

*Aesthetic value in Literary Translation  
Kahlil Gibran's the Prophet as a case study.*

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*Abstract*

The preservation of the aesthetic value of literary works especially poetry remains the main difficulty that translators face. Literary translation is in fact very challenging. The study compares three translations, two in Arabic and one in French, of Kahlil Gibran's the Prophet which is a wonderful book of poetry originally published in English in 1923 and translated into more forty languages. The purpose of this study is to see to what extent those translations have managed to assert and preserve the artistic essence of the original text. Besides, the study has examined the main strategies used in those translations. The data are drawn from some passages of those translations. Relying on the structuralist approach, the study revealed that all the translations have succeeded in a way or another in maintaining the aesthetic value of the source text with much more superiority of one translation characterized mainly by being more creative.

Keywords: aesthetic value, structuralism, poetry, translation.

ملخص

يعتبر الحفاظ على المقومات الجمالية للنصوص الإبداعية عموماً وخاصة الشعر من أهم الصعوبات التي تواجه المترجمين. الدراسة تقارن ثلاث ترجمات لمؤلف «النبى» لجبران خليل جبران، اثنتان باللغة العربية وواحدة باللغة الفرنسية. الهدف من الدراسة هو البحث في مدى تمكن هذه الترجمات من المحافظة على المقومات الجمالية والفنية للنص الأصلي. كما تناولت الدراسة أهم الآليات التي اعتمدها المترجمون. العينات تم أخذها من بعض هذه الترجمات وتمت مقارنتها مع النص الأصلي. باعتماد المنهج البنوي خلصت الدراسة إلى تمكن هذه الترجمات بشكل أو بآخر من الحفاظ على المميزات الفنية للنص الأصلي مع تفوق ترجمة واحدة وتميزت بكونها كانت أكثر إبداعاً من الأخرتين.

**Introduction :**

Literary translation is regarded as the most difficult type of translation because, in addition to all the difficulties that exist in all translations at the lexical, grammatical, cultural and semantic levels, it has to deal also with the aesthetic aspects of the text, a task which remains more difficult.

Despite the fact that Gibran's *The Prophet*, which is a work of poetic philosophy on love, marriage, freedom, time, friendship, was originally published in English in 1923, it still gains more interest from the part of translators and has been translated into more than forty languages. So, my choice of this project is based first on this assumption and second because little research has been conducted on literary translation especially on poetry translation. Thus, bearing in mind that literary translation is the most challenging and difficult type of translation (Newmark, 1988), my attempt is to make a comparative study between Arabic and French translations of Gibran's *The Prophet*.

My analysis will be focused on two Arabic translations; one is old and the other is recent and then a French translation.

***My main research question is therefore the following:***

Is the artistic device of the original text preserved in those translations?

Borrowing Jacques Derrida's (The French philosopher) concept of "deconstruction", my intention is to try somehow to deconstruct those translations and look for their particularities. To answer my main research question, I seek to address the following questions:

- What are the main strategies made in those translations?
- What are their prominent features in terms of: lexical choice, sentence structure and metaphors?

As far as my interest is concentrated on language and how this poetic language is maintained or "faithfully" transferred in the translated versions, structuralist analysis approach was used to analyze the data. The analyses reveal similarities and differences between those translations.

Besides, those analyses reveal that all the translations have managed in a way or another to keep the artistic and the aesthetic value of the original text but one translation has gained attractiveness for its poetic language and creativity.

In concluding, I interpret and discuss the implications of the results.

***1. Literature review:******1.1. Literary translation :***

Literary translation is the type of the translation which deals with any of the literary genres represented in poetry, drama and prose. In this respect, Johnson (1999:1) says that literature is: "an apparently nebulous body of knowledge in oral or written form, an imitation of life, which reflects civilization and culture, and which covers every angle of human activities-culture, tradition, entertainment, information among others." It is necessa-

ry then to point out that literary translation is a very challenging activity mainly because creative writing is itself characterized by a very sophisticated, symbolic and figurative language. In this respect, Widdowson (1984, p. 151) says that "no matter how literature may be expressed, its effects are certainly attained via language. Literary translation for Goethe is "one of the most important and dignified enterprises in the general commerce of the world." (Stated in Wechsler, 1998, p. 9).

**Therefore, a literary translator for Peter Newmark (1988) :**

*generally respects good writing by taking into account the language, structures, and content, whatever the nature of the text. The literary translator participates in the author's creative activity and then recreates structures and signs by adapting the target language text to the source language text as closely as intelligibility allows. He needs to assess not only the literary quality of the text but also its acceptability to the target reader, and this should be done by having a deep knowledge of the cultural and literary history of both the Source and the Target Languages. (p.1).*

Talking about literary translation means discussing constraints in translating the aesthetic features of literary texts; Landers (1999) says:

*Only literary translation lets one consistently share in the creative process. Here alone does the translator experience the aesthetic joys of working with great literature, of recreating in a new language a work that would otherwise remain beyond reach. (p. 4)*

According to Jackson (2003): one of the central requirements of literary translation is to afford a firm interpretation about both meaning and effect. Hence, literary translators are usually much more involved in finding out a corresponding mood, tone, voice, and effect than in literal translation. (cited in Dastjerdi, 2004, p.2).

### **2.1. Structuralist approach :**

Structuralism is a theory which owes its existence mainly to Ferdinand de SAUSSURE and especially by his book: Cours de linguistique générale (Course in General Linguistics, 1916). Saussure's concern is on what he calls language, that's «a system of signs that express ideas,» and this language according to him can be divided into two constituents : "langue, referring to the abstract system of language that is internalized by a given speech community, and parole, the individual acts of speech and the «putting into practice of language»." ( p.25).

Structuralism has had a prominent place in the field of literature and it is defined then as a theory which tries to explain the structures underlying literary texts. Among the figures of this literary movement the French theorist Roland Barthes (1963) who argues that:

*The goal of all structuralist activity, whether reflexive or poetic, is to reconstruct an <object,>*

*in such a way as to manifest thereby the rules of functioning (the <functions>) of this object. The structure is therefore actually a simulacrum of the object, but it is a directed, interested simulacrum, since the imitated object makes something appear which remained invisible or, if one prefers, unintelligible in the natural object. (p.149-150)*

## **2. Methodology :**

### **2.1 Data sampling and collection :**

The primary data of this study are passages from three translations of Gibran's The Prophet which are the following:

- A French translation: le Prophète by Janine Levy(1993)

- Arabic translations:

1) النبي by Anthonious Bachir(1987)

2) النبي by Sargon Boulous(2010)

### **2.2 Analytical method :**

The topic pushes me to adopt the structuralist approach in the sense that the principal value of creative writing among which poetry is language. In this respect, Jacques Derrida (1967) says that "we belong to language ". In fact, language cannot exist by itself but within linguistic items which constitute in turn a text. The choice of this approach is based also on the assumption that my interest is on how the artistic devices are reproduced, translated, omitted or added. Hence, meanings are not looked for rather than how they are transferred. So, by this assumption we can certainly avoid wasting time making different interpretations.

## **3. Results and Discussion :**

Results or findings reveal that all the translations have successfully preserved the artistic quality of the source text .They have shown a proficiency in translating Gibran's The Prophet. Besides, we can add that these translations are an attempt to rewrite the text or to be a "double original" to borrow Stancev's expression .In other words; they have managed to render the original text as if it was originally written in Arabic or in French. The findings reveal also that two translators used a literal translation whereas one translator who is Sargon Boulous used many strategies among which expansion strategy which made in turn his translation more creative and innovative. The discussion of those findings will be through the following examples taken from those translations.

### **3.1 The main strategies used in those translations:**

As I have just pointed out, Janine Levy and Anthonious Bachir have relied upon one strategy which is particularly a literal translation .As for Sargon Boulous he has used many strategies among which reduction (omission) and expansion (addition), for empha-

sis, let us see the following example:

**Example**

**The source text:**

From: **The coming of the Ship**

Almustafa, the chosen and the beloved, who was a dawn onto his own day, had waited twelve years in the city of Orphalese for his ship that was to return and bear him back to the isle of his birth. And in the twelfth year, on the seventh day of Ielool, the month of reaping, he climbed the hill without the city walls and looked seaward; and he beheld the ship coming with the mist.(p.1)

**- Janin levy's translation:**

Almustafa, l'élú et le bien-aimé, cette aube qui commençait à poindre à la rencontre de son propre jour, avait attendu, 12 années durant dans la cité d'Orphalèse, le retour de son vaisseau, lequel devait le porter à nouveau vers son île natale.

Lors de la douzième année, au septième jour de Ayloul, le mois des moissons, il gravit la colline hors des murailles de la cité. Scrutant l'horizon, il aperçut son vaisseau voguer avec la brume sur les eaux. (P.15)

- Anthonio Bachir's translation :

وظل المصطفى ، المختار الحبيب ، الذي كان فجرًا لذاته ، يترقب عودة سفينته في مدينة اورفيليس اثني عشرة سنة ليركبها عائداً إلى الجزيرة التي ولد فيها .

و في السنة الثانية عشرة، وفي اليوم السابع من أيلول شهر الحصاد صعد إلى قمة إحدى التلال القائمة وراء جدران المدينة و ألقى نظرة عميقة إلى البحر، فرأى سفينته تمخر عباب البحر مغمورة بالضباب(ص.15)

- Sargon Boulous's translation :

أمضى المصطفى، الذي كان هدياً لحاضره، هو المختار والحبيب، اثني عشر عاماً في مدينة أورفليس بانتظار سفينته التي كانت ستعود لتأخذه إلى الجزيرة التي وُلد فيها.

وفي العام الثاني عشر، في اليوم السابع من أيلول، شهر الحصاد، ارتقى التلة الواقعة خارج أسوار المدينة وتطلع صوب البحر؛ فإذا به يلمح سفينته تهادى آتية مع الضباب(ص.16)

When reading the first two texts, we feel that that the translators adopted a literal translation in the sense that they kept the same syntactic structure, the same word order and they tried to be in a way or another "faithful" to the original text but with respect to the specificities of each language in terms of syntactic structures and sentence word order (SVO or VSO).

Concerning Boulous's translation, it is characterized by a sense of creativity; the translator broke the original structure and gave the text a new spirit through a very good vocabulary and a sublime narrative style. More than that, it does not sound that it is translated.

**3.2 lexical choice :**

**Example 1:**

- Most of the translations into arabic translated the word: love by the word: المحبة but Sargon Boulous translated it by : الحب ;in the French version ,it is translated by the word :amour.

يا أهل أورفليس، عمّ يمكنني أن أتكلّم سوى عن ذاك الذي تختلج به نفوسكم في هذه اللحظة بالذات؟  
الحب

آنذاك، قالت المطرة:

ألا فلتكلّمنا عن الحب.

فرفع رأسه وتطلّع الى الجمع، فخيّمت عليهم السكينة.

وبصوت عظيم قال:

عندما يومئ إليكم الحبّ اتبعوه، حتى لو كانت طرقاته وعرة وشائكة.

وإذا ما طواكم بأجنحته فاخضعوا له، رغم أن السيف الخبيء بين برائنه قد يجرحكم.

وعندما يكلمكم، صدّقوه، رغم أن صوته قد يحطّم أحلامكم كما تفتك ربح الشمال بالحديقة (...).

عندما تحب، لا تقل: "الله في قلبي"، بل قل بالأحرى: "إنني في قلب الله".

ولا تفكر أنك تستطيع أن توجه الحب في مساره، فالحب، إن وجدك جيداً به، هو الذي يوجّه مسارك.

ليست للحب رغبة أخرى غير أن يحقق ذاته(ص.24)

The use of love or الحب is stronger than المحبة which is used in other translations. Hence , we can speak of what the French critic Marc Gontard refers to as the violence of the word « la violence du mot » So, الحب here is used in its philosophical dimension ;المحبة remains in Boulous's translation an aspect of this strong feeling. This reminds me of Zarathoustra's love in Nietzsche's masterpiece : « Ainsi parlait Zarathoustra » which was translated by :المحبة Besides, and as it is stressed in The famous Arab dictionary :lissan Al Arab (لسان العرب), the word محبة is regarded as an aspect of the real feeling which is الحب .

### - Example 2 :

#### The source text :

Then said Almitra , "Speak to us of Love"and he raised his head and looked upon the people, and there fell a stillness upon them.(p.7)

#### Antonio Bachir's translation :

حينئذ قالت المطرة:هات لنا خطبة في المحبة.

فرفع رأسه ونظر إلى الشعب نظرة محبة وحنان، فصمتوا جميعهم خاشعين.(ص.23)

#### Janin levy's translation :

Alors, Almitra dit : Parle-nous de l'Amour. Et il leva la tête et regarda le peuple assemblé, et le calme s'étendit sur eux.(p.23)

#### Sargon Boulous's translation :

آنذاك، قالت المطرة :

ألا فلتكلمنا عن الحب .

فرفع رأسه وتطلع إلى الجمع، فخيّمت عليهم السكينة.(ص.24)

When comparing those translations, we find that Sargon Boulous has succeeded in using the rights words (the underlined ones) which made his translation very poetic and very symbolic. A good choice of words has asserted a kind of parallelism between two different situations, the one of manipulation, if we may say, embodied in the person of Almitra and his speech and the audience and its stillness or their *سكينة*. As for the other translations, they succeeded in transferring the metaphor in the target language but without much creativity.

### 3.3 Sentence structure :

Gibran's The prophet belongs to what is called "prosaic or free verse" or *الشعر* represented by many poets like Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman and others. This type of poetry focuses on language more than musicality. So, we can talk about the structure of the sentences.

All the translators kept the same sentence structure used in the original text except for Sargon Boulous who broke this in some passages like in the following example:

#### The source text:

Then said Almitra, « Speak to us of Love. »

And he raised his head and looked upon the people, and there fell stillness upon them. And with a great voice he said:

When love beckons to you follow him,  
though his ways are hard and steep.

And when his wings enfold you yield to him,

Though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you. And when he speaks to you believe in him,

Though his voice may shatter your dreams as the north wind lays waste the garden.  
For even as love crowns you so shall he crucify you. Even as he is for your growth so is he for your pruning.

Even as he ascends to your height and caresses your tenderest branches that quiver in the sun, so shall he descend to your roots and shake them in their clinging to the earth. . (p.7)

#### Janin levy's translation :

Alors Almitra dit, Parle-nous de l'Amour.

Et il leva la tête et regarda le peuple assemblé, et le calme s'étendit sur eux. Et d'une voix forte il dit :

Quand l'amour vous fait signe, suivez-le.

Bien que ses voies soient dures et rudes.

Et quand ses ailes vous enveloppent, cédez-lui.

Bien que la lame cachée parmi ses plumes puisse vous blesser.

Et quand il vous parle, croyez en lui.  
 Bien que sa voix puisse briser vos rêves comme le vent du nord dévaste vos jardins.  
 Car de même que l'amour vous couronne, il doit vous crucifier.  
 De même qu'il vous fait croître, il vous élague.  
 De même qu'il s'élève à votre hauteur et caresse vos branches les plus délicates qui frémissent au soleil,  
 Ainsi il descendra jusqu'à vos racines et secouera leur emprise à la terre. (p.23)

#### Antonio Bachir's translation :

حينئذ قالت له المطرة : هات لنا خطبة في المحبة  
 فرفع رأسه و نظر إلى الشعب نظرة محبة وحنان فصمتوا جميعهم خاشعين فقال لهم بصوت عظيم :  
 إذا أشارت المحبة إليكم فاتبعوها ، و إن كانت مسالكها صعبة متحدرة  
 و إذا ضمتكم جناحها فأطيعوها ، و إن جرحكم السيف المستور بين ريشها  
 و إذا خاطبتكم المحبة فصدقوها ، و إن عطل صوتها أحلامكم و بددها كما تجعل الريح الشمالية البستان قاعا  
 صافصفاً لأنه كما أن المحبة تكللكم فهي أيضا تصليبكم ، و كما تعمل على نموكم هكذا تعلمكم و تستأصل الفاسد  
 منكم و كما ترتفع إلى أعلى شجرة حياتكم فتعانق أغصانها اللطيفة المرتعشة أمام وجه الشمس .  
 هكذا تنحدر إلى جذورها الملتصقة بالتراب وتهزها في سكونة الليل . (ص.23)

#### Sargon Boulous's translation :

الحب  
 آنذاك، قالت المطرة :  
 ألا فلتكلمنا عن الحب .  
 فرفع رأسه وتطلع إلى الجمع، فخيّم عليهم السكينة.  
 وبصوت عظيم قال:  
 عندما يومئ إليكم الحبّ اتبعوه، حتى لو كانت طرقا تـهـ وعرة وشائكة.  
 وإذا ما طواكم بأجنحته فاخضعوا له، رغم أن السيف الخبيء بين برائنه قد يجرحكم.  
 وعندما يكلمكم، صدّقوه، رغم أن صوته قد يحطم أحلامكم كما تفتك ربح الشمال بالحديقة (...).  
 عندما تحب، لا تقل: "الله في قلبي"، بل قل بالأحرى: "إنني في قلب الله".  
 ولا تفكر أنك تستطيع أن توجه الحب في مساره، فالحب، إن وجدك جديراً به، هو الذي يوجّه مسارك.  
 ليست للحب رغبة أخرى غير أن يحقق ذاته . (ص.23)

If we read carefully those translations, we discover that the two first ones kept the same sentence structure. Concerning Boulous, he violates it especially in the end of the passage. He even added his point of view about love (see the underlined sentences).

#### 4.4 Metaphors :

##### Example 1 :

##### The source text :

From: Joy and sorrow

And the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was oftentimes filled with your



tears.

And how else can it be?

The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain.

Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven?

And is not the lute that soothes your spirit, the very wood that was hollowed with knives?

When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy.

When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.

Some of you say, «Joy is greater than sorrow,» and others say, «Nay, sorrow is the greater.»

But I say unto you, they are inseparable.

Together they come, and when one sits, alone with you at your board, remember that the other is asleep upon your bed. (p.22, 23)

#### Antonio Bachir's translation :

البئر الواحدة التي تستقون منها ماء ضحككم قد طالما ملئت بسخين دموعكم

وهل في الإمكان أن يكون الحال على غير هذا المنوال ؟

فكلما عمل وحش الحزن أنيابه في أجسادكم تضاعف الفرح في أعماق قلوبكم

لأنه أليست الكأس التي تحفظ خمركم هي نفس الكأس التي أحرقت في أتون الخراف

قبل أن بلغت إليكم؟

أم ليست القيثارة التي تزيد طمأنينة أرواحكم هي نفس الخشب الذي

قطع بالمدى والفؤوس؟

فإذا فرحتهم فتأملوا ملياً في أعماق قلوبكم تجدوا أم ما أحزنكم قبلاً يفرحكم الآن و إذا احاطت بكم جيوش الكآبة

ببصائرهم ثانية إلى أعماق قلوبكم و تأملوا جيداً تروا هنالك بالحقيقة أنكم تكون لما كنتم تعتقدون أنه غابّة

مسراتكم على الأرض

و يخيل إلي أن فريفاً منكم يقول : « إن الفرح أعظم من الترح » فيعارضه فريق آخر : « كلا ، بل الترح أعظم من

الفرح » أما أنا فالحق أقول لكم : انهما توأمان لا ينفصلان يأتيان معاً و يذهبان معاً فإذا جلس احدهما منفرداً إلى

مائدتكم فلا يغرب عن أذهانكم أن رفيقه يكون حينئذ مضطجعاً على أسرتكم (ص.40)

#### Janin levy's translation :

Et le puits où monte votre rire a si souvent été rempli par vos larmes.

Et comment pourrait-il en aller autrement? Plus profond le travail de la peine dans votre être, plus de joie vous contiendrez.

Car la coupe qui renferme votre vin n'est-elle pas celle-là même qui brûla dans le four du potier? Et le luth qui apaise votre esprit n'est-ce pas le bois même naguère évidé par le couteau?

Quand vous êtes joyeux, regardez au fond de votre cœur et vous verrez que votre joie résulte uniquement de ce qui a causé votre chagrin.

Quand vous êtes malheureux, regardez encore une fois votre cœur et vous comprendrez

en réalité que vous pleurez pour d'anciens délices.  
Certains d'entre vous disent «La joie dépasse la peine.» ; d'autres disent : «Non c'est la peine qui domine.»  
Et moi je vous dis : elles sont indissociables.  
Elles arrivent ensemble et quand l'une s'assied à table en votre compagnie, rappelez-vous que l'autre est assoupie sur votre lit.(p.47)

#### Sargon Boulous's translation :

و نفس البئر التي كانت ترتفع منها ضحكاتكم، كانت مليئة بدموعكم في أكثر الأحيان.  
عندما تحس بالفرح، أنظر عميقاً في قلبك، وسوف تجد أن ما أعطاك حزناً في السابق، وحده الذي يعطيك  
الفرح الآن .  
عندما تشعر بالحزن، تطلع ثانية في قلبك، وسوف ترى أنك في الحقيقة تبكي من أجل ذلك الذي كان بهجة لك .  
البعض منكم يقول: "الفرح أعظم من الحزن". ويقول آخرون: "كلا، بل الحزن هو الأعظم".  
لكنني أنا أقول لكم، لا يمكن الفصل بينهما.  
معاً يأتيان، وحينما يجالسك واحد منهما بمفرده على الطاولة، تذكر،  
أن الثاني ينام في سريرك.(ص.41)

If we compare the original text and those translations to Sargon Boulous's translation, we find that the translator intervenes as a poet in the sense that he came up with new images and metaphors in defining joy and sorrow. He made also some omissions for the sake of this good metaphorical language that characterizes his translation and which takes into consideration the artistic dimension of poetry. But this point does not mean that the other translators have not been able to reproduce the metaphor into the target language.

#### Example 2:

##### The source text:

A voice cannot carry the tongue and the lips that give it wings. Alone must it seek the ether? And alone and without his nest shall the eagle fly across the sun. (p.2)

Janin levy's translation

La voix ne peut emporter la langue et les lèvres qui lui ont donné des ailes .Elle doit partir seule à la recherche de l'éther .Et l'aigle doit voler seul et sans son nid au-delà du soleil. (P.16)

##### Antonio Bachir's translation :

فإن الصوت لا يستطيع أن يحمل اللسان والشفيتين اللواتي تسلحن بجناحيه ، ولذلك فهو وحده يخترق حجب  
الفضاء ، أجل ، والنسر ياصحح لا يحمل عشه بل يطير وحده محلقا في عنان السماء . (ص : 16)

##### Sargon Boulous's translation :

الصوت لا يقدر أن يحمل معه اللسان ، والشفاه التي منحته الأجنحة .عليه وحده أن يتقصى الأثير . ووحيدا، من  
دون عشه، سيطيّر النسر تلقاء السماء . (ص : 17)

When comparing these translations, we find out that the first ones, because of their

use of a literal translation; they have rendered the same metaphor in the target language without any change or addition. Boulous on the opposite, for the sake of preserving the aesthetic effect; he has used two alternatives of “alone” rather than one which are: وحده and وحيدا. These two words are meant to differentiate between two cases or two images.

### **Example 3:**

#### **The source text:**

And he heard their voices calling his name and shouting from the field to field (p.3)

#### **Janin levy's translation :**

Et il entendit leurs voix qui l'appelaient par son nom et qui criaient d'un champ à l'autre (p.17)

#### **Antonio Bachir's translation :**

وسمعتهم يصرخون بعضهم ببعض من حقل إلى حقل ، مرددين اسمه (ص.17)

#### **Sargon Boulous's translation :**

وتعالّت الأصوات في كل حذب وصوب تهتف باسمه (ص.16)

What we can say is that the French version kept the same structure of the sentence and made word for word translation; so, the metaphor is faithfully transferred in the target language. The same thing can be said about Bachir's translation. As for Boulous, he has made a kind of expansion to the source text by adding a word stronger than “call” which is هتف .

### **Example 4:**

#### **The source text:**

Love has no other desire but to fulfill itself.(p.9)

Janin levy's translation

L'amour n'a pour seul désir que de s'accomplir.(p.27)

#### **Antonio Bachir's translation :**

والمحبة لا رغبة لها إلا في أن تكمل نفسها.(ص.25)

#### **Sargon Boulous's translation :**

ليست للحب رغبة أخرى غير أن يحقق ذاته.(23)

As we can see two translations have managed to preserve the form and meaning of the metaphor by choosing the appropriate words; Janin Levy has translated :to fulfill by: accomplir which goes well in the context and Boulous has opted for :يحقق and added the word ذات which does not only have a semantic connotation but a philosophical dimension as well. Concerning Antonio Bachir's translation, his translation seems to me am

biguous and weak because he has not well chosen the right words; in Arabic we cannot say: إكمال النفس and this is due to his word for word translation; he translated fulfill by نفسها يكمل and itself by نفسها .

#### **Example 5:**

##### **The source text:**

For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday. (p.12)

##### **Janin levy's translation:**

Car la vie ne retourne pas en arrière ni se s'attarde à hier. (p.32)

##### **Antonio Bachir's translation :**

لأن الحياة لا ترجع إلى الوراء ، ولا تلتذ لها الإقامة في منزل الأمس. (ص.29)

##### **Sargon Boulous's translation :**

لأن الحياة لا تمشي إلى الوراء، ولا تتلأأ بصحبة الأمس. (ص.30)

#### **Example 6:**

##### **The source text:**

You may house their bodies but not their souls,  
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.(p.12)

##### **Janin levy's translation :**

Vous pouvez loger leurs corps mais non leurs âmes,  
Car leurs âmes habitent la demeure de demain, que vous ne pouvez visiter, pas même dans vos rêves.(p .32)

##### **Antonio Bachir's translation :**

وفي طاقتكم أن تصنعوا المساكن لأجسادهم.  
ولكن نفوسهم لا تقطن في مساكنكم.  
فهي تقطن في مسكن الغد، الذي لا تستطيعون أن تزوروه حتى ولا في أحلامكم . (ص.28)

##### **Sargon Boulous's translation :**

يمكن لكم أن تقدموا مأوى لأجسادهم ، لا لأرواحهم، لأن أرواحهم تسكن في بيت الغد ، ذلك الذي لا يستطيعون زيارته ، حتى ولو في الحلم . (ص: 29)

#### **Example 7:**

##### **The source text:**

Pleasure is a freedom song (p.61)

Janin levy's translation

Le plaisir est un chant de liberté (p.88)

**Antonio Bachir's translation :**

اللذة أنشودة الحرية . (ص.83)

**Boulous's translation :**

اللذة نشيد حرية . (ص : 84)

**Example 8 :**

**The source text :**

It (pleasure) is the blossoming of your desires,(p.61)

Janin levy's translation

Il (le plaisir) est l'épanouissent de vos désirs,(p.88)

**Antonio Bachir's translation :**

اللذة زهرة رغباتكم،(ص.83)

**Boulous's translation :**

إنها ( اللذة ) أزهار رغباتكم . (ص.84)

**Example 9 :**

**The source text :**

It (pleasure) is a depth calling unto height,(p.61)

**Janin levy's translation :**

Il (le plaisir) est une profondeur appelant une hauteur,(p.88)

**Antonio Bachir's translation :**

اللذة عمق ينشد علــوا . (ص.83)

**Boulous's translation :**

هي ( اللذة ) عمق يتنادى نحو علو . (ص.84)

**Example 10 :**

**The source text :**

It (pleasure) is the caged taking wing.(p.61)

**Janin levy's translation :**

Il (le plaisir)est l'encagé prenant son envol,(p.88)

**Antonio Bachir's translation :**

اللذة طائر قد أفلت من قفصه . (ص.83)

**Boulous's translation :**

إنها اللذة) ذلك المخلق خارجا قفصه.(ص.84)

Apart from the specificities of languages in terms of structure, all the translations have preserved the same implication of the metaphors used in the original text by relying upon a literal translation and choosing the exact equivalents and producing a simple and beautiful language.

### **Conclusion :**

Talking about poetry, Aristotle says that “Beauty is the gift of God”, and the translations I have examined have succeeded in many ways to preserve the beauty and the aesthetic value of a book of poetry full of images and metaphors. The structuralist approach was very helpful to me in the sense that the “Prophet” is written in a very good English by an Arab poet who possesses two different cultures. This element makes his language “universal” in the sense that it is full of wisdom and advices. That is why the element of culture does not create much problems for the translators. So, all the translations focus on the text only and try to reproduce the artistic dimension of the original text properly. A limitation of this study is that it cannot be generalized on all the translations of Gibran’s The Prophet if we take into consideration that the book has more than seven Arabic versions and ten French ones. Besides, I could not deal with all the metaphors that exist in Gibran’s Prophet and which are more than one hundred. Further research may be conducted to analyze the other translations and other aesthetic features that characterize Gibran’s poetry like the style and similes.

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