilling reading becomes" (2001, p. xxiv). Thus, this study identified compensation as the solution to keep up with ST communicative clues.

2. Case study

The poet 'Antara (525–608) is one of the seven pre-Islamic composers of the *Mu'allaqāt*, a compilation of seven canonical poems certified by prominent literary critics in pre-Islamic Arabia as renowned compositions. These poems are usually reported to be hanged on the curtains of the Kaaba as a sign of their canonical recognition.[1] The main theme of 'Antara's *Mu'allaqa* is his desperate quest for his beloved's affection and his search for compensation in warfare and self-pride. His love story is so famous in Arabic canon that it was adapted into the legendary framework of *Sīrat Antar (Antar's Biography)*[2]. Adhering to the period's prevalent prosodic tradition, this *Mu'allaqa* adopts a serial thematic structure with a three-part model: *nasīb*, which refers to one's yearning for a lost and much-needed love; *raḥīl*, which discusses the poet's departure, with a description of his mount—the horse; and *fakhr*, which pertains to self-praise (Stetkevych, 1993, p. 2). Such a structure is not as rigid as it may seem because pre-Islamic poets "were not slaves of convention, rather the stock of materials available were their tools which they frequently manipulated" (Montgomery, 1986, p. 6). This study substantiates this point.

The present article focuses on Verse lines 2, 5, 6, and 42, which belong to the *nasīb* section of 'Antara's *Mu'allaqa*. Ibn Qutaybah, as Stetkevych explains, attributes to *nasīb* the role of disposing favorably, captivating interest, and exacting a hearing "because rhapsodizing a beloved touches souls and clings onto the hearts" (1993, p. 7). In these verse lines, "Antara expresses his longing to his beloved by using different appellations, which reflects a relational complexity."[3] The appellations traced in these verse lines are 'Abla, Umm al-Haytham, Ibnata Makhram, and Ibnata Mālik; the first is the beloved's conventional name while the rest are heteronyms. Contrary to the use of 'Abla,

[1] Lahiani (2008) provides more details about the *Mu'allaqāt* compilation and discusses the credibility of this widespread belief (pp. 15-22).
[2] Blunt & Blunt (1903, p. 31) viewed him as parallel to Charlemagne and King Arthur in the Arabic chivalric tradition.
[3] The analysis done in this section refutes Montgomery's reading of such plurality as "a sign of the poem's instability" (2018, p. 190).

which is affectively unmarked and hence neutral, the use of heteronyms communicates affective markedness in the text. These heteronyms are instances of metonymy. This trope occupies a considerable position in Arabic rhetoric – oral and written, ancient and modern. A masterpiece of Arabic criticism, Al Thaʿālibī's (1985) book expands upon a considerable treasure of metonyms in the Arabic language and culture, many of which turned into idioms. Al Muḥibbī defined metonymy in terms similar to Denroche's, as an instance of "rational style" (2003, p. 198). To both, metonymy provides different ways of expression as it "multiplies the possibilities of what can be expressed while remaining within the conventionalized linguistic resources of ready-made signs" (Denroche, 2015, p. 85). Denroche asserted that "metonymic processing" facilitates the "flexibility and subtleties on and above those systems, on which we constantly rely in our social dealings with others" (2015, p. 1). Metonymy, he further explained, "not only offers alternatives when naming but also opportunities for expressing nuance, giving emphasis and creating 'spin'" (p. 5). Therefore, appellation variation and textual metonymy function in these verse lines not as elegant distinctions, but rather as functional stylistic choices for discourse purposes. Thus, they bear both "salience and nuance" (Denroche, 2015, p. 56). An appellation, as an expression, has both sense and referent; the former refers to its specific "abstract meaning," while the latter is "what an expression in a particular sense refers to in a particular real 'speech/writing event'" (Dickens, 2020, p. 418). Denroche clarifies further that "sense/reference relations are inherently metonymic [...] and that moving between them involves the cognitive ability to process metonymically" (2015, p. 57).

In Verse line 2, 'Antara uses ploce[4] as he repeats his beloved's name in both hemistichs:

Yā dāra 'Ablata bi l-Jiwā'i takallamī
wa 'imī sabāḥan dāra 'Ablata wa slamī

[Oh 'Abla's abode at al Jiwā, speak
Good morning 'Abla's abode and stay safe][5]

The importance of the proper name in this apostrophic verse lies in its attribution of habitation to 'Abla. This name has an unmotivated appeal as a proper name; it is neither metaphorical nor metonymic but is simply an individual onomastic representation (Larcher, 1994, p. 122). It is the pleonastic repetition of the name that is rather affective. Pleonasm is "common in classical Arabic poetry and in the Holy Quran, and performs several communicative rhetorical functions" (Lahiani, 2020b, p. 96). It betrays here the lover's yearning and passion. Notably, 'Antara twists the tradition of a deserted campsite lamentation to verbalize his love. He was the son of a slave woman. His father, an acknowledged tribe member, had not by then recognized his kinship, and he was considered by his tribesmen as an outcast. It is because of this that 'Antara addresses the abode and attributes it to 'Abla, rather than addressing 'Abla openly: his social rank prevents him from making an explicit address.

[4] Ploce is a scheme that covers an item's intermittent repetition in a piece of discourse (Leech, 1984, p. 77).

[5] All translations in brackets are the author's. An attempt was made to keep these translations as literal as possible, to give the reader a close idea of how the original verses are composed.

In Verse line 5, ‘Abla is not referred to by her name but is rather metonymically spoken about through her *kunya*, as Umm l-Haytham. This is a teknonym (Larcher, 1994, p. 134):

ḥuyyīta min talalin taqāddama ‘ahduhu
aqwā wa aqfara ba‘da Ummi l-Haythami

[Salutations to you, remaining campsite, with the souvenirs embedded.
Now ruined and deserted with the departure of the Mother of al-Haytham]

Through such a metonymic appellation, ‘Antara cherishes his beloved. He functionally uses metonymy here because it “allows access to the meaning of the whole by highlighting a single aspect or part” (Denroche, 2015, p. 171). Denroche explained that “each metonymic choice represents a different emphasis/focus within a more generalized domain” (2015, p. 84). ‘Antara’s reference to his beloved as *literally* the mother of an eaglet (*haytham*) rather than as ‘Abla is his attempt to valorize and flatter her (Larcher, 1994, p. 134). It is also his way of wishing her long life because she is unmarried and hence does not have any children, yet. By attributing motherhood to her, ‘Antara implies that he wants her to live long enough to become a mother (Larcher, 1994, p. 134). In addition, it is customary that the Arabs would address a person, regardless of gender, by their *kunya* rather than given name as a way to honor them (Al Baghdādī, 1997, p. 142). Note also that *Ummi l-Haythami*, just like *Ibnata Makhrami*, which will be quoted later, matches the rhyme scheme of the ST poem.

Verse lines 6 and 42 contain apostrophic addresses to ‘Abla. The poet calls his beloved as Ibnata Makhram and Ibnata Mālik:

Ḥallat bi ardhi l-zā’irīna fa asbaḥat
‘asiran ‘alayya ṭilābuki Ibnata Makhrami

[She landed in the land of the growlers and thus it became
Hard for me to ask for your hand, Makhram’s daughter]

Hallā sa’alti l-khayla yā Ibnata Mālikin
in kunti jāhilatan bi mā lam ta‘lamī

[Why don’t you ask the horses, oh, Mālik’s daughter
In case you feign ignorance of what you know]

Both patronyms treat the beloved as a specific man’s daughter. In a patriarchal culture like that of pre-Islamic Arabia, calling a woman by her patronym is an expression of reverence for both the child and her father. The father in the context of ‘Antara’s *Mu‘allaqa* is referred to by two different names: Makhram and Mālik. In addition to respect and courtesy, metonymy permits the speaker in both contexts to “construe meanings which reflect different viewpoints from which a situation is viewed [....] Choosing a single feature to identify a concept or entity gives that feature salience” (Denroche, 2015, p. 82). Addressing ‘Abla as a daughter rather than as an *independent* individual, as in Verse line 2, also shifts the responsibility of ‘Abla’s departure from her to her father. Thus, ‘Antara seeks an excuse for ‘Abla’s departure, that is, she left him because she had to and not because she wanted to. Thus, the real addressee here is ‘Abla’s father, not ‘Abla herself (Larcher, 1994, p. 136).

In Verse line 6, the lover suggests a link between his beloved’s new place and the way he refers to her. This place is characterized as *ardhi l-zā’irīna*,

literally "the land of the growlers," referring to enemies. Thus, when ʻAntara calls ʻAbla as Ibnata Makhram, he includes her father as one such adversary and blames her aversion on her father. Ibn Manzūr defines the word *makhram*, amongst others, as an outlet between two mountains. He also gives another reading of the word as *makhrim*, meaning the head of the fruit wherefrom it is cut (1984, p. 171). Both meanings may be relevant to interpret this patronym. Obviously, the father is culturally the sole path to win the daughter's hand. In addition, the father, opposing the poet's love impulse towards his daughter, is definitely cutting the thread between them. Though it is not sure whether ʻAbla's father was known by this metonym or it was ʻAntara who invented it to exteriorize his feelings towards his uncle, the use of this patronym semiotically fits the context that it is used in. In Verse line 42, ʻAntara urges ʻAbla to ask the horses, metonymically meaning the knights, about his high achievements during wartime in case she is unaware of them. This verse line is contextualized in the poet's explanation to his beloved that, unlike hers, his life as a warrior is tough enough to help him endure nonreciprocal love (Lahiani, 2020a, p. 37). According to convention, "the loss of intimacy with a gentle, sweet and indolent creature of luxury leads him to proclaim his intimacy with hardship and danger in the desert" (Hamori, 1990, p. 202). This verse line marks the transition between *nasīb* and *raḥīl*, which is usually "the sharpest, or the most dramatically felt, break in the poem" (Stetkevych, 1993, p. 30). As a desperate lover, ʻAntara subtly blames ʻAbla's father for his unfulfilled love by referring to her as his daughter (Ibnata Mālikin) and simultaneously reflects on his own worth by showing his warfare values.

Clearly, the variation of names for the same person and their repetition in this *Muʻallaqa* are quite revealing and functional because they change register and accentuate appeal. The challenge of translating this feature rests in empowering the translation receiver to recognize the relation between the concepts in the same text unit and the function of their metonymic notions. According to Barcelona, the "inferential nature of metonymy, i.e., its role in activating the implicit pre-existing connection of a certain element of knowledge or experience to another one, also explains its ubiquity and its multilevel nature" (2005, p. 42). While the ST receiver easily understands that these names refer to the same woman and comprehends the functions of the appellation variations, the TT reader does not share the same range of expectations. In the following section, this study examines how 17 English and French translations, produced between 1782 and 2020,[6] dealt with the proper names in these verse lines, considering the chronology and the mode of discourse. To highlight the improvement and influence, the earlier translations will be mentioned first. Prose and verse translations will also be evaluated separately with cross-references, wherever possible. In some cases, different modes of discourse may require distinct translation techniques.

3. Comparative critical assessment

Most of the translators followed the ST pleonastic repetition of ʻAbla's name in Verse line 2; there were a few exceptions, though. The translations that omitted the double references to ʻAbla are in fact translations that did not perceive the

[6] Larcher's translation was first appended to his 1994 article and then edited in his 2000 book. This article adopts the latter because its endnotes are more informative than the footnotes in the 1994 translation. In addition, the 1994 translation presupposes the reader's awareness of Larcher's arguments presented in the article (Larcher, 1994, p. 152).

communicative function of the ST pleonasm.[7] For instance, Caussin de Perceval's (1795–1871) translation reads:

> Salut, demeure d'Abla dans la vallée de Djiwa! Demeure chérie, parle-moi de l'objet que j'aime (1847, p. 521)
>
> [Hello, 'Abla's habitation in the valley of Djiwa! Habitation, darling, speak to me about the object of my love]

Here, the translator effaced the ST ploce and hence pleonasm, when he substituted the second reference to 'Abla with the phrase "*l'objet que j'aime*" (the object of my love), which clarifies the relationship between the poet and this woman. This relatively compensates for the shift. However, one would find it difficult to imagine that the brave 'Antara who lived in pre-Islamic Arabia would utter the delicate and amorous apostrophic expression "*demeure*[8] *chérie"* (habitation, darling) or define his beloved as openly as "*l'objet que j'aime*" (the object of my love). Thus, the implemented shift is an explicit loss as it dissociates the text from its cultural and literary contexts. As Hamori argues, the "*nasīb* is not usually, in the old poets, an erotic idyll" (1990, p. 202).

Like Caussin de Perceval, Palmer (1840–1882) mentions 'Abla's name only once:

> Home of my Ablah! dear for her sake!
> Would that thy stones, Jewà, could speak to me (1877, p. 100)

Palmer's translation omits all the other references to 'Abla (i.e., her teknonym and patronyms), resulting in a complete loss. To compensate for this shift, he inserts her name intermittently throughout his TT, such as in lines 17, 47, and 86. These lines translate Verse lines 8, 20, and 34 in the ST, respectively, which do not cite any names.

Similarly, Anne Blunt (1837–1917) and Wilfrid Blunt (1840–1922) removed the ST ploce by mentioning 'Abla's name just once:

> Tents in Jiwà, the fair wàdi, speak ye to me of her.
> Fair house of 'Abla my true love, blessing and joy to thee! (1903, p. 33)

In their first line, the Blunts address this omission by substituting the name with the pronoun "her" before mentioning the name in the second line. This use of a pronoun to replace the proper name in the first line creates suspense, which the second line satisfies. Also, the addition of the phrase "my true love" clarifies who 'Abla is according to the speaker. Such an assimilative strategy preserves the ST message and simultaneously adheres to target language (TL) exigencies.

Berque (1910–1995) and Nouryeh (1940–) mention the beloved's name only once, like the previous examples, but they do not attempt to compensate for this shift:

> O demeure d'Abla
> à Jawā' parle
> bonjour, ô demeure, et salut! (Berque, 1979, p. 109)

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[7] Lahiani 2020b assesses the outcomes of ineffective manipulations of pleonasm while translating from Arabic into English and French.

[8] Caussin de Perceval's use of the word *demeure* is out of context as well, for it shows no awareness that the Arabs were nomads and thus were in constant movement.

[O ‘Abla’s abode
at Jawā’
Speak
Good morning, o Abode and goodbye!]

O ‘Abla’s hearth in Jiwa’i, speak: good
morning, hearth, may you fare in peace (Nouryeh, 1993, p. 151)

When the apostrophe is minimized to *demeure* or “hearth,” the nostalgia is then restricted to the dwelling place and therefore dismisses the beloved as the main object being missed, which explains the modified losses in both translations. As previously explained, this verse line serves to describe the poet’s longing for his beloved. The mention of her dwelling place is a medium through which he expresses his longing for her and the things associated with her. In addition, neither Berque nor Nouryeh explains ‘Abla’s identity. For instance, while Nouryeh mentions in an endnote that “‘Abla is the name of the lady” (1993, p. 159), he does not clarify the relationship between this “lady” and the poet. This rendering is also unchanged in Berque’s revised translation in 1995 (p. 67).

Meanwhile, Montgomery (1962–) omits the ST ploce with the embedded proper name:

The ruins were deaf – refused to reply,
then shouted out in a foreign tongue (2018, p. 4)

Like Berque and Nouryeh before him, Montgomery shows a modified loss here: he shifts the reality experienced in the ST from missing the beloved to missing her dwelling place. The *Mu‘allaqa* opens with a verse line meditating upon a deserted campsite, justifying its absence of names. Then the second verse line refers to her twice as it shifts its focus toward the beloved, suggesting ‘Antara’s longing for her more than her place. Conversely, in his translation of the second hemistich of the first verse line, Montgomery mentions ‘Abla’s name (“Is this where ‘Ablah walked? Think!”) and then completely removes it where it should be functional, that is, Verse line 2.

Regarding the teknonym Umm l-Haytham, the translators did not attempt to translate it. Rather, it is transliterated in all the works in the corpus except Montgomery’s and Blankinship’s. The differences among these translations pertain to whether a translator uses interpolation to clarify the teknonym’s metonymic value. Bateson (1939–), with no literary or cultural motives behind her work (1970, pp. 40-1), transliterates the teknonym without explanatory hints associated with its affective metonymic value. Among the verse translators, Arberry (1905–1969), Khawam (1917–2004), Wormhoudt (1917–), Berque, and Sells (1949–) followed this strategy.[9]

In contrast, the pioneering translators Jones (1746–1794)[10] and Caussin de Perceval took advantage of the space provided by prose to explain that Verse line 5 refers to the previously mentioned maiden:

[9] Though Berque included notes, they were brief and not adequately focused to go through the metonymic details.

[10] Paul Smith (2012) versified Jones’ translation with minor word changes. The corpus does not include his translation because it does not improve the original (Jones’ translation), which is what this study aims to highlight.

> Hail, dear ruins, with whose possessors I had old engagements; more dreary and more desolate *are you become*, after the departure *of my beloved* OMM ALHEITHAM (Jones, 1782, p. 61)

> Salut, restes d'une habitation depuis longtemps abandonnée, et que le départ d'Oumm-el-Haytham (Abla) a changée en une affreuse solitude! (Caussin de Perceval, 1847, p. 521)

> [Hello, remains of a habitation that has been for long deserted, and that Oumm-el-Haytham (Abla)'s departure has transformed into such a dreadful solitude!]

Both translators mark their interpolations: Jones italicizes the explanation while Caussin de Perceval puts it between parentheses. Meanwhile, Johnson (1796–1876) transliterates the name and then provides a basic technical explanation in a note: " أم الهيثم patronym of عبلة" (1894 , p. 169).[11] As for Schmidt, the last prose translator in the corpus, he clarifies in an endnote that the name "*désigne Abla"* (designates Abla) (1978, p. 171). Indeed, these translators worked hard to avoid the risk of losing the reader and secure the TT receiver's cooperation; therefore, they implemented the explicitation strategy in translation. Implicit loss occurs, however, because the metonymic affective connotation of the ST teknonym disappeared: none of the prose TTs communicated the poet's praise of his beloved.

The Blunts overlook the meaning of the verse line that mentions 'Abla's teknonym:

> There on the sand lay the hearth-stones, black in their emptiness,
> desolate more for the loved ones fled with Om Héythami (1903, p. 33)

From this translation, one would incorrectly understand that Umm l-Haytham is a bad woman who encourages 'Antara's beloved to flee with her.[12] The Blunts may have been unaware of the name's metonymic value, which justifies its attribution to a woman rather than 'Abla. The outcome is a modified loss, to use Al-Masri's terminology.

Both Nouryeh and Larcher (1948–) transliterate the teknonym but then add explanations in endnotes, like Johnson and Schmidt, their prose predecessors. Nouryeh explains, "Um Haythami is an honorable reference to 'Abla" (1993, p. 159). Larcher, meanwhile, clarifies the appellation as follows: "*Oumm Haytham, litt. 'mère de l'aiglon,' teknonyme* (kunya) *de 'Abla, apparemment flatteuse*" (Oumm Haytham, literally 'eaglet's mother' 'Abla's teknonym (kunya) seemingly a flattering one) (2000, p. 40). Both interpolations convey the ST's semantic and referential features.

Montgomery substituted the ST teknonym for the beloved's actual name:

> Rise, desolate traces, from dust
> now that 'Ablah's gone (2018, p. 4)

This choice was made, with losses incurred, because the translator perceived the proper name variation in this poem as "a sign of the poem's instability"

[11] The bilingualism of Johnson's notes limits their readership. He intended his translation to be "nothing more than an aid to the students, and for this reason, it has been made as literal as possible" (1894, Preface).

[12] In the Blunts' translation, such misappropriation recurs in a few instances. Cf. Nourallah (1990, p. 126 ff).

(2018, p. 190). Contrary to him, Blankinship juxtaposed the beloved's name to her teknonym:

> Long live you scars of sand, left long ago;
> vacant after ʿAblah, Mother of Haytham (2020, p. 153)

Blankinship's translation includes commentaries in the Arabic language that are enclosed in the same page. Within his explanation of the initial reference to 'Abla, he explains that this is the woman who is addressed by the poet, and that she is the same one as Umm l-Haytham (p. 153). Blankinship does not refer to this as being a teknonym; nor does he compensate for the loss of its communicative dimension. Needless to mention here that his commentary would be accessible by readers of Arabic only, and thus the translation reader who does not know Arabic would be left with no clue.

Contrary to 'Abla's teknonym, which most of the translators transliterated, her patronyms in Verse lines 6 and 42 were generally translated. However, following the translators' approaches to the teknonym, the embedded metonymy in the patronyms was not consistently clarified. Jones and Caussin de Perceval did not interpolate their explanations as with Verse line 5, and they translated Verse lines 6 and 42 as follows:

> She dwells in the land of my foes, like roaring lions: oh! how painful has been my search after thee, fair daughter of MAKHREM (Jones, 1782, p. 61)

> Go, ask the warriors, O daughter of MALEC, if thou art ignorant of my valour, *ask them* that, which thou knowest not (p. 66)[13]

> O fille de Makhrim (Mālik), tu résides maintenant sur une terre ennemie: combien il m'est difficile de parvenir jusqu'à toi! (Caussin de Perceval, 1847, p. 521)

> [O daughter of Makhrim (Mālik), you reside now on an enemy territory: How difficult it is for me to reach up to you!]

> Fille de Mālik, interroge les guerriers, si mes exploits te sont inconnus (p. 524)

> [Mālik's daughter, ask the warriors, in case my exploits are unknown to you]

Neither Jones nor Caussin de Perceval clarified that 'Abla is indeed the woman in question. None of them inferred that the person to be blamed is 'Abla's father more than 'Abla herself. Both pioneering translators were indeed aware of the metonymic nature of the names, which validated their use of translation rather than transliteration. Note that Caussin de Perceval explained in the TT and in a note that Makhrim is Mālik (1847, p. 521) with no further details. Thus, the appellations' affective values and the cultural dimension embedded in them are lost. In Jones's translation, the phrase "fair daughter of MAKHREM" even misdirects the verses' appeal because it shifts from blame to praise and longing.

[13] Jones adopted the same procedure when he translated the name of the slave-girl *Umm 'Amr* (Ibn Kulthūm, 5 and 6) into "mother of 'Amru" (1782, p. 67). In this case, transliteration is much more suitable because it is not necessary to mention that this girl is the mother of 'Amr. Likewise, Jones translated the patronym *Abā Hind* (Ibn Kulthūm, 23) into "son of Hinda" (1782, p. 69). This rendering not only deforms the *literal* meaning of the name, but also there is no use to attempt its translation. The same was done by Caussin de Perceval when he translated this name into "Fils de Hind" (1847, pp. 369; 386 ff.).

Johnson (1894, p. 185) and Schmidt (1978, p. 172) explained through notes that the appellations refer to ‘Abla. Bateson, meanwhile, did not explain whom the patronyms referred to. Most of the verse translators followed the steps of their prose counterparts. We start with the Blunts’ translation of Verse line 6:

> Fled to the land of the lions, roarers importunate.
> Daily my quest of thee darkens, daughter of Màkhrami (1903, p. 33)

This does not allow for much of disambiguation. First, it leaves the identity of “daughter of Màkhrami” rather obscure. Second, it creates a modified loss again because it conveys to the reader that the maiden *escaped* rather than *had to* leave as a result of her tribe’s decision. Such modulation takes the text to a completely alien cultural environment in which a woman would make a life-changing decision and escape on her own to lead another life. Such a woman would clearly be incompatible with the *nasīb* framework. Here, the Blunts’ acculturating strategy depicts ‘Abla as a femme fatale, countering the ST micro and macro cultural contexts. In the vein of these losses, the Blunts removed the communicative value of the daughter–father relationship embedded in the patronym. Obviously, the Blunts’ manipulations of these names and their embedded communicative values negate Shamma’s claim that this translation showed a “conscious effort to couch the Arabic texts in the similar terms of European chivalric romance” (2014, p. 107). Shamma highlighted this viewpoint in his argument that the Blunts frequently use romanticizing words in the contexts of war, love, heroism, and honor, a claim that the author of this study does not support.

In Verse line 42, the Blunts show a different approach:

> Ask the horsemen of Màlek, O thou his progeny,
> all they have seen of my high deeds. Then shalt thou learn of them (1903, p. 35)

Here, the beloved’s patronym is sacrificed to highlight her father’s identity and her kinship with him: “O thou his progeny.” The Blunts explained in an endnote that “Màlek was the father of Abla, against whose kinsmen Antara had found himself at feud and had indeed killed not a few of them. It is of these that he appeals as witnesses to Abla of his valour” (1903, p. 64). The ST metonymic address fulfills its affective function in this couplet, as the speaker in this TT suggests ‘Antara’s supremacy over ‘Abla’s father and his warriors.[14]

Nicholson (1868–1945) comes next in the corpus of verse translations. His translations are included in his book *A Literary History of the Arabs*. In an unexpected move, he does not explain the patronym as he translates it (1907, p. 115). Considering such an interest, it seems rather odd that he does not clarify the function of the metonymy that is in ‘Abla’s patronym. He addresses ‘Antara’s romance later in his book, with ‘Antara and ‘Abla’s love story, and its ups and downs, as its core. Similarly, Arberry does not express the patronyms’ functions when he translates them (1957, p. 179) although he is

[14] A similar manipulation occurs when the Blunts translate, rather than transliterate, *Imru’ l-Qays* when his beloved blames him. This is rendered as “slave of grief” (1903, p. 4). This resolution to translate the name fits the verse’s communicative value. In an endnote, the Blunts explain that this phrase is a “rendering of his name” (1903, p. 55) and then refer to a previous note where they clarify the meaning and origin of this poet’s name (1903, p. 51).

aware of all the English translations published before his. Arberry also weakens the ST appeal when he renders the order in Verse line 42 as a piece of advice:

> I could advise you, daughter of Malik, to ask the horsemen
> If you should happen to be ignorant and uninformed (p. 181)

This mode shift further affects the interpolation loss relevant to the patronym. In Verse line 6, Khawam manipulates the patronym differently:[15]

> Puis le lieu où les deux amants venaient en pèlerins
> m'est devenu lointain, fillette, et ta recherche ardue (1960, p. 47)
>
> [and then the place where the two lovers would visit for pilgrimage
> Is now far away from me, nymph, and seeking you became arduous]

The name Ibnat Mālik is replaced by *fillette* ("nymph"), which lovers frequently use to cherish their beloveds. However, in the ST context, the poet blames his beloved for feigning ignorance of his worth. Thus, as Khawam implies, he is far from cherishing her. In addition, in such a translation as Khawam's, the transmission of the proper name is essential as this translator shows in his book his interest in developing Arabic poetry and how poets' lives shape their poetry. The introduction reads, "*'Antara se fait remarquer dans les disputes entre tribus et dans les batailles. Il a consacré sa vie au service de sa Dame et cherche à oublier dans les combats son amour malheureux*" (Antara was noticeable in disputes between tribes and in battles. He dedicated his life to serve his Lady and seek to forget his misfortunate love in battles) (1960, p. 11). Despite attributing such importance to 'Antara's beloved, Khawam does not pay much attention to her different appellations throughout the translation.

Wormhoudt, Berque, Sells,[16] Nouryeh and Blankinship emulate Arberry and the prose translators in that they translate 'Abla's patronyms without specifying their metonymic background and semiotic referent. Like them, Larcher translates these names as follows:

> Advenue sur terre de lions et devenue
> Difficile à moi, ta quête, fille de Makhram! (2000, p. 31)
>
> [Now that she is in the land of lions and became
> Difficult for me to quest you, Makhram's daughter!]
>
> Que n'as-tu questionné les chevaux, fille de Mālik
> Si vraiment tu ignores ce que tu ne sais pas (2000, p. 35)
>
> [That you have not questioned the horses, Mālik's daughter
> If ever you really ignore what you do not know]

As opposed to the abovementioned verse translators, Larcher comments on these patronyms in two endnotes. In the first one, he says *"fille de Makhram," nom d'allure patronymique désignant 'Abla"* ('daughter of Makhram,' a patronymic name designating 'Abla) (2000, p. 40); in the second, he writes "*Autre nom d'allure patronymique de 'Abla (et celui que l''histoire' a retenu)"*

[15] This translator does not address verse line 42.

[16] Sells transliterates *Ibnat Makhram* into "Bint Makhrami" (1989). Like these translators, he does not clarify the patronym's metonymic aspect.

(Another of ‘Abla’s patronymic allure names [and the one that reverberates in history]) (p. 42). Both clarify the patronyms’ reference to one person: ‘Abla. Regarding the intended function, Larcher maintains this in the first while keeping it vague in the second; concerning the former, the exclamation mark that closes the couplet directs the reader’s attention to the existence of a deeper level in the poet’s statement. Larcher’s interest in Arabic linguistics and examination of the proper names used in the *Mu‘allaqa* of ‘Antara clearly helped him produce a translation of these proper names that is also clear and true to the ST functions. Larcher was also familiar with the translations of Khawam, Schmidt, and Berque (1994, p.150) and thus was able to build on them.

Meanwhile, Montgomery treats both patronyms rather uniquely in the corpus:

> The pursuit’s too hard, Bint Makhram (2018, p. 4)
>
> ‘Ablah, Daughter of Mālik, ask
> The riders if you want to hear (2018, p. 7)

In an endnote to his translation of Verse line 6, Montgomery explained that “the beloved has four names in this poem—‘Ablah, Umm al-Haytham (Mother of al-Haytham), Bint Makhram (Daughter of Makhram), and Bint Mālik (Daughter of Mālik)” (2018, p. 190). However, this does not guarantee that the TT reader would attribute the transliterated name to the beloved even if they read the line within the TT context. In contrast, Montgomery’s rendering of the second patronym conveys the explanatory power embedded in the metonymic appellation, which establishes not only meaning-making but also the ST speaker’s appeal.

4. Conclusion

This study validated the role of proper names as more than deictic symbols; they also bear functional communicative clues that require specific translation techniques. They are not only culture-bound and hence entirely sensitive to the context of the situation, but the proper names examined in this study are also semanticized, and are thus both referential and propositional, conventional and loaded, values that are acquired through their lexical compositions and occurrences in the text. ‘Antara used these cultural assets and distinctively shaped them so that they fit the appeal he spread in his *Mu‘allaqa*. The translators, meanwhile, faced the challenge of adopting a conscious decoding before rendering these names into the TL, where the problem is not simply a choice between translation and transliteration. More fundamentally, they had to demonstrate enough awareness when deciding on the translation technique: interpolation, substitution, and omission being the main ones that they used here. In the assessment process, the main weaknesses that were identified are implicit loss and modified loss. The above comparative assessment reveals that most of the translators were not aware of the embedded cultural and idiosyncratic dimensions in the proper names in question and of the communicative clues that underlie their variations. Unsurprisingly, Larcher is the one who produced the translations that are closest to the ST messages and yet most coherent with TL exigencies and expectations. His translations benefited from his interest in the ST’s philological and cultural aspects, which provided insights into the deeper function of the proper names used. His use of

endnotes to support his translations also enabled him to compensate, to some extent, for the incurred losses in his verse rendering. Thus, Larcher's work is a covert translation because it reproduces the ST function in the TT and simultaneously diverges from its register. Montgomery's translation is also a covert translation but a radical example: far from occupying the position of a second original, it rather presents itself as another original, assimilating the ST by diminishing its functions. An overt translation, Blankinship's work contributes very little to translating the proper names with their referents and communicative functions. The use of ST-oriented strategies left this translator with the fate of observing the text from the outside, to use House's words. Jones' is the sole translation that Blankinship refers to and quotes in his work. Advantage could have been taken of the other translations.

As it endorses Venuti's perception of literature as "writing created especially to release the remainder" (1998, p. 10), this study suggests that a translator incorporates proper names in their ST comprehension, as part of what makes up "the remainder" in a literary work. Proper names are traditionally undertaken as uniquely conventional and unmotivated, which is the main reason for translating them inefficiently. The first step would thus be to decide whether the names used are conventional or loaded. In case of the former, transliteration would be the best solution, though omission in a few cases may also be possible if need be. The big challenge rests with loaded proper names as these are suggestive and motivated. They would cover cultural if not also idiosyncratic clues. Compensation in this case would be expected, by adopting such techniques as substitution, interpolation and/or modulation. Though transliteration can be acceptable here, it cannot stand as the sole technique used to transfer what a suggestive proper name reveals. This has already been experimented in the Comparative Critical Assessment section above.

This study supports Hermans' assertion that translation is "irrevocably plural, and it is plural because it is repeatable" (2003, p. 41). Translators usually build on each other's work, a task that is both constructive and challenging, and this is factual especially for some translators of pre-Islamic poetry who do not read ST commentaries in Arabic. Truly, the way a literary translator handles proper names provides "valuable clues to the overall orientation of the translation" (Hermans, 1988, p. 14).

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