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Translating Palestinian poetry of resistance:

Case: Tawfiq Zayyad's poem "Here We Shall Stay"

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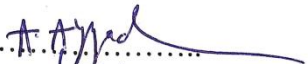
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Dedication

To my superheroes, my parents

Etimad & Khalid

& to all disease fighters all over the world…

Declaration

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master, is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this study (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed: .....~Sarah Khalid~.....

Sarah Khalid Abdulhafeez Hussein

Date: 15 /1/2020

Acknowledgments

Abstract

This thesis investigates aspects of ideology, politics and culture in the translations of Palestinian poetry of resistance, namely, Tawfiq Zayyad's poem, "Here We Shall Stay". The thesis, which takes seven different English translations of the poem as its corpus, is situated within the theoretical framework of Descriptive Translation Studies and the Three-Dimensional Model of Critical Discourse Analysis. The thesis first introduces the historical, socio-political, and institutional conditions of production of the source text and its seven English translations. Then it moves to show how these translations reflect aspects of ideology, politics and culture at the micro-structural level. The data analysis reveals that translations –as products- reflect different ideologies, political agendas and cultural aspects depending on their institutional contexts and thus play different roles in the context of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The findings highlight the need for investigating translations of Palestinian poetry of resistance in their historical, socio-political and institutional contexts.

Keywords: Translation, resistance poetry, political texts, ideology, Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

ترجمة شعر المقاومة الفلسطينية: قصيدة الشاعر توفيق زياد "هنا باقون" ـ أنموذجاً

إعداد: سارة خالد حسين

إشراف: الدكتور أحمد عيّاد

ملخص

تبحث هذه الأطروحة في النواحي الأيدلوجيه والسياسية والثقافية في ترجمة شعر المقاومة الفلسطينية، تحديداً قصيدة الشاعر الفلسطيني توفيق زياد "هنا باقون". وتتناول هذه الأطروحة سبع ترجمات مختلفة لقصيدة "هنا باقون"، وتستند في تحليلها لهذه الترجمات على منهجية الإطار النظري لدراسات الترجمة الوصفية ومنهجية التحليل النقدي للخطاب بمستوياته الثلاث. إذ تبدأ الأطروحة بالبحث في السياق التاريخي، والاجتماعي السياسي، والإطار المؤسسي الذي في ظله كُتِب النص الأصلي للقصيدة مُركِزَةً في ذلك على الجوانب الايدولوجية والسياسية والثقافية المتضَمنة في هذه الترجمات. ومن ثم تنتقل الأطروحة في بحثها إلى ما تعكسه الاختلافات بين الترجمات السبع أيديولوجياً وسياسياً وثقافياً من خلال مقارنتها مع النص الأصلي للقصيدة على المستوى الجزئي. ويبين تحليل الأمثلة الواردة في الأطروحة كيف أن هذه الترجمات المختلفة (بوصفها مُخرجَات) تخدم أهدافاً مختلفاً حيث أن هذه الترجمات تلعب دوراً رئيساً في التأكيد على روايات وأجندات سياسية وأيديولوجية وثقافية حول الصراع الفلسطيني-الإسرائيلي وفقاً للإطار المؤسسي الذي في ظله تُترجم القصيدة، وذلك وفقاً للأهداف المبتغاة من ترجمة القصيدة. كما تؤكد نتائج هذه الأطروحة الحاجة الماسة لإجراء مزيدٍ من الدراسات لترجمة شعر المقاومة الفلسطيني بالاستناد إلى دراسة وتحاليل السياقات التاريخية، والاجتماعية السياسية، والمؤسسية المواكبة لها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: شعر المقاومة، السياسة، الأيدولوجيا، الترجمة، الصراع الفلسطيني-الإسرائيلي.

List of Abbreviations	
Abbreviation	**Stands for**
CDA	Critical Discourse analysis
DTS	Descriptive Translation Studies
OOB	Off Our Backs
SVW	Street Voice Website
TL	Target Language
SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
SC	Source Culture
TC	Target Culture
TS	Translation Studies
TT	Target Text

Romanization	Arabic Character	Romanization	Arabic Character
ʾ	همزة ء	GH	غ
Ā	ا	F	ف
B	ب	Q	ق
T	ت	K	ك
TH	ث	L	ل
J	ج	M	م
H̱	ح	N	ن
KH	خ	H	هـ والتاء المربوطة في نهاية الكلمة
D	د	W, Ū	و
DH	ذ	Y, Ī	ي
R	ر	A	Short Opener
Z	ز	Ā	Long Opener
S	س	Ā	Maddah
SH	ش	à	Alif Maqsourah
S̱	ص	U	Short Closer
Ḏ	ض	Ū	Long Closer
Ṯ	ط	I	Short Breaker
DH̱	ظ	Ī	Long Breaker
ʿ	ع	Doubling the letter	شدّة

Title: Arabic Transliteration System[1]

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[1] This Arabic transliteration System table is based on the Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. Retrieved from: https://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/docs/11th-uncsgn-docs/E_Conf.105_137_CRP.137_14_Romanization%20System%20from%20Arabic%20%20letters%20to%20Latinized%20%20%20letters%202007%20-%20ENGLISH.pdf (last accessed, 4/2/2018)

Table of Contents

Chapter I

Introduction

Una mattina mi son svegliato	One morning I awakened
O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao, ciao, ciao	Oh Goodbye beautiful, Goodbye beautiful,
Una mattina mi son svegliato	Goodbye beautiful! Bye! Bye!
E ho trovato l'invasor	One morning I awakened
	And I found the invader
O partigiano, portami via	Oh partisan carry me away
Ché mi sento di morir	Because I feel death approaching
E se io muoio da partigiano	And if I die as a partisan
Tu mi devi seppellir	Then you must bury me
E seppellire lassù in montagna	Bury me up in the mountain
Sotto l'ombra di un bel fior	Under the shade of a beautiful flower
E le genti che passeranno	And the people who shall pass
Mi diranno: "che bel fior"	Will tell me: "what a beautiful flower"
Questo è il fiore del partigiano	This is the flower of the partisan
Morto per la libertà	Who died for freedom
	Translated by Genius[2]

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[2] https://genius.com/Genius-english-translations-vasco-scansani-di-gualtieri-bella-ciao-english-translation-lyrics (last accessed: 3rd of January 2020).

During World War II, the poem "Bella Ciao" appeared. It was sung in rural Italy by the *modine*[3] who symbolized poverty and tough labor conditions in the pre-industrial era in Italy (TRT World 2019: 0-6:8). However, a few decades later, the song "Bella Ciao" evolved and its words changed from resisting poverty and harsh working conditions, to reflecting the fight against Fascism and the Nazi occupation in 1943 (ibid.). The song became the pulse of the Italian resistance.

Over time, "Bella Ciao" connection with the Nazis was forgotten and the song continued to evolve showing up in protest movements all across Europe. (ibid.) It showed up in Greece after the left-wing Syriza[4] party took power in 2015. It also appeared in a Catalan independence protest in Barcelona in 2019, and in the Yellow Vest movement in France in 2019 (TRT World 2019: 3:37-3:57). Moreover, because of the unstable political situation in the Middle East region, the song "Bella Ciao" was sung in a number of protests. For example, the song was adopted and sung in protests against the Lebanese government in October's Revolution last year 2019 (Ghazal 2019: para. 11). It was also adopted in Syria as a memory song of the post-war against al-Assad government (Shekho 2019: 0:2:32). Furthermore, it appeared in Iraq while Baghdad anti-regime protesters clashed with police, their supporters in Mosul used art to fight for change, resisting the regime with the resistance anthem "Bella Ciao" (AFP 2019: para. 1).

"Bella Ciao" shares the same sense of defiance and disobedience with other poetry of resistance since it speaks on behalf of the oppressed. Moreover, on the first of June 2018, Razan an-Najjar, a 21-year-old Palestinian paramedic was shot and killed by Israeli soldiers near the Gaza-Israel separation 'fence' during Gaza's Great March of Return[5]. She was wearing her white uniform helping injured Palestinian protesters near the 'fence' (Noy 2018: para. 3). After she was brutally killed by an Israeli sniper, activists in Gaza along with a group of human rights and Right of

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Modine refers to women rice-weeders in the River Po basin during the last 19th century (TRT World [3] 2019: 144)
Syriza refers to Coalition of the Radical Left, a coalition of Greek far-left political parties. (Collins [4] Dic.).
Gaza's Great March of Return refers to protests where Palestinians demanded their right to return to their ancestors' homes after they were expelled in 1948 when Zionists removed 750,000 Palestinians from their villages (Fayyad 2019: para. 2).[5]

Return activists decided to release a video-clip[6] for an-Najjar titled "Bella Ciao" (The Palestine Chronicle 2018: para. 1). The video-clip adopted the song "Bella Ciao" and displayed photos of an-Najjar in her white uniform treating injured Palestinians. The use of "Bella Ciao" in the video-clip was set against Israel's colonialism and occupation.

The poem "Bella Ciao" is as significant as Zayyad's poem "Here We Shall Stay" in terms of resistance. Both poems share an ambiance of resistance and defiance and speak on the behalf of the oppressed against occupation, oppression, and violence. "Here We Shall Stay" was also sung in 1999 as a commemoration to Zayyad's 70th birthday (EHNATV 2013: 0:14). Despite having "Here We Shall Stay" written in September in 1965, there is still no detailed information about the exact occasion of its composition. Debatably, it was written after an-Nakba 1948 and prior to an-Naksa 1967. It was written during sensitive political events, which were likely to have motivated Zayyad to write the poem.

Until today, Palestinians still suffer from the Israeli occupation, which is viewed in this thesis as a form of colonialism (cf. **Chapter II**). The thesis also considers the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a space and place of asymmetrical power relations. This thesis investigates aspects of ideology, politics and culture in the translations of poetry of resistance, namely, Palestinian poetry of resistance i.e. Zayyad's poem "Here We Shall Stay". In such unequal power relations, Niranjana (1992: 2) suggests that translation shapes and takes shape "within the asymmetrical relations of power that operate under colonialism."

The thesis proposes that translation reflects a certain ideology (Lefevere & Bassnett 1990: 10), influences cultures (ibid.: 8) and is politically motivated (Schäffner 2004: 123). Six different translation agents[7] produced the seven English translations of the poem. They are individual Palestinian translators, namely, Alaa Abu Dheer, Naseer Aruri, Adib S. Kawar, Sharif Elmusa and Charles Doria. One website, Street Voice produced two translations of the poem, and *Off Our Backs* Journal –a journal concerning feminism– where the latest translation of the poem has appeared. (cf.

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[6] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8U2_cOH-wrw&t=1s (last accessed 24th of December 2029)
[7] Agents include the individual translator and the institution that are involved in translating Zayyad's poem *'Here We Shall Stay'*. As agents, translators intervene in the translation process (Munday 2016: 158).

Chapter III). These different translations demonstrate principles of audience design as well as ideological, political and cultural considerations in Zayyad's poem.

Translation is defined throughout this thesis as "a highly manipulative activity that involves all kinds of stages in that process of transfer across linguistic and cultural boundaries. It is not an innocent, transparent activity but is highly charged with significance at every stage; it rarely, if ever, involves a relationship of equality between texts, authors or systems" (Bassnett 2012: 2).

This thesis sheds the light on how translated texts reflect aspects of ideology, politics and culture. In this regard, it defines ideology as "significations generated within power relations as a dimension of the exercise of power and struggle over power (Fairclough 1992: 67). It also defines politics as "a struggle for power, between those who seek to assert and maintain their power and those who seek to resist it" (Chilton & Schäffner 2002: 5). Finally, it defines cultures as "not monolithic entities, but that there is always a tension inside a culture between different groups, or individuals, who want to influence the evolution of that culture in the way they think best" (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: 8).

The literature review herein, indicates that translation of poetry of resistance, specifically Palestinian poetry of resistance from Arabic into English, is still largely an under-investigated area in modern Translation Studies (cf. **Chapter II**). In the process of translation, ideology, politics and culture can be unveiled by studies that consider translation as a product (Hermans 1985: 13), and by analyzing the historical and socio-political settings of the text (Chesterman 1997: 119). In this context, Schäffner (2004: 137) argues that "by linking translations (as products) to their social contexts, causes and effects of translations can be discovered".

The thesis further examines the textual features in the source and target texts by linking them to their historical, socio-political and institutional conditions of production. Serving this objective, the thesis applies the theoretical framework of Product-Oriented DTS (Lambert and Van Gorp 1985), and the Three-Dimensional Model of CDA (Fairclough 1992) (cf. **Chapter III**). As an approach, Product-Oriented DTS, focuses on investigating actual translations (Munday 2008: 10), while CDA represents a promising model for text analysis, it aims at uncovering