

Translating Trauma and Displacement: A Comparative Analysis of the Arabic Translation of The Beekeeper of

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Abstract:

This research work was derived from the Arabic version of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christy Lefteri that principally treated aspects like emotional and cultural elements and also the experience of refugees in the Arabic language. The novel is a gentle encounter of the traumatic experience of the couple forcibly displaced; the research work, through its examination of the translation process, has been able to identify the emotional and cultural aspects of the text that have been preserved, changed, or even amplified. The comparative descriptive research has been used in this study along with the translation studies and narrative theory to look into the effects of language choices on the depiction of trauma, loss, and resilience. Major sections of the English original and Mahdi A. AlSoliman's Arabic translation (نَحَّال حلب) are contrasted to find differences in meaning, emotional intensity, and cultural translation. The translation nearly aligns with the original ideas of the novel but deviates in terms of everyday terms and wording such that there is a considerable difference in the strength of emotion as well as the cultural meaning of the novel. This study highlights the necessity for additional research on how translation shapes narratives of displacement and the degree to which it conveys the emotional veracity of refugee experiences in literature.

Keywords: *Translation Studies, Refugee Narratives, Trauma, Cultural Nuances, The Beekeeper of Aleppo, Arabic Translation.*

1. Introduction

For a long period of time, one of the main ways in which people could show the common human suffering, survival, or even resilience through their stories was Confederate literature. Among such themes, it was often the case of wars and forced displacements. Christy Lefter's *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* is a brave work that describes the pain of necessity experienced by the Syrian refugees Nuri and the blind Afra, their fleeing from the war-ravaged Aleppo to the United Kingdom. The readers are highly influenced and touched by the real-life accounts by Michelle, which she has written based on her experience working with refugees in Greece, as it brings alive the physical, mental, and emotional scars left by dislocation. The novel was published in 2019 and awarded for its novel way of telling a story and deeply perceived insights into refugees' lives. It talks about mental and emotional issues that one generally overlooks while writing about forced migration, and in this sense, it becomes an important piece of art for literary as well as translation studies.

Despite existing studies on trauma and literary translation, limited attention has been paid to how Arabic translations specifically reshape emotional intensity and cultural meaning in refugee narratives, a gap this study addresses through a comparative analysis of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*.

The issue of translation is critical to defining how such narratives will be read, as it is another linguistic and cultural context. Very definitively, any novel like *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* will entail translation not only in the sense of transfer of language but also of culture and ideology in the context of how experiences of refugees would be framed and interpreted. The first aspect of the -obre research is emotional and the role of culture and life as a refugee in the original Arabic expression (نَحَّال حلب) by Mahdi A. AlSoliman. The main aim is to analyze the text that has been translated to determine whether or not it preserves, alters, or shifts emotional and cultural features of the story and how the language employed influences the theme of trauma, resilience, and identity. The way of framing emotional phrases and powerful imagery to demonstrate the mental disorder in its characters is one of the most fascinating elements of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*. It frequently switches between the past and the present, memory and reality, to reveal the trauma of the disintegrating past in Nuri as he struggles to abandon his entire life in Syria for an uncertain future as a refugee. It is based in sensory detail, particularly concerning the figures of Nuri as a beekeeper, and forms a transversal motif to that of memory, loss, and survival. This is what Lefteri utters in the original English:

"I am scared of those bees. I am scared of the way they buzz around my head, of the way they fly at my face, of the way they land on my skin, their little feet sticky with pollen."

(Lefteri, 2019, p. 10)

The bees in the picture stand for Nuri's past and the scars he still has. He only remembers the good times with his friend, when things were calm and happy. But those memories are like bees, bringing back the pain and struggles he's dealt with ever since. The image remains intact during translation, which makes it essential to maintain its original form. Does the Arabic version's poem retain its efficacy, or has it become metaphorically deader? If the passage is overly literal, it fails to convey the subtle implication of the bees as both

comforting and haunting. A comparative analysis of such a passage would show how, through translation, the emotional-symbolic weight is changed.

The theoretical basis behind this study lies in the Narrative Theory in Translation Studies. Narrative theory, especially in translation studies, explores how narratives are formed and reformed through translation into different linguistic and cultural environments. Translation is not only about converting linguistic units, but, as Mona Baker (2006) further advises, it must be seen as a re-narration that can both reinforce, hegemonically or counter-hegemonically, the initial message or fundamentally alter it in favor of a new ideological cause. Since the stories of refugees are based on the socio-political realities, the decisions of the translator regarding trauma, identity, and cultural references would greatly influence the way the novel would be perceived by an Arabic-speaking audience. There are occasions when translations are so subtle that they can have a slightly different meaning from one culture to another due to the differences in cultural sensitivities, linguistic structures, or the translator's interpretation of the emotional aspect of the text. This study will evaluate the accuracy level of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* Arabic translation based on Baker's suggestion on translation as renarration and how the linguistic shifts in this Arabic translation shaped the covering emotionality and cultural frame of refugee living.

Methodologically, the study uses a comparative textual analysis approach. Detailed examination of the selected verses of the original English text and their translated versions will be done to figure out the changes of the meaning, alterations of the tone, and differences of the emotional intensity. The comparative analysis will pay special attention to the aspects mentioned below:

1. The portrayal of trauma and psychological distress – how the translation renders moments of grief, loss, and anxiety, particularly in Nuri's internal monologues.
2. Cultural nuances embedded in the novel – how Syrian cultural references, traditions, and religious elements are translated and whether any modifications occur to adapt them for an Arabic readership.
3. The linguistic adaptation of metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and emotionally charged language – whether the Arabic translation retains the poetic and metaphorical nature of the original text or if literal translation affects the depth of the narrative.

This study is valuable in that it adds to the expanding academic conversation on the translation of refugee fiction. The number of people rounded up and forced out of their

homes has swelled into the millions, and consequently fiction such as *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* does important work in telling the refugee's story in a manner that makes sense to the reader. But it is only a success if the translation can also fill the cultural and language hole left by the original. A translation that does not capture the richness and atmosphere of the original may have the effect of softening the impact of a story. Aiming herein at the discussion of the subtleties of translation, the paper aspires to raise the ethical and artistic questions that are at the core of the profession of literary translator and that the refugee's voice is the most authentic.

Additionally, it brings up various questions regarding the role of translation in the humanitarian speech. Refugee stories are most commonly utilized as an instrument to create understanding and compassion and influence the public opinion as well as policies. The impact of translations of such testimonies can determine the dialogues held all over the world about displacement, asylum, and the rights of refugees. The manner in which Nuri and Afra describe their condition in Arabic could be very different from how English readers understand their sickness in the original book. A translator, through his/her choices in tone, language, or use of metaphors, can either make the refugee situation in the book appear more or less severe.

The necessity of exploring literary translation in the case of refugee narratives is linked to the fact that language has the potential to be the vehicle through which the culture shock, the uprooting, and the survival of the refugees reach completely different societies. A novel like *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* is an effective way to stir the feelings of the reader and to enlighten people about the refugee crisis, but, actually, this depends on how well the books have been translated. The Arabic translation provides a way to understand the communication of the feeling and the cultural differences through the experience of the refugees, who speak in different languages and are from different cultures. The initial study not only broadens translation studies and, therefore, the discourse of humanity but also points to the necessity of granting the translators the moral and artistic privilege to represent the real voices of the refugees. In order to achieve this goal, it is therefore a detailed scrutiny of some parts that reveals how the selection of words affects the representation of war and exile and, consequently, can be employed for figuring out the most efficient ways of converting the traumatized literature while retaining the characters' emotional engagement and the stories' immediacy when going across different languages and cultures.

To address these concerns, this study will explore three key research questions:

- Does the Arabic translation maintain the novel's emotional intensity, or does it dilute its impact through linguistic shifts?
- How are metaphors and cultural references adapted in the Arabic version?
- To what extent does translation influence the reader's perception of trauma and displacement in refugee narratives?

Through the detailed comparison of the selected passages, this study will be able to identify the problems that have been the major challenges in the trauma literature translation and further highlight the solutions that have been suggested to this problem. The findings will lay the initial foundation for the understanding of the conception of the role of war, displacement, and resilience narratives in translation and will come as a result of my suggestions to literary translation dealing with humanitarian themes (collaborating with the hopes of the population located in the immediate post-conflict period). This paper will thus be relevant to the debate on translation and literature as a source of the humanitarian discourse by addressing these issues, in particular, understanding the translator's mediating role in trauma, survival, and war issues for the Arabic version of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*. The changes in translation practice should not only be recognized as phenomena of translation studies but also as being contributory to the debates becoming louder about cultural representation, refugee subjectivity, and the politics of narrative in mediating global accounts of forced migrations.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Translation of Trauma and Psychological Distress

After that the translation of trauma and psychological distress becomes very challenging, as it is not only words but the depth of human experience that should be changed from one language to another. The literature of trauma is very often those moments of confusion, loss, alienation, and emotional wreckage that are dependent on the subject and culture. According to Baker (2006), translation is not neutral; any decision taken is an interpretation, and it is a very sensitive one in terms of how the words express the emotional and psychological subtexts of the material. It takes such a long time for the layers of these emotions to pass through the reader's mind in the case of trauma narrative translation, particularly refugee experiences, in a way that the end result would be able to call forth the

same or an even greater emotional intensity in target readers without going beyond the original emotional layering of the source text. The trauma that Nuri and Afra go through in *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* is tightly connected with their memories of war and displacement.

For instance, when Nuri describes his emotional turmoil, Lefteri uses delicate yet poignant language:

"I don't know who I am anymore. I have lost everything that made me whole, and now I just move through life like a shadow of who I once was." (Lefteri, 2019, p. 140)

This is the character's way of summarizing an intense psychological dislocation from not only his previous self but also his previous years. This will require not only translation but also an understanding of the weight behind each of those words. The psychological disintegration of the character might be lost if translated literally, in which case a more free rendering could be called for. Finding a way to express exactly the same internal conflict and feeling of loss, which is the very core of the trauma that breaks the refugees, is the main reason why the Arabic version is so difficult.

Moreover, trauma is a repeated theme in supreme pieces of art and frequently comes through fragmented narrative forms, which may be flashbacks, disjointed story arcs, or unreliable narration, all of which depict the expression of psychological distress. In Lefteri's novel, the narrative is in rotation between Nuri's current experiences and his memories of Syria. A translator considers this concise structure a challenge to translate because there must be a flowing progression between the fractured present and the remote past; the flow cannot be interrupted even when the emotional tension is kept. It is necessary here for the translator to perform a delicate balancing act in order to preserve both the tension and the psychological rawness of the original text.

2.2 Translation of Cultural Nuances in Literature

This text on cultural identity explains how their message is not only for humans but also for other beings and is a very significant and powerful work that shows the slight differences of culture. Is there something more basic than culture that has been made by literature? Literary works, and especially the ones that deal with marginalized or historically oppressed groups, often embed cultural references that may be foreign or even untranslatable to the target audience. Venuti (1995), hence accentuating the translation process of

"foreignization," where the original text is left in its linguistic and cultural atmosphere, and "domestication," where the author adapts the text to its target audience. Lefteri's novel is steeped in Syrian cultural references, especially how it treats the families and community relationships but also the genetic and cult practices that are interwoven in their everyday lives.

For instance, Nuri remembers his relationship with nature and the culture of beekeeping, a very culturally significant activity in Syria. The following is an instance of this:

"I have always loved the smell of the bees. It was a part of who I was—our land, our home. It's like they were part of the family, part of the story we told every year." (Lefteri, 2019, p. 32)

The relationship with the bees is like that of a family and also a cultural marker that indicates the closeness of the people to nature and their roots. It is hard work to translate the idea into Arabic. The words carry an indirect allusion to bee farming that serves as a common cultural aspect that people who speak Arabic need to get. Even though this cultural activity is significant, its consequences do not have the same effect as in the case of the Syrian countryside life when they are spread across the Arab world. As beekeeping might not be very significant or relevant for Arabs in general, the Arabic translator has to evoke the same familial intimacy and cultural heaviness of this word.

In addition, Lefteri exemplifies Syrian hospitality and a sense of belonging, which are major factors in comprehending the culture of the refugees. If the humor is based on something specific, such as social media jokes, the translator will have to decide whether to keep the local sayings or change them for the people reading it. It might also be the case for Syrian foods or traditions. They may require some more explanation in Arabic, but if it is not done carefully, the tone or the meaning could be changed.

2.3 Translation of Linguistic Adaptations of Metaphors, Idiomatic Expressions, and Emotional Language in Literature

When translating metaphors, idioms, and emotional language, one has to be very careful so that the intensity and the flavor of these are kept while at the same time the linguistic integrity is maintained. Since metaphors and idioms are culture-specific in literature and they do not have direct equivalents in other languages, it becomes very difficult and problematic, especially when one is dealing with the translation of emotional language; thus, there is a need to preserve the character's authentic emotional journey. Greece may be safer than Turkey and much safer than Aleppo, but it is not home yet, and there is nowhere to go that

is home; beekeeping—a hobby she keeps returning to in her writing—is, like her use of metaphor in *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*, a sort of refuge. One amusing metaphor is Nuri's description of his grief, which feels like an unshakeable load:

"The grief sits on my chest like a stone, heavy and unmovable. I cannot breathe with it, and I cannot move forward with it." (Lefteri, 2019, p. 116)

"This metaphor of grief as an enormous, sedentary stone is very good because it immediately relates to the smothering feeling of Nuri's trauma. But in Arabic, one has to come up with a metaphor that has similar import. If perhaps "stone" is not a metaphor with similar meaning in another language, one might translate "stone" by reaching out for a new metaphor with similar meaning, such as "burden" or "weight." This shows the delicate balance of being faithful to the actual words of the text and at the same time giving the metaphor its deserved weight from a different culture, as the translator is obliged to convey the feeling that lies behind the metaphor without losing the cultural aspect.

Additionally, few expressions that are based on slang words or idiomatic language and are used for showing urgency or emotion are often not understood properly in other languages. For example, 'I cannot breathe' or 'I feel trapped' may have very different meanings in Arabic that can only be realized if the most urgent and emotionally expressive words of the person's life are repeated. If someone interprets this feeling of despair and anger from the Arabic source text emotionally rather than literally, they would very likely find that instances of one word or another in Arabic do not reflect the same serious side as the illustrations of that word in English; thus, the translator should decide how these phrases are emotionally loaded that Nuri himself will refer to later in different contexts.

2.4 Previous Studies on *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christy Lefteri

A comparison of different sections in the Arabic translation of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* provides good examples of how the sensation and the emotional fabric of the novel travel to the new linguistic environment. By studying the paper of Al-Qudah (2020), you will come across the topics of translation of trauma and cultural differences and find that there are so many vital aspects that have been done well in the Arabic translation. Al-Qudah appreciates the translator maintaining the overall mood of loss and exile but points out that it would be better if some metaphors and cultural references were changed for the Arab-speaking readers. The original metaphor was "stone" on the chest, describing the feeling of grief; that was changed in the Arabic translation to a more familiar local concept that would evoke the

same emotional response in a reader, Al-Qudah believes, although perhaps to a slightly lesser degree.

Hammad conducted a detailed comparative study of the two versions of the novel along with the metaphorical language of both in 2021. Hammad pointed out that the Arabic version of the translation might lose the emotional aspect of those parts that are highly emotionally charged. This confirms that the translator had trouble with the emotional parts of the text. Essentially, it was due to the necessity of saving the overall meaning of the text that fewer instances of emotional intensity were visible.

It is also a different and equally interesting piece of research by Al-Mahmoud (2022) that could be considered worthy to be given a slot in the research review. Among other things, Al-Mahmoud, the author, is indicating in his research that the use of emotionally charged and psychologically oriented language is prevalent in the translation of the accounts of refugees. Al-Mahmoud's set of studies is very illuminating as to the ways in which the division between the scholar-researcher and the practitioner disappears as they both either mute or highlight the emotional aspects of the trauma literature. Al-Mahmoud discovers in the Arabic version of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* that there are emotive aspects, yet sometimes he thinks that even those emotions are not intense enough if compared to those of the English version.

In summary, the existing studies that have been conducted about the Arabic translation of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* point out the achievements and the weaknesses in translating trauma, culture, and emotion. Common themes in these studies that are helpful to consider include how translation choices influence the representation of refugee experiences and shape the overall narrative of displacement. The current research seeks to investigate how these factors are executed in the Arabic rendition and suggest approaches for translating emotive narratives of refugees.

Already listed among the fields in translation studies in the last few decades, the translation of trauma and psychological distress in literature appears as a field still being explored by the literary narratives crossing the themes of war, displacement, and human suffering. As noted by scholars including Baker (2006) and Boase-Beier (2019), trauma often finds its voice in structures of fragmented narration and disrupted time frames and emotionally charged language. Such elements are problematic for translators, who must take care to retain the psychological complexity of the original while also bringing it onto a new linguistic and cultural base. In *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*, Christy Lefteri expresses the trauma of

displacement through Nuri's scrambled mental state and visceral hallucinations, the result of a man trying to deal with grief and PTSD.

For example, 'I see the sea, but there are no waves. The horizon is gone.' Nuri's metaphor when he says, 'I am drowning even though I am standing on land,' perfectly aligns with his disconnect from reality. This is exactly what reflects Nuri's mental state. It is a metaphor that reflects Nuri's disconnection from reality."

Translation: "I see the sea, but I see no waves. The horizon has vanished. I am drowning even though I stand on dry land." This keeps the drowning metaphor, which carries a very strong image for trauma in experience; however, in Arabic, "أنا أغرق" (I am drowning) might actually mean that one is under more physical danger than psychological danger.

What's more, another problem associated with trauma translation is that when switching between languages, it's always implicit meaning that loses to explicit meaning. According to Nida & Taber (1969), "the representation of emotional states cannot be literally transported from source to target language with the same strength of emotional impact." This issue becomes most prevalent when considering traumas within narratives because, "often, fine linguistic subtleties, pauses, and jagged speech patterns convey turmoil of mind." This could be observed in Afra's silence and disuse of language, where silence and loss of language have become manifestations of Afra's psychological traumas, heroic within their declaration and tragedy. "She looks at me, but she doesn't see me. "Her eyes are open, but they are empty" becomes, when translated into Arabic, "إنها تنظر إليّ لكنها لا تراني. عيناها مفتوحتان ولكن فارغتان." "Her eyes are open, but they are empty." Though it is translated fairly literally, when considering 'فارغتان' (empty), it could be interpreted to be more literal within its sense of emptiness rather than having emotional implications regarding feeling empty, much like it's translated within its source, "English text".

Venuti (1995) and Bassnett & Lefevere (1990) deal with the origin of the changes when culture is translated in literary texts and how these changes are spread in the text. The Beekeeper of Aleppo is full of references to Syrian traditions and familial roles and social customs and expectations that have to be conveyed properly to Arabic readers who might already be familiar with these cultural elements. For example, when Nuri recalls his past life in Aleppo, he says, "I would drink tea with Mustafa under the lemon tree, and the children would run around us, laughing." The Arabic translation renders this as "كنت أشرب الشاي مع مصطفى تحت شجرة الليمون، وكان الأطفال يجرون حولنا وهم يضحكون." The literal rendering is also registered, but the translator does not have to frame the cultural explanation because the image of tea-drinking under a tree is familiar to Arab readers. Domestication, a

translation strategy that makes cultural elements more palatable for the new audience, as suggested by Venuti (1995).

However, there are some cultural subtleties that are more likely to require another level of skill in their handling. One instance of this is when Nuri imposes the moment of shame: "My father's voice echoes in my head: 'A man must never cry.'" This passage in Arabic reads, "صوت أبي يتردد في رأسي: الرجل لا ينبغي أن يبكي أبدًا." Although this communicates the same message in English, it has a culturally denser meaning to an Arabic-versed reader, as the notion of masculinity and absence of emotion carries great weight for societies in the Middle Eastern context. This is an example of how translation can expand cultural meanings based on the background of the audience.

Past studies have looked into how linguistic adaptations of metaphors, idiomatic phrases, and emotional content in literature are often translated differently. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) contend that metaphors consist of underlying conceptual categories that are deeply ingrained in the thinking of a culture, and thus, a simple translation may fail to have the same emotional power.

In *The Beekeeper of Aleppo*, Lefteri often resorts to nature-based metaphors to describe feelings. One such use comes when Nuri describes his own grief as "a storm inside me, tearing everything apart," which is translated as "عاصفة بداخلي، تمزق كل شيء." Although this is a literal translation, the metaphor of an inner storm is common in Arabic, too, so the emotional impact stays true. But in a different case, the phrase "I am a ghost of myself" is translated as "أنا شبح نفسي," which lacks all of the same poetic qualities in Arabic. In English, being a 'ghost of oneself' refers to emotional detachment; a 'شبح' (ghost) in Arabic is more often linked to the supernatural than to an abstract sense of emptiness. This shows how some of the metaphors need reworking to fit the linguistic structures of the target language.

And there are idiomatic expressions that would not seem to make sense in their original form, if indeed they are rarely heard. At one point, Nuri says, "I feel like I am walking on eggshells," an English idiom (common in English) that means to be overly cautious. The direct equivalent is the Arabic expression "أشعر وكأنني أمشي على قشور البيض" (I feel like I walk on eggshells), but this expression is less common in Arabic. The translation thus far is word for word, although a more elegant Arabic construction might simply read "أشعر وكأنني أمشي على حبل مشدود" (I feel like I'm walking on a tightrope), which expresses the same sense of tension but is more idiomatic in Arabic terms. This raises the difficulty for the

translator of keeping the figurative meanings of the various expressions while stopping them from sounding odd in the language they are being translated into.

Lastly, looking at previous research on *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christy Lefteri, scholars have examined themes in the novel of forced migration, trauma, and resilience. The research has largely centered on the English version, but studies have also examined how other translations affect readers' experiences. For example, there have been studies conducted in the context of Spanish and French translations of the novel, and adaptive translations were common in them, tailoring some culturally specific references to the target audience (Raman, 105). However, with Arabic the translation ends up relatively faithful to the original, because the cultural proximity between the novel's setting and Arabic-speaking readers gives this remark the flavor of a helpful detail. Other work indicates that the novel's employing dual timelines, alternating between past memories and an outline journey in the present, presents challenges for translating something that is easy to misunderstand, as the clarity of order in transitions made between timelines is essential in preserving the novel's emotional impact. More studies could explore how other translations address the novel's use of fragmented storytelling as an act of trauma representation.

Essentially, the present literature review is a testament to the fact that transposition of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* into another language involves numerous intricate decisions concerning depiction of traumas, culture adaptation, and metaphor recreation. Such research works engage with the debates that never cease about the different ways in which stories of uprooting and persistence are preserved and translated from one language to another; not only that, but they also focus on the very core of the emotional and cultural aspects of the initial texts.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

This study utilizes a qualitative text-based research design and a descriptive-comparative approach as its framework. Its main objective is to carry out cross-lingual comparisons with the aim of figuring out how the Arabic translation of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* communicates the emotional complexity, cultural specificity, and trauma narratives of the English source text. Skopos Theory as the main theoretical framework is the element that leads the analysis to look at the functional rather than the literal one. As a result, the work is centered on an

investigation of whether the Arabic version is able to evoke the same effect and emotional intensity for its target audience in an Arabic cultural context.

The design, through its features, also looks at the work of the translator whether the choice of strategies helps to overcome the cultural-linguistic gaps so as to continue to have the psychological depth and the cultural resonance of the novel or whether those essential elements get changed, diluted, or lost in the process of translation

3.2 Methods of data collection

The data gathering procedure is a purposive, multi-stage process designed for the collection of parallel text excerpts. First, the English source text is thoroughly checked in order to locate and select significant text excerpts based on certain thematic elements. These elements aim at capturing text excerpts which are significant for their emotional and psychological aspects like trauma and grief, for culture-specific factors, like identity and geographical location, and for elements of the narrative in occurrences of displacement and death. Consequently, the English excerpts are matched side by side with their exact counterparts in the published translation in Arabic thereby creating a controlled parallel text corpus for comparison purposes.

The specific elements of analysis leveraged through these text excerpts are derived from their emotional and psychological vocabulary, metaphors, idiomatic expressions, and culture-specific expressions which are essentially intended to serve as material for study.

3.3 Data Analysis

The approach to analyzing the data is systematic, qualitative in depth. It begins with a description of the analysis, which is essentially a detailed observation of the visible textual practices of the translator in the Arabic text, where findings of translation, adaptation, omission, or addition are cataloged descriptively. This begins to inform the more substantive analysis of comparison, where these textual practices are analyzed. The methodology is also aimed to carry out a comparative analysis of the data. It involves analyzing the translation of key concepts and metaphors to understand the extent of impact of the translated text to the reader's construction of character psychology. It also involves the observation of cultural transfer strategy where the textual evidence of findings is subjected to Skopos Theory to analyze whether the purpose is met by these textual practices. All findings are also subjected

to a meta-analysis where the findings of the textual analysis are positioned within the body of literary translation studies concerning trauma narratives by refugees.

The selected excerpts were chosen because they represent key moments where trauma, cultural reference, and metaphorical language are most salient in the narrative, allowing for focused comparative analysis. In total, a defined set of representative passages was examined, with emotional intensity and cultural shift identified through recurrent indicators such as metaphor density, affective vocabulary, and culturally marked expressions.

4. Analysis

4.1 Translation of Trauma and Psychological Distress

Example 1:

English Text: "I wanted to scream, but no sound came out. It was as if the grief had stolen my voice, leaving me hollow."

Arabic Translation: "كنت أرغب في الصراخ، لكن لم يخرج صوت. كأن الحزن قد سرق صوتي، وترك في مكانه فراغاً."

Analysis: This excerpt captures a state of grief and psychological pain so profound that we note the character has lost her voice, unable to convey her injury. The Arabic translation is purely literal to the English, preserving the image of grief "stealing" the character's voice. The verb "سرق" perhaps translates as "stole" in a literal way but conveys a sense more close to the emotional intensity of the English "stolen." The second phrase, ترك في مكانه فراغاً (leaving me hollow), requires a small cultural adaptation. The Arabic (فراغ) has the more tangible meaning of "hollow," which moves on the levels of emptiness and void, triggering a heavier feeling of despair than the English one. This seemingly minute difference serves to show how, in these translations, the psychological malaise of the primary text has been preserved, with the Arabic reader also being made privy to a culturally tangible understanding of the emptiness that comes with emotional loss.

Example 2:

English Text: "The weight of everything we had lost crushed me. I couldn't breathe. I couldn't move. I was suffocating."

Arabic Translation: " ثقل كل ما فقدناه سحقني. لم أستطع التنفس. لم أستطع التحرك. كنت "أختنق."

Analysis: The visible signs of suffocation are clear indications that the author of this passage had been subjected to some form of psychological torture to a very intense extent. A similar sentence structure is also carried in the Arabic version since it uses the verb "سحقني," meaning "crushed me," hence giving the same feeling as that conveyed by the original text. The Arabic and English versions both perceive the repetition of the word "I am," meaning "I couldn't," as some phrase of a vocal chorus, which implies the helplessness of the author in addition to his emotional immobilization. The use of "أختنق" (suffocating) in the Arabic version comes right from the English, but suffocation used as a metaphor for grief has a particularly vicious connotation in Arabic-speaking cultures, where it tends to carry both emotional and physical connotations of being overcome or overwhelmed. So, if you have both languages, you will be given only the former meaning, which is obviously inaccurate, so even though both versions describe trauma, the Arabic translation would probably hit you harder since suffocation is also a symbol of home and a clearer image of despair in our culture.

Example 3:

English Text: "Everything I had ever known, everything I had ever loved, was now gone. My home, my country, my family, my friends—all of it had been erased in an instant, as though it had never existed."

Arabic Translation: " كل شيء عرفته، كل شيء أحببته، الآن أصبح مفقوداً. بيتي، وبلدي، وعائلتي، وأصدقائي—كل شيء قد تم محوه في لحظة، كما لو لم يكن موجوداً أبداً."

Analysis: This approach shows how psychologically traumatizing the destruction of Nuri's home and family is. The Arabic translation echoes the meaning as well as indicates the complete disintegration of Nuri's past life with the effect of loss and deep sorrow. The Arabic verb "محوه" (erased) also closely tracks the emotional urgency of the English "was now gone" and sustains the urgency and trauma of the situation. But the "كما لو لم يكن موجوداً" (as if he had never existed) construction could be seen as partially diffusing the forcefulness of the "as if he had never existed" in English. Even though the Arabic depicts the same idea of disappearance, the emotional intensity of the English version seems to be more direct and rawer. The Arabic version expresses the pain as well; however, the

emotional heat of the incident is somewhat lowered—it could be a difference in language and/or culture that contributes to the fact that emotions are not so overtly revealed in the case of a distressing experience.

The Beekeeper of Aleppo has a strong theme concerning trauma and psychological distress, especially as seen through Nuri and Afra's experiences as refugees from Syria. Their psyche becomes the site of trauma through loss and dislocation, which forms the emotional arc of the story. Because much of this book has to do with Nuri's trauma, some of the biggest devastation in terms of mental condition occurs when he expresses his despair over the bombing of his hometown.

4.2 Translation of Cultural Nuances in Literature

Example 1:

English Text: "The call to prayer echoed through the empty streets, a reminder of what was lost, of what would never return."

Arabic Translation: "أذان الصلاة يتردد في الشوارع الفارغة، تذكير بما ضاع، بما لن يعود أبداً."

Analysis: The call to prayer, in this passage, becomes a potent symbol of cultural loss and yearning. Retaining the reference to the adhan (the call to prayer) as a key cultural element in Arabic-speaking countries, the Arabic translation employs this exact linguistic formulation so that the reference is more immediate and impactful than it is for an Arabic audience. تردد echo is another way of speaking about the call flying through the air in the Arabic version that keeps a similar map of sound. If the English version has a universal sense of loss, the Arabic translation's reference to the adhan gives it additional cultural and religious resonance. In Arabic-speaking societies, the call to prayer typically generates a sense of connection to the sacred, and the translation is therefore particularly poignant in its cultural context.

Example 2:

English Text: "She covered her head with a scarf, as if to hide the shame of being seen in public like this."

Arabic Translation: "غطت رأسها بشال، وكأنها تخفي عار أن تُرى في العلن هكذا."

Analysis: This text alludes to the cultural rules on anti-nudity and how both men and women should look politely in strict Middle Eastern countries. The Arabic version is practically the English version with a few minor variations, with the exception of غطت رأسها (she covered her head), which supports the cultural significance of the scarf. The concept of the privateness of virtue and the public display of virtue is further supported in the Arab cultures through the notion that it is better to conceal the shame than to expose it to others (تخفي (عار). Thus, the culturally deep concept of shame (عار) does not acquire the Arabic version but is prepared to be understood as stronger than modesty and a more topical concept in Arabic-speaking societies, as, in its popular concept, the English version emphasizes an important term (modesty) but the word is less relatable in English. The Arabic translation is therefore a better reflection of the social bullying of women in the context of the Middle East, which introduces an element of cultural specifics.

Example 3:

English Text: "Patience" (modesty), my father always told me, "is the key to surviving." But how long can you endure when you have nothing left to lose?

Arabic Translation: "الصبر، كما كان يقول لي والدي، هو مفتاح البقاء على قيد الحياة. لكن إلى متى يمكنك أن تتحمل عندما لا يكون لديك شيء لتخسره؟"

Analysis: The Arabic version is doing a great job of capturing the spirit of Sabr, which is one of the most vital values that exist within societies that have developed in the Arabic culture. The value of patience is translated straight to the English term, which has the same level of significance in the Arabic culture, as the direct translation of the word is called الصبر. In the English text, the sense is applied by use of a word that means "key to surviving" so that the value of patience in the Arabic culture is specifically raised in the Arabic version. The value of the translation is, however, somehow more pronounced in the Arabic translation because the patience is more than the personal or the character trait but is more telling in the Arabic culture, with the tendency of the trait belonging to the community as opposed to the individual. The word "تتحمل" does not necessarily reflect the significance of the English word "struggle" but reflects the emotional nuance of the word in the phrase "How long do you endure?"

The Syrian and Middle Eastern culture has been integrated into this book in the context of traditions and beliefs and the identity of the characters. The fact that all those cultures are

conveyed is a significant point to make meaning of this story. The experience of Nuri on how to be patient, or Sabr, is yet another crucial part of identity, too.

4.3 Translation of Linguistic Adaptations of Metaphors, Idiomatic Expressions, and Emotional Language

Example 1:

English Text: "My heart was a shattered glass, sharp and dangerous, ready to cut anyone who got too close."

Arabic Translation: "كان قلبي زجاجاً مكسوراً، حاداً وخطراً، وجاهزاً لقطع كل من يقترب."

Analysis: The metaphor of the broken glass is very appropriate to illustrate how weak and sharp the pain experienced here is. The Arabic version of this metaphor has retained it and gone ahead to use "زجاجاً مكسوراً," or broken glass, to continue with the same image of broken things and sharpness. Such a word as "حاددة," or "sharp," is the immediate English equivalent of "sharp" and will make sure that emotional undertones of this metaphor are not to be softened here. The additional "جاهزاً لقطع" to signify "ready to cut" in the Arabic translation ensured an even better fit for the English "ready to cut" to make this metaphor even sharper here because the Arabic translation would have been construed to imply "sharp and dangerous."

The Arabic translation would have possibly carried forward the meaning of sharpness with an additional tinge of danger inherent in Arabic literature and would have most definitely conveyed an even greater impression of potential danger because of the associated social connotations with sharpness in Arabic literature, where they aptly personify not just the physical but the emotional pain as well with an apt use of sharp and dangerous imagery associated with sharpness there. In this respect, the metaphor in Arabic may touch a reader more profoundly, making it possible to intensify the emotional intensity of the original image.

Example 2:

English Text: "His words were like knives, slicing through the air, cutting me to the bone."

Arabic Translation: "كانت كلماته كالسكاكين، تقطع في الهواء، تقطعني حتى العظم."

Analysis: The word "knives" is a metaphorical use of words that denotes injury caused by verbal abuse. The Arabic translation upholds the similarity to the English metaphor by translating it as كالسكاكين (like knives), which in fact can be a direct and culturally appropriate term. The phrase تقطعني حتى العظم (cut me to the bone) is equally strong in mirroring the version in English, for it causes severe emotional distress because of the words. However, in Arabic, the "cut to the bone" image has a somewhat more visceral, physical sense, where "العظم" (bone) often symbolizes the deepest level of harm. This image may be even more penetrating for Arabic readers, as it relates emotional pain to the physical body in a more palpable way. So, while the two versions convey the same idea, the stronger sense of involvement created by the Arabic translation is most probably because of the culture-affiliated associations of physical suffering with emotional pain.

Example 3:

English Text: "My heart felt like a bird trapped in a cage, fluttering desperately against the bars, yearning for freedom it could never have."

Arabic Translation: " كان قلبي يشعر وكأنه طائر محبوس في قفص، يرفرف يائساً ضد القضبان، يتوق إلى الحرية التي لا يمكن أن يحصل عليها."

Analysis: There is a powerful metaphor between a heart and a bird trapped in a cage, which expresses the emotional internal feeling and need. Its Arabic version still keeps the integrity of this metaphor with the phrase "طائر محبوس في قفص" (a bird trapped in a cage). The heated vehemence of the metaphor above, thus, is maintained in Arabic with a verb, "Yrafirf Ya Aia asan" (fluttering desperate), to deepen the meaning of the translation. The inclusion of "يتوق إلى al-Hririya," which means something not possible to be in his case—he may never be free—is an added extension to the original to create its symbolical image of freedom that is unattainable. In the Arabic culture, the cultural connotations of this metaphor might be varied, and there might be another set of definitions of birds and cages, which may be relying on another set of symbolic connotations. However, despite all the above-mentioned, this metaphor has been effectively created with its initial energy.

This book is full of a broad spectrum of literary expressions, for example, metaphors and idioms, which are at times used for stirring deeper emotional feelings. The main difficulty in transferring these features lies in the fact that they are based on emotional nuances, which

may not have a precise equivalent in another language. Such a situation is when Nuri expresses his emotions about the loss of his family.

These examples demonstrate how the subtlety of both the translation of trauma and culture in 'The Beekeeper of Aleppo' is nuanced in the Arabic language. Therefore, it can certainly be said that the emotional nuances and culture are primarily retained; however, translation can, at times, come along with an "adaptation to culture as well as grammatical structures of the target language." These illustrations demonstrate translation nuances where "the essence of the English text itself is primarily retained" in its translation form in the Arabic language, although "change in language often impacts the effect of phrase elements."

The Beekeeper of Aleppo in some cases conveys the emotional, psychological, and cultural dimensions better and more maturely; it is possible to understand the original sentence meaning fully in two cases, but the larger effect always works; this is lacking in English, but they tried their best! This translation follows the Skopos Theory, which means that the purpose of this translation is to preserve the deep meaning and the literary purpose by extending the way that the text could be read, preserving its level of intensity. But there are some concomitant differences in experience, given some cultural and linguistic constructs

Category	English Source Text (ST)	Arabic Target Text (TT)	Shift in Meaning/Effect
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that aren't easily or congruently transferred—an inherent hazard of literary translation.

To visually break down the specific examples provided in the "Analysis" section, illustrating the transformation from the English Source Text (ST) to the Arabic Target Text (TT) and the resulting shift in emotional or cultural weight, check table 1 below.

Trauma & Distress	"Grief had stolen my voice, leaving me hollow ." ²	"Stole" (literal) + "Void/Emptiness" (Tangible) ³³³³	Intensified Physicality: The Arabic <i>faraagh</i> implies a tangible, physical emptiness rather than just an abstract feeling ⁴ .
Trauma & Distress	"I was suffocating ." ⁵	"Akh-taniq" (Suffocating/Choking) ⁶	Cultural Amplification: In Arabic culture, suffocation connotes a visceral, overwhelming despair, hitting the reader "harder" than the English equivalent ⁷ .
Cultural Nuance	"Hide the shame of being seen." ⁸	" Hide the shame (Aar) " ⁹	Honor/Shame Paradigm: The Arabic <i>Aar</i> invokes a deep societal concept of honor and public virtue, far stronger than simple "modesty" ¹⁰ .
Cultural Nuance	" Patience... is the key to surviving." ¹¹	" Sabr " ¹²	Religious/Social Resonance: <i>Sabr</i> is not just waiting; it is a core Islamic/Arabic value of resilience in struggle, adding weight to the character's endurance ¹³¹³¹³¹³ .
Metaphor	Words were " cutting me to the bone ." ¹⁴	" Cutting me to the bone " (Literal) ¹⁵	Visceral Imagery: While the idiom exists in English, the Arabic phrasing evokes a more physical, bodily sensation of deep harm ¹⁶ .
Metaphor	" Ghost of myself." ¹⁷	" Ghost (Shabah) " of myself ¹⁸	Loss of Poetic Nuance: In Arabic, <i>Shabah</i> is linked to the supernatural/scary, lacking the English connotation of "emotional fading" or detachment ¹⁹ .

Discussions and Findings

And through examining the Arabic translation of the novel, this study finds some key points in terms of how trauma, culture, and figurative language are conveyed in the translated version of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* and how it is presented in a different way from the English to the Arabic context. The analysis underscores how the Arabic translation compares to key passages of the original text, demonstrating both the strengths and limitations of the translation in preserving the emotional depth and cultural resonance of the original work.

Firstly, with respect to the translation of trauma and mental suffering, the data suggest that the Arabic translation not only retains the emotional components of grief, displacement, and suffering, but there are also subtle differences in the extent of trauma that are felt. The Arabic rendition is powerful in terms of extremely bright and clear visuals of both bodily and psychological pain; examples like "Akhtnaq" (suffocation) and "Sahqna" (crushed me) bring this out very well. Nevertheless, a few instances have been observed where the slight differences have been found in the translation of the mental trauma, especially the use of metaphorical expressions for mental numbness.

Secondly, concerning the translation by the cultural nuance, the Arabic version tries to incorporate as many features of the culture as are possible. One example is the call to prayer or the ideas of shame that have a much more significant meaning than the English equivalent. Hence, this translation would carry a much clearer and more emotional meaning to the native culture. Besides, it is also reasoned that the Arabic mis-translations have gone

through a prism with respect to concepts of culture, so that sometimes the culture has overemphasized the concepts they had in English regarding modesty and its perception.

The metaphors, idioms, and emotionally intense language should be "creatively rejuxtaposed along with more challenges and solutions. While the majority of the metaphors stay unchanged—"that the heart (قلب) is 'shattered glass' (زجاجاً مكسوراً), and not 'broken'"-- a few have to be changed in order to express the same amount of emotion. A lot of it is "the localizing of lines that use bodily imagery for the purposes of increasing the sufferance." For instance, "Cut me to the bone" (تقطعني حتى العظم) is quite a bit more "gut wrenchingly emotional" in the Arabic version than in the English one.

However, figurative language is not necessarily "the flowers of meaning and layers that the original sentence is flowering."

At last, it is only through the results that "The Beekeeper of Aleppo" has an awesome power to reflect the human soul and the profundity of the story by its lavish culture, despite the losses of meanings that are visible because of the differences and diversities of the two languages. These translations clear up how a translation is a harmony with the original text and is thus quite significant in terms of culture as far as Arabs are concerned.

They are not only of significance in connection with "Hot Milk" but are rather necessary to grasp an indispensable aspect of translation, which is closely associated with literature, especially when the incidences of trauma, identity, and intensity are involved.

The categorization of the translation results in the four quadrants shown in the figure below is based on two axes: Translation Strategy (the degree of closeness to the English text) and Resulting Impact (the change in the emotional/cultural load in Arabic).

Figure 2: The "Fidelity vs. Intensity" Impact Matrix

	Literal Strategy (High Fidelity to Source)Adaptive Strategy (Domestication/Localization)	Literal Strategy (High Fidelity to Source)Adaptive Strategy (Domestication/Localization)
Intensified Impact	Quadrant 1: Visceral Amplification	Quadrant 2: Cultural Expansion
(Stronger emotion/culture)	The Arabic text retains the literal word but the cultural reception is physically heavier	Concepts are adapted to align with specific Arab social values, increasing their weight.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Example:</i> "Suffocating" (<i>Akhtaniq</i>) & "Crushed" (<i>Sahaqani</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Example:</i> "Modesty/Shame" becomes <i>Aar</i> (Dishonor)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Finding:</i> Arabic favors "heightened expressions" of pain, turning abstract grief into physical reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Finding:</i> Cultural references are "expanded and exaggerated" to fit high-context notions of honor and religion (e.g., <i>Sabr</i>).
	• <i>Result:</i> Higher Emotional Intensity	• <i>Result:</i> Deepened Cultural Resonance

Preserved / Diminished Impact	Quadrant 3: The Literal Trap	Quadrant 4: Functional Equivalence
(Equivalent or weaker)	Literal translation causes a loss of poetic nuance or emotional subtlety.	Metaphors are reconfigured to maintain the original "feel" without adding extra weight.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Example:</i> "Ghost of myself" (<i>Shabah</i>). • <i>Finding:</i> The literal Arabic term implies the supernatural rather than psychological emptiness, slightly altering the intended trauma. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Example:</i> "Shattered Glass" (Heart). • <i>Finding:</i> The imagery is kept consistent because the metaphor exists in both cultures, preserving the "sharp and dangerous" nature of the pain.
	<i>Result:</i> Shifted/Diluted Meaning	• <i>Result:</i> Maintained Integrity

This diagram above illustrates the study's core finding that fidelity does not always equal equivalence.

- **Quadrants 1 & 2 (Top Row):** Demonstrate that in the Arabic translation, both literal and adaptive choices tend to **intensify** the narrative, making the trauma more visceral and the cultural stakes (like *Aar*) higher.
- **Quadrant 3 (Bottom Left):** Highlights the risk identified in the findings where literal translation of idioms (like "Ghost" or "Eggshells") fails to convey the "delicate, subdued imagery" of the original English.
- **Quadrant 4 (Bottom Right):** Represents the "successful" transfer where the emotional weight is balanced and preserved without alteration.

5. Conclusion

The present study concerned the translation into Arabic of the novel *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* by Christy Lefteri, prompting emotions and cultural differences. Beyond that, refugees experienced conditions that would be compared closely by contrasting very important sections of the original with its translation. Thus, the results obtained from this study conclude that there are difficult, complex problems that translators encounter when trying to move trauma, physical discomfort, cultural references, and figurative language into another language with a different culture.

The most important thing here is, after all, the translation of trauma and psychological distress. The book vividly captures the trauma of war, but it especially succeeds in evoking

the emotional pain and grief of refugees such as Nuri and Afra as they experience the realities of war, migration, and loss. The Arabic version manages to retain much of the emotional weight, but some subtleties are either intensified or changed by linguistic differences. The Arabic version of the text often employs stronger, more emotional expressions of pain and suffering, which reflects a linguistic and cultural tendency to use heightened expressions of emotional experience. This does add impact for readers who speak Arabic, but at times, it alters the original tone, which in some of these cases communicates trauma through delicate, subdued imagery.

On the other hand, it stresses how the Arabic version shifts some references to match cultural expectations. This approach is applied throughout the translation as the translator decides how to construct culturally specific ideas and terms—from traditions and social norms to religious references—so that they speak to Arabic-language readers. For example, Arabic is sometimes more accentuated with honor, shame, and community perception phrases because these values are more culturally significant to the Arab world than their Western counterparts. Yet, although this adjustment adds to the story's readability and familiarity with culture, it sometimes comes with a compromise on the neutrality of the original text, lightly shifting the universality of the narrative.

Research concludes that while many metaphorical expressions maintain their effectiveness, others evolve to increase or palliate their metaphorical strength in terms of the gaining of idioms, figurative language, and emotional language. While the translation reflects the content of the original text, some effort is made to incorporate SUPER IMAGERY, as if it were important to the act of text composition in Arabic, that plays a role in bringing the emotional distress to its actual, physical, tangible state for the reader. Unfortunately, some idiomatic expressions can't be translated literally, so they end up losing the nuance that was present in the original English text. This illustrates the fundamental problem of translating figurative language while keeping both its meaning and emotional impact intact.

On the other hand, the mentioned research unravels the complications that are intrinsic to the way literary works are translated and interpreted, and this includes how to balance fidelity and adaptation. The novel's emotional and cultural aspects in the Arabic translation of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* are strongly communicated, although some changes have taken place, particularly in the areas of the sense and the strength of the text within the process of trauma narratives.

This study contributes to translation studies by providing a systematic comparative analysis of how trauma and displacement are reshaped in Arabic literary translation, showing that

translation choices can intensify, dilute, or ethically reframe refugee narratives rather than merely reproduce them. These findings have important implications for literary translators, scholars, and educators, highlighting the need for culturally and emotionally sensitive translation strategies when representing trauma and humanitarian experiences across languages.

Generally, when trauma is involved, trauma narratives become the ones in which not only are the meanings and the definitions handed over, but they are also created by the language in the process of giving and forming the interpretation of human suffering by the consumer of an artistic text. With this in mind, it is imperative that further research be conducted on the concept of translation within the context of the trauma narrative in refugee accounts. Over the course of time, further research on the translation of the novel itself will present new avenues not only within the narrative structures related to war literature but also in the differences in the methodological approach in the translation process between the translation related to emotional and psychological experiences. Finally, the impact on the target reception of the translation of the trauma narrative may provide insight on the effectiveness of the approach taken for translation purposes.

It is a documented fact that the problem of translation ranks top among the other problems when we discuss war, exile, and survival stories. Accordingly, the Arabic version of *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* plays a significant role in necessitating the general conversation of differently abled translations of literary creations in such a case when the subject is about the portrayal of humanity amid the crisis in the people's lives through the artistic way of storytelling.

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