

**A War Lost in Translation: A Translation-Studies Based
Approach to Analyzing Rajiv Joseph's Play
*Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo***

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Abstract

Rajiv Joseph's play *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (2009) is about the danger of losing communication in our world, and the role translation can play as a reconciliation vehicle for dying humanity. With the U.S. conquest of Iraq in the background, the playwright portrays contemporary history in a surrealist fashion where characters return from death to contemplate the meaning of life, death, and the folly of human conflicts. The research paper follows the evolvment of the character of Musa, the Iraqi interpreter of the American army, from the first moment we meet him in the play as a novice translator looking up unfamiliar words in the dictionary till he ends up murdering Tom in the Sahara of Iraq. Between his first appearance and the moment violence is practiced against Tom, Musa acquires linguistic competencies that empower and grant him more cultural and intellectual resistance powers to defend himself, his country and culture. The research main thesis is that translators are also visible cultural figures who are sometimes engaged in resistance to injustice, oppression and colonialism, and in the production of discourses and representations. Furthermore, a translator actively participates in jotting down or blocking the narrative that constructs culture in fundamental ways. The chief line of argument also postulates that though the Americans won the battle in Iraq on the ground, they have lost it in translation.

Keywords: Tiger, zoo, translation, Iraq, colonialism, intercultural.

“I would maintain that war is the continuation of mistranslation or disagreement by other means. War is, in other words, a condition of nontranslatability or translation failure at its most violent peak.”

(Emily Apter, 2006, p.16)

Art and Humanities help us inquire into our place in the world and how we understand and sense that. In the Western World drama scene, many dramatic works have tried to explain the different aspects of the U.S. conquest of Iraq and Afghanistan in the early 21st century to the audience, discuss the war experience in these two countries and explain the waste of human souls and the reasons that might have led to it. However, a few of these plays underscore the destruction the war has caused in these places and the trauma that soldiers on both sides of the battle line suffer from. Jenny Spencer (2012) claims that many of these plays are political and protest plays. To mention a few, *Stuff Happens* (2005) by David Hare, *Guantanamo* (2004) by Gillian Salvo and V. Britain, *My Trip to AL Qaeda* (2007) by Lawrence Wright, *The Trial of Tony Belair* (2007) by Alistair Beaton and *Fallujah* (2007) by Jonathan Holmes, *Ajax in Iraq* (2008) by Ellen McLaughlin, and Jeff Key's *The Eyes of Babylon* (2011) have all tackled the war from different perspectives. Rajiv Joseph's *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*'s main preoccupation is to cast light on the catastrophe of losing communication in our world. However, Rajiv Joseph's genre-defying play is not a work about love or hate, nor a play about religion, history, philosophy, war or even morality. Luckily enough, it is far ranging and broad in its scope to merit multidimensional critical approaches and interpretations.

In many parts of the play, it refers to historical circumstances, events and figures and, at the same time, is pervaded with religious notions. However, one can say that it is about the experience of getting in a peaceful or antagonistic encounter with a different culture. Furthermore, the play can be also regarded as a sub-genre of political drama that discusses the fate of humanity, the decline of real understanding among nations and cultures, and the role translators can play in the remedy of dying humanity. With the U.S. invasion of Iraq at the backdrop of the play's action, contemporary history is portrayed in a surrealist-like guise. In fact, the U.S. conquest of Iraq and its aftermath profoundly affected Rajiv Joseph's imagination. He contends that communication and mutual understanding are replaced by doubt,

tension, and anxiety in a war situation. Furthermore, he states in an interview with Vineyard theatre official website (2013) that he “wanted to see certain types of people (American and Middle Eastern) on stage together and having to deal with one another ... to instantly create a dynamic atmosphere in a scene,” (2013, Interview with Rajiv Joseph section, para.3). As a matter of fact, the play can be regarded as an exploration of the U.S. chauvinism and her war-like foreign policy following the 9/11 attack as well. *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (2009) is a tale of a fragmented and unanchored world that is lost in translation. The playwright's vision is metadramatic and sounds to delve stylistically into a type of magical realism. It is a dramatic commentary on the broken world and the encounter between different cultures and individuals. In 2011, the play made its first professional stage debut on Broadway. Furthermore, the first publicly published version of the play came out in 2009 after a long process of revision and shifts since Joseph had the first thought of writing it in 2003.

Given the fact that translation approximately connects with many disciplines and subject matters in the academic institution, one can claim that the military involvement of the U.S. in both Iraq and Afghanistan has brought an interest in translation to the front in literary studies, media and academic research (Apter, 2006). Musa, the Iraqi translator of the U. S. forces, is the play's protagonist. He is both the hired interpreter who is at the same time scary to his employer; the American invaders. Moreover, they also mistrust him. In fact, the play describes the sophisticated process of translation, and it shows signs that lack of communication is the root of all evil. This happens via presenting an Iraqi local interpreter who, whilst empowering himself on many levels, is also engaged in searching for his own identity defending his own nation and culture when he is translating to the enemy soldiers. Throughout the course of action, we are introduced to the history of the character of Musa from the moment we first meet him in act one, scene two, until he gets in the hold of the dramatic action in the leprosy colony scene. Actually, he is the character around which all other characters revolve. With the conquering of Iraq in the background, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (2009) features the plight of the Iraqi people in the middle of the occupation operations.

This research hypothesizes that the act of translation can be actively used as a viable instrument of resistance to invaders, conquerors and tyrants. The research contends that translation plays a significant role in the political, cultural, linguistic, emotional and psychological empowerment of the subjugated subject both on the individual and collective levels. In the play, the very act of translation becomes culturally suggestive and ideologically operative. Mainly, through an analysis of the character of Musa, Tom, Kev, and Tiger, this research aspires to explore the many aspects of the act of translation as a political act of resistance, activism, negotiation, transformation and transaction. The conceptual frame and theoretical base of the current research comes from an interest in analyzing the play in the light of the discipline of translation studies. Furthermore, the research paper intends to shed more light on the character of Musa, other dramatic characters and upon the act of translation as an in-between space/passage through which the original prototype/source is revived in the target source.

Moreover, this research takes as a hypothesis that though the Americans have already won the battle on the ground due to their military power, they have lost it on another level; that is to say, they have failed to retain the victory in the cultural encounter with the Iraqi people. They have ethically lost the war before the whole world. Additionally, the research paper argues that translation-the act and the process-has equipped and empowered Musa civilizationally, morally, culturally, emotionally and politically. By the end of the play, Musa's linguistic competencies in another language, the development of his awareness, and the knowledge he acquires, give him the upper hand in the cultural confrontation with the American soldiers. My approach in tracking the development of the character of Musa, and how he manages to win the war against the American forces single-handed through using translation as his means is interdisciplinary and translation-studies based as one has previously mentioned. The research paper will also endeavor to draw upon the two notions of intercultural encounters and transactionality early on the road to understand the play's complexities.

The play is set in a conflict zone. It is somewhat a surrealist black comedy that makes light of subject matters that beat the bounds and are usually disquieting to discuss in public. Playwrights and writers most often employ it as a tool for exploring

topics and issues that are discomposing and thought provoking. The layout of the play revolves around a series of murders that influence the debate of the whole play and seems to motivate the dramatic act. Furthermore, the play's origin stems from taking the realistic and psychological dilemmas of the characters to a level where characters return from death to reflect on the meaning of life, death, and God. The Tiger comes back as a ghost to haunt its killer, referring to himself as Dante in Hades, (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012). Indeed, the presence of animals in dramatic settings of war highlights the folly of human conflicts. Joseph reflects on the reason behind choosing a Tiger as the narrator in his play, saying, "to give the animal a voice is to give the primal a voice. And by having the Tiger as the narrator of this play, I have a strictly apolitical voice", (Gerald Raymond, 2011, Features, para3).

The play's first impetus is the biting off of a part of the hand of an American soldier by a caged tiger in Baghdad Zoo during the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, (Reuters, 2003, Sep.21st). As another soldier kills the wild cat, the Tiger's ghost wanders in a surreally painted landscape resulting from the bombardment and occupation of the war-torn Baghdad. The animal gets out of its caged den after being shot dead by Kev to set foot in a limbo where the incomprehensibility of life is considered and contemplated. In the course of his aimless roaming, he comes across and sometimes interacts with two young American soldiers; Kev and Tom, Uday; the son of Saddam Hussein, an Iraqi teenage hooker wearing a headscarf and Musa who is an Iraqi topiary artist turned translator. Musa is seemingly trying to acclimatize to the hardships of his job as a translator for the invaders of his country. Furthermore, he is also doing his best to overcome the recurrent memory of raping and mutilating his sister, Hadia, at the hands of Uday, who appears holding the decapitated head of his brother Qusay. The plot of the play does not exhibit any sophistication as the wild cat's ghost reappears in its ghostlike shape and in the guise of a moral philosopher to terrify and haunt his killer, Kev. Unable to bear the guilt of murdering the Tiger and the continuing and irritating visits of the wildcat spirit, Kev is hospitalized and put under suicidal watch in a military hospital. Tom, the other American soldier who lost his hand for the Tiger, returns to claim his gold gun and the gold toilet seat he has early plundered from an Iraqi presidential mansion. He visits Kev in the hospital. Kev, in a moment of entire despair and at the brink of nervous breakdown, cuts his hand to feed it to the Tiger to make peace with him. Only after his death, he gains a

revived sense of life in general and becomes able to communicate with the dead and the living. Musa shoots down Tom as the former tries to trick the latter in a wrecked leper colony in the desert of Iraq. Musa, that seems to be the protagonist of the play, is always distressed by the traumatic memory of the rape and murder of his sister.

Shortly after the first appearance of Musa in the play, the playwright informs us that Uday previously employed Musa as a topiary gardener. This leads the playwright to unveil the traumatic past of Musa, as we know that Uday had raped and murdered his sister. Again, Uday's ghost keeps haunting Musa, time and time again, and passes some comments on the play's events. When the American soldiers abuse Musa for their own personal interest in the scene of the Iraqi hooker, he feels humiliated and upset and confides to the audience that his current employers are not less oppressive than his previous ones. He believes he is destined to serve tyrants with unlimited power over the people they rule or work with. He even expresses his unfortunateness saying, "I am always employed by tyrants," (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.56). The point is that the Americans are not less oppressive than Saddam Hussein's regime. The play follows the development of the character of Musa, the interpreter, from the moment of his first appearance as a novice translator looking up uncommon words in the lexicon until he ends up murdering Tom in the Sahara of Iraq. Between his first appearance and the moment at which violence is practiced against Tom, Musa acquires linguistic competencies that grant him more cultural and intellectual resistance powers. In his dilemma, his improved linguistic knowledge gives him the upper hand over the invaders. It was his tool to repair and rebuild his broken and traumatized personality. Eventually, the Tiger unable to get satisfying answers about human existence and its horrors, decides to go back to his animal nature and instinct.

Proudfit states that the atmosphere of jingoism enkindled in the U.S in the aftermath of the 9/11, and that has been maintained by the invasions of countries like Iraq and Afghanistan, have minimized the critical attention about the play in academic journals of literary studies since its first debut in 2009 as a dramatic work. However, he observes that it has nowadays started to get appropriate critical attention since it is an attempt to go beyond the "familiar territory of challenging the orientalist binaries to exploring post-structuralist complications of postcolonial models", (2017, p.482). In other words, it examines the entire heterogeneity between the West and

East, he says. In fact, the play examines the dilemma of humanity in the 21st century with the U.S. invasion of Iraq as the backdrop of the whole debate and the search for a solution for the far-ranging conundrum of a heteroglossic world, (2017, p.480).

Additionally, Proudfit holds that the play is mainly concerned with exploring intercultural binary/dual conflicts by using Edward Said's approach to East/West binary. Though the first act is concerned with East/West binary conflicts, the second act takes a different shift towards a post-structuralist approach to the issues discussed, (2017, p.480-481). This shift is more preoccupied with the danger of viewing the conflict in Iraq from the perspective of a binary conflict only. Charles McNulty, the drama reviewer of the *Los Angeles Times* describes the play's vision as daringly far-reaching and "bringing together cultures, species and even the living and the dead, in its own right," (2009, May18th, *Los Angeles Times blogs*, para.4). He even adds that it is "no ordinary play. I'm tempted to call it the most original drama written so far about the Iraq war," (2009, May18th, *Los Angeles Times blogs*, para.2). He extends his admiration of the work to the playwright describing him as "An ebullient synthesizer of world data, Joseph is not just alert to the fevered geopolitical madness surrounding us, he's also endlessly inventive in finding bold theatrical metaphors to depict the extent of the depravity," (2009 May18th, *Los Angeles Times blogs*, para.3). Moreover, Charles Isherwood called the play "a visionary new work of American theatre" (2011, 31 March, theatre review section, para.1). Moreover, John Lahr writes in a *New Yorker* review saying that in the second act of the play, the ethical discourse of the play loses momentum. He wrote saying, "What began as an inventive expression of moral outrage quickly turns inchoate." (2011, April 4, theatre section, para.3). Furthermore, Charles Jones of the *Chicago Tribune* voiced disappointment about what he called a second act unjustifiably immersed in cogitation. The audience, he says, struggles on occasions "to find the narrative drive in the piece, especially in the rather befuddling and overly ruminative second act", (2013, February 12, entertainment section, para.4). He also proclaims that: "*Bengal Tiger* is about...the horrors of destroying an ancient culture (the zoo is, in many ways, a metaphor for all the Iraqi assets, be they antiquities or living people, in great peril,)" (2013, 12th February, entertainment section, para.5). However, Proudfit contends:

On one level, the play is about violence in the Iraq region and about the foundational role of the United States in encouraging the ongoing cycle of that violence. At the root of the play's violence is the gold gun..., which suggests that the cycle of violence is inescapable even for a character who recognizes and abhors it. Moreover, justice is never achieved through these acts. Most notably, Musa, instead of taking revenge on Uday, ends up killing the man who, he later learns, unknowingly took revenge for him. It is Tom who killed Uday when the US military captured Hussein's mansion, (2017, pp.483-484).

Proudfit continues proclaiming that the repeated reference to people losing their lives, or parts of their bodies in the play-Tiger, Tom, Kev, Hadia, Uday, Qusay, the leper woman and even the lions which are shot down after they have run away from the zoo- creates a feeling that the destruction and losses of war are far- ranging. He writes: "No one escapes war intact. Whether they are perpetrators or victims of violence, everyone inevitably loses part of themselves", (2017, p.484).

Translation by definition is the process or the mental activity or procedure of transferring the meaning from one language to another with an intention to maintain the message and the communication from a source language to a target language. The term is usually used to refer to the whole process, the methods and strategies used to convey the meaning from an original source to a receiving source. Translation can take one of three shapes; it can be intralingual (contained within the same language), interlingual (translation proper) or intersemiotic (between signs or system), (R. Jakobson, 1971, p.261). However, while interpretation is more employed in transforming oral, spoken or verbal discourses, translation is the meaning transfer of a text and the eventuating production of an equivalent text. Though the two terms of translation and interpretation are associated disciplines, they are often used interchangeably, (Rizzi et al., 2019). According to this general definition of translation, there is no doubt that the two notions of translation and interpretation are used interchangeably in this research without much distinction between both of them.

In *Los Angeles Times*, Joseph describes the play as an act of translation. He says:

The act of translation is at the core of *Bengal Tiger*. One of the central characters in the play is an Iraqi man working as a translator for the U.S. military, and there are several scenes in the play in which a person stands between two others and tries - sometimes in vain - to allow for communication and understanding. No subtitles are used during those scenes because it's important to me that the audience sense the confusion and frustration of being unable to communicate while a situation becomes dire. The play itself is an act of translation, in that I have never been to Iraq, I have never fought in a war and, obviously, I have never been dead, a ghost, or a tiger or wandered through limbo. The play engages with all these things, and so I'm basically guessing my way through the territory, hoping it all coheres... Writing, it seems to me, can translate the unknown into the known, the mysterious into the lucid, the abstract into the concrete. Moreover, even if it doesn't, a writer can try, (2010, but how will it translate? Opinion section, para.2&3).

Indeed, Joseph believes that one of his roles, as a playwright is to place some beef on particular ideas to make them more understandable, to give the ideas some kind of in/definable context, and to help us make the journey from the conceptual abstraction to the observable phenomenon. In his famous manifesto- like article in the *Los Angeles Times*, Joseph illuminates his concept of the play as an act of translation. He writes: "I think as a playwright I'm trying to translate abstractions into some sort of emotional truth", (2010, how will it translate? Opinion section, para.11). Joseph recalls that the American people and maybe the administration used to think about Iraq as an abstraction, an idea and a thought, not as a reality. He illustrates his idea by saying: "to all of us, Iraq was an abstraction. It was an idea. It was something we thought about, philosophized about, debated about, and it was a country that, apparently, could disappear in a flash," (2010, how will it translate? Opinion section, para.6). Luckily enough, Joseph better understands Iraq, its people, culture and history than many other playwrights do. He writes: "Iraq exists. It's the cradle of civilization, it's where writing was invented, it's where Algebra was invented, and it's where they invented the wheel. And it's a country that on March 20, 2003, was invaded by the United States although it posed no immediate threat to our national security," (2010, how will it translate? Opinion section, para 10).

In fact, the very first expository scene of act one introduces the two U.S. soldiers namely; Tom and Kev who seem to share a similar linguistic attribute in the use of the U.S. marine soldiers' vernacular, which they bring into play in their communication. The two young soldiers seem not to understand why they are thrown away thousands of miles away from the U.S. mainland to conquer a country like Iraq that is the birthplace of many ancient scientific discoveries. Surprisingly enough, they never refer or discuss the war in the least possible way. Their coarse –yet-familiar speaking and behavioral manner reflect Joseph's way of constructing the relationship between these two comrade-in-arms. He smartly intensifies the conversations with implicit sub textual commentary. That is usually provided by the lion-like narrator; Tiger:

Tom: Zoo duty's seen action three nights last week.

Kev: Who's goanna attack a zoo.

Tom: *We're* here. They'll attack us. And they've been stealing shit. Like peacocks.

Tiger: All eight of them took off as soon as the wall got blown up.

Kev: I do not know why they wanna kill us. *We're* trying to protect their zoo, you know?

Tiger: Typical lion-like behavior, (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.7-8).

Apparently enough, Tiger comments on the U.S. invasion of Iraq and compares it to a predator's behavior. Furthermore, he continues to provide critique about the military involvement of the U.S. in the Middle Eastern country that has implicit purposes.

As a matter of fact, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* is a transaction-based story, says Gerard, (2015). In the play, like the case in the translation process, it seems that most of the characters and micro tales wind up to a negotiated deal. This manifests in the inconsiderate struggle and search for the gun or in Tom's tragic negotiations

over his life in the leper colony scene. In act one, scene five, Tom attempts to regain the gold weapon from his colleague Kev and a literal business deal is negotiated and executed before our eyes. The exchange goes as follows:

Tom: You have it?

Kev: What?

Tom: The gold gun, do you have it?

Kev: Not with me.

Tom: Not with you?

Kev: I told you, man. I'm out on a f...night raid, next thing I know I'm out on my way here. It's not like I had time to pack, you know what I'm saying?

Tom: Where's the gun?

Kev: Somewhere safe.

Tom: Where?

Kev: I don't know man, where's is your toilet seat?

Tom: None of your business. Where's my gold gun?

Kev: You know what man? I saved you. Okay? I saved your life.

Tom: I don't care what you did, Where's my gun?

Kev: It's in your momma's...

Tom: What?

Kev: I said: Your gun...

Tom: Kev. Do you know that my mother is dead?

Kev: She is?

Tom: Yeah. (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.28-29).

We are informed that Tom's mother is dead. It seems that he is also traumatized by that loss. In such case, the audience are aware of the fact that nothing is capable of compensating his pains. There is no equivalence between what is offered and what is gained. Something is lost in the transformation. His loss- like the foreign text's intended meaning - is never compensated in the transformed version. He is suffering from chronic anxiety, despair and sorrow, as there is a kind of impossibility in recovering the original meaning risked in the transformation process. The dramatic irony is that despite his repeated attempts to regain the lost gun, he never had any chance to get hold of it again. In fact, act one, scene eight, is the highest point of the transactional and negotiable nature of the episodes and the dialogue. Furthermore, when Tom hires a call girl to perform sexual services for him, two issues may pop up here; first, he has to negotiate the price with her and what she has to do for him. Seemingly, they lack a common language, and he asks Musa to mediate in between. Second, he feels a bit insecure about the work he needs her to do for him. As Musa starts to translate and actually negotiate the deal, the playwright sarcastically employs the scene to highlight the negotiation-based situation in which a U.S soldier is abusively using the Iraqi translator, which casts light on the entire purpose of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. One of the implicit messages of the play, says Gerard, is that "war and its consequences are all transactional, and ultimately, avoidable. Human suffering, almost always, is usually due to one transaction or another. The choice is whether to make a deal or not." (Gerard, 2015, p.21). The point Joseph is putting forward is that a better deal or transaction in the Iraqi situation could have mitigated the suffering and reduced the loss of souls in Iraq. Furthermore, Joseph pinpoints the pain and the disquietude Musa the interpreter is experiencing for working with the American troops. Musa sounds like a sinner interpreter who is ruminating on

salvation for the sin he is committing every day for providing translation services for the country that is determined to destroy his homeland and culture.

In act one, scene six, Uday addresses Musa, a symbol of the collective Iraqi people who are torn between the overthrow of the regime and the panic of what may happen after its fall. Uday asks Musa: "Uday: ...where are you going to get work as a gardener? There's nothing left to garden...my man. And you think the Americans are going to employ you forever? They're already retreating. And they're going to leave you here with nothing green and nothing to work with except a big pile of shit. All you have is me and my gun." (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.38). Gerard argues that Joseph uses the notion of transaction as a kind of transformation to alert the audience that the American forces will leave the country in ruins. The Green Iraq will be transformed for the worse. In fact, the theme of transformation permeates the whole play. The dead characters are transformed and revived back to have more knowledge and wisdom about their situation. That can be a potential sign of hope on the side of the playwright. The transformation takes place in front of our eyes. The call girl literally transforms before our eyes into Hadia, (Gerard, 2015, pp.21-22). The stage directions describe the transformation as follows: "Musa sits and stares at the girl. The girl looks at Musa. The lights shift. Tom freezes, as the girl becomes Hadia, Musa's sister. Musa doesn't see her, but senses her." (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.49). Gerard asserts that Joseph "does not just use the idea of translating as a transaction, but also as transformation," (2015, p.23).

Furthermore, Muneroni (2013) asserts that Joseph's play explores the nature of the afterlife and the future of humanity through portraying individual characters who are dramatized alternatively as alive, dead, and revived, then stuck in a war-stricken city that may allude to our troubled human situation. The characters' demise in the play does not seem to be eventual, but it is provisional and a passage into a new life experience with guaranteed new capabilities. The characters, though perished, reemerge transformed in Uday's topiary garden setting and acquire new capabilities to operate in dissimilar contexts. In fact, though they are deceased, they are functioning and behaving as if they were alive. In other words, they are translated, transformed and refracted into a non-identical manifestation of themselves, he continues, (p.2).

In the 20th century, several translation studies scholars had used religious vocabulary and analogies to describe the nature of translation in an attempt to mark out the association between the original text and the produced text, the role and function of the translator in the translation process as well as the context in which a translation is produced. Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) holds in his canonical essay, "The Task of the Translator"-1923- that translation is a resurrection of the original text. The revival of the original text, or the afterlife as he calls it, is a transformative renewal of the original text. He writes:

To grasp the genuine relationship between an original and a translation requires an investigation analogous in its intention to the argument by which a critique of cognition would have to prove the impossibility of a theory of imitation. In the latter, it is a question of showing that in cognition there could be no objectivity, not even a claim to it, if this were to consist in imitations of the real; in the former, one can demonstrate that no translation would be possible if in its ultimate essence it strove for likeness to the original. For in its afterlife- which could not be called that if it were not a transformation and a renewal of something living-the original undergoes a change. Even words with fixed meaning can undergo a maturing process, (Benjamin, 2002, p.256).

In the light of Benjamin's argument, a translation of a text is a posthumous revival of the body and the soul of the source text. The original text, he believes, survives in its translation. The rebirth is more than a historical or a linguistic reconstruction. Hence, the original becomes a new coined form that seems to develop in a different historical moment. The translation is a transformed form of the original that is both based on and cut off from the original at the same time. It continues to live and operate on its own right and builds up new relationships that are flexible and independent in turn. The root is enabled to grow into new trunks, branches and leaves. In the same vein, Jacque Derrida (1994) proclaims that the original text with its palimpsestic and genetic core still haunts and more or less steers the course of action of the finished target text like a phantom. He writes:

A masterpiece always moves, by definition, in the manner of a ghost. The Thing [Chose] haunts, for example, it causes, it inhabits without residing,

without ever confining itself to the numerous versions of this passage, "The Time is out of joint." In their plurality, the words of translation organize themselves; they are not dispersed at random. They disorganize themselves as well through the very effect of the specter, because of the Cause that is called the original and that, like all ghosts, addresses same-ly disparate demands, which are more than contradictory, (Derrida, 1994, pp.20-21).

Both Derrida and Walter Benjamin are in the belief that the genetic qualities of the original text "inhabits without residing" any translation of the original text. However, Muneroni holds that it is Douglas Robinson (2001), who gave an expression to the notion of the spirit of the original work channeled through the body of the translator, (2013, p.3). D. Robinson (2001) writes:

Another way of putting all this is to say that I am interested in exploring the gray area between the translator as a rational, fully conscious subject who is completely in control of all his thoughts and actions (this rationalist ideal is normatively male) and the translator as a mystical void filled with other voices, a channel or medium for the speech of others. Both ideals exist for translation, often in the same breath, the same sentence. That they are radically opposed to each other should go without saying, but has gone without saying for a long, long time. One of the things that the rational translator-subject is supposed to control, in fact, is the interference of his own control in the process of channeling the source author directly and immediately to the target reader, (p.11).

In view of the previous argument, Stephan Muneroni comments on the portrayal of the characters in the play saying:

The characters in the play, in fact, become translators after they die; their bodies operate as channels to convey both the pains and joys of literary and cultural translation. It appears that the gift of death, to play with the title of Jacque Derrida's book (2008) is for Rajiv Joseph also a gift of translation. Translation partakes of the experience of connecting to the dead and speaking to/for the dead. The characters acquire transcendence the moment they die and

show their new status by displaying translational abilities they did not have in life: the Tiger turns or translates himself, from a wild beast caged in a zoo into a philosophizing being who even manages to temporarily overcome his animalistic tendencies. Kev, on the other hand, finds he is capable of speaking Arabic and acts as a medium between the world of the living and that of the dead, speaking for the leper woman and translating both her words and her pain,(2013, p.3).

Muneroni asserts that Musa the actual and unfeigned translator is the most important character in the play. The topiary artist- turned interpreter seems to live in an in-between area of communication. His broken English and the Iraqi vernacular dialect he speaks and understands seem to counterpoise the marine patois used by Tom and Kev. He says:

Musa is the moral compass of the story, and through him, the spectator learns about the traumas of war. As he interprets for the American troops, the audience witnesses the hardships of his profession, those related to the daily interactions with the American soldiers who come across as rude and culturally insensitive, as well as those immediately connected to the various challenges of translating languages and cultures. Musa embodies the very trials and errors of translating as he confronts the complexity of rendering specific grammatical or syntactical structures, the challenges of having to find circumlocutions to describe specific concepts or the constant struggle between adhering to the source language while guaranteeing the communicability and speak ability of the target language, (Muneroni, 2013, p.4).

In act one, scene two; Musa smartly surprises Kev with this question: “what is bitch?” (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.13). The inquiry is about the slang usage of the word “bitch” he seems to have come across in a humorous context and which he cannot detect in a lexicon. Musa sounds perplexed as he informs Kev that though he has a good command of English, he does not sometimes feel familiar with informal American English. This confusion and embarrassment intensifies when Kev uses a hurtful and derogatory term to describe Musa sitting at his desk in a war-ravaged city and not being engaged in a battlefield work, says Muneroni, (2013, p.4). However,

he shows an interest in improving his linguistic competencies despite the war zone in which he operates. Furthermore, he speaks to Kev in a manner that will be more insightful in the later scenes of the play. It seems he is paving his way to a non-traditional battle with the American soldiers. The stage directions state that "Musa is sitting on the floor in an office, writing. There is a laptop at his side and a dictionary," .The dialogue goes as follows:

Musa: "Knock Knock.", "Who's there?" "Operation Iraqi Freedom."

"Operation Freedom who?", "Operation Iraqi Freedom...bitch."(Musa stares at the words, shakes his head, frustrated, confused. He flips through the dictionary.) "Bitch"... "Bitch"... "Operation Iraqi Freedom, bitch."(He finds the word. Reads it. Frowns, shakes his head, and puts the book aside. Kev enters carrying a huge amount of combat gear. He puts it down and catches his breath. Musa stares at him. Kev stares back.) What is "bitch?"

Kev: What?

Musa: "bitch." What is "bitch"?

Kev: Are you calling me a bitch?

Musa: No. I am asking you what "bitch" means.

Kev: So, why you calling me a bitch, bitch?

Musa: I want to know what it means. "Bitch". The word. I look it up in the dictionary.

(Kev starts donning his gear.)

Kev: You're the terp.

Musa: Yes. My name is Musa.

Kev: You going on these night raids?

Musa: Yes.

Kev: You speak Iraqi?

Musa: Arabic.

Kev: *Arabic?*

Musa: Iraqi Arabic.

Kev: Why do you get a computer?

Musa: This is my own computer. I bought it.

Kev: It has a DVD player.

Musa: DVD? Yes.

Kev: You got any movies?

Musa: Movies? Yes. I have a number of movies.

Kev: What movies you got?

Musa: I have a number of movies. I have *Fast and Furious*.

Kev: You got *Fast and Furious* ?

Musa: Yes.

Kev: I love that movie.

Musa: It's a good film.

Kev: It is a f... classic.

Musa: Yes. (Beat.)What is this word "bitch"? (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.13-14).

On the surface of it, the two characters that Joseph introduces to us are satisfactorily identifiable and have a common ground. Both sound to have an interest in movies and cinema. However, they both lack any cultural commonality. In fact, Joseph is employing this conversational exchange to probe something deeper. It is the fallacy that the U.S. know other peoples' culture for sure. Kev sounds categorizationally American in his deficient ability to know Musa's cultural world intricacies. On the other hand, Musa seems half-heartedly willing to delve into Kev's world. Though he may be partly intimidated by the invaders' power, he is putting a lot of effort and patience into his work in an attempt to understand the situation he is experiencing. The challenge is that Kev's cosmology, mindset and life formula are very limited. He does not even know that the Iraqi dialect is not a language. Joseph is underlining that the U.S. is sending her soldiers to fight in places whose cultures are alien to them. This very narrow worldview is supposedly going to have very negative consequences on the characters as their worlds overlap, and flap over in the course of the play. Joseph is alluding to the fragility of the American soldiers and the fact that they are usually stationed in zones that are incompatible with their expertise.

Proudfit maintains that the play's focus in act one is disrupting binary cultural demarcations. In fact, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* abounds in exchanges and scenes that reflect the stereotyping and biases pertinently apposite in intercultural contact zones. Though the American military/Marine language takes upper hand in giving voice to stereotyping in the play, Proudfit believes that:

Joseph's interest often seems more generally to lie in the tendency of all people to oversimplify and erase differences between members of a foreign culture, in order to reinforce in the mind an imaginary monolithic Other while simultaneously exaggerating differences between self and Others. Through the stereotyping of cultural Others, difference is thus both problematically erased and problematically fabricated, (2017, p.485).

One can claim that the conversational exchanges throughout the play between Tom and Kev, on one side, and Musa, the interpreter, on the other, discloses their deep-seated conviction that "he is representative of all other Iraqis – and indeed representative of all other Arab peoples," (Proudfit, 2017, p. 485). The two U.S.

Marine soldiers do not sound curious at all to get to know Musa's personal name or know who he is in particular. They are repeatedly using a humiliatingly offensive vocabulary when addressing him. They always use the word "Habib" when conversing with him which is an indecorous vocabulary used to describe Arab Muslims in U.S. media and which has emerged in the aftermath of 9/11 event, (Rehman, 2007). Kev asks Musa, in his first encounter with him in act one, scene two: "Why do you get a computer?" to which Musa answers back without understanding the implied insult in the question, "This is my own computer. I bought it," (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.13). The message is that why this Iraqi translator is having a computer in a U.S. military camp when he is there to provide interpretation services to the soldiers in battlefields where he should get some military self-defense training. Again, it may also mean that Iraqis are not apt enough to use technology, and that they are only subjugated to their American masters. Proudfit holds that "Kev buys into the long list of common orientalist west/east moieties [and]... Joseph thus demonstrates the soldier's binary understanding of the west as master and the east as subordinate," (2017, p.485). In fact, the first encounter between Musa and Kev manifests a condescending attitude to Musa, his work, mindset and even his cinematic taste. Proudfit also claims that the whole situation that is triggered by Musa's bewilderment over the ambiguous use of a vernacular vocabulary is a redrawing of "the orientalist trope of the feminized east", (2017, p. 486). As soon as Kev figures out that Musa is trying to imagine a commonality between them in both showing interest in American movies, he immediately tries to devitalize and indispose him by striking a belittling comparison between two different understandings of how this interest works in their cases. Moreover, when Musa asks Kev why he is dressed up in the translator's office space, the conversation goes as follows:

Musa: Why have you dressed in here?

Kev. None of your business, Habib.

Musa: I mean this is just office space. Just translators work in here. Why would you dress in here?

Kev: None of your f...business, I said.

Musa: Are you new?

Kev: I'm not new.

Musa: No?

Kev: I've seen action, boy.

Musa: Me too.

Kev: Yeah, but I have a gun. You, what you do, you talk.

Musa: I help you do your job.

Kev: You do not help me with shit, Habib.

Musa: I see.

Kev: That's why I get this bad ass equipment, see? And that's why you get a f...laptop. You can boot up and watch *Fast and Furious*, but, I live it, bitch. I live *fast and furious*.

Musa: Why am I a bitch?

Kev. Just shut up. (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.15).

This disqualifying and enfeebling language is employed twice in the same scene. When Musa perceives that Kev was a member of the group that killed Saddam's two sons, and upon seeing Uday's gold gun, the stage directions state that he "stares at the gun, now grasping it in a strange manner. He begins to shake with rage...Musa shakes, begins to breathe harshly." (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.16). Kev asks him mockingly, "Then what was all that shit about? All that shaking around and shit... You're a freak, Habib. Freaky-deaky, no shit", (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.17).

Furthermore, as Kev is getting out of the office, he tries to high five Musa, who, say the stage directions, “just stares at Kev’s hand... [and] lightly high fives him”. Therefore, Kev comments saying, “That’s what I’m talking about, bitch. That’s what I’m talking about”, (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.17). Earlier in the same scene when Musa gets lost in the ambiguously different meanings of the word “bitch”, he asks Kev about it and gets this answer, “You know, like if you’re a little pussy or something, or you’re being like, you know, a pussy. Then you’re being a bitch, you know?” (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.14).

Despite the fact that Kev accuses Musa of freaking out, he himself does the same thing upon seeing Tiger’s ghost. Even Tiger itself tries to dissociate and distinguish itself from other lions, which he blames for running away from the zoo. Later in the play, all characters discover that the dichotomies they assume exist with others are fallacious. Notwithstanding, the play seems to proclaim that these characters have more in common than they envision, (Proudfit, 2017, pp. 487-488). In fact, Kev tells Tiger and Tom that they are suffering of the same problem. He says: “we all have a psycho problem now, Tommy, Me and the Tiger and you,” (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.51). They are aware that they are “broken” and “refracted” (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.52-53). Kev even feels he is like “brainiac in the afterlife,” (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.52). Therefore, Kev continues, they require “some sort of relational algebraic equation that the three of us can factor into and solve our problem.” (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.51). Proudfit writes:

Joseph’s play contends that these characters are more alike than they think that there is something universally human (and tragic) that joins them all, even if it is nothing more than-ironically-the need to organize in binary oppositions. As such , the first act of *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* is squarely humanist in its assertion of vague but nonetheless real universals that link all of these characters, (2017, p.488).

In fact, it is pointless to claim that almost all characters in the play are haunted in a way. They are manifested in act one as broken in themselves and are in search of healing the rift. The tragedy of the war in Iraq – a country that is historically known as one of the birth places of civilization- failed in helping the West and the East mend

the long-standing fences and only led to increasing the cleavages between cultures. Therefore, in the bafflingly heteroglossic global discord arena of the twenty-first century, translation can offer some hope of reconciliation. Joseph's Play mirrors and displays a fear of deflection and a human-induced aspiration for reunion, comments Proudfit, (2017, p.480).

One more time, Joseph asserts in an interview with *Slant Magazine* that his play is about translation, lack of communication and negotiation. He says:

When you look at what was happening in Iraq during the war, I think one of the huge problems that we were obviously going to face was that American soldiers don't speak Arabic. So when they go into places and they want to question people they have no way of communicating, especially under high stress situations in which combat is involved. That lack of communication, or what is lost in translation, can result in violent acts. It was a striking notion of this particular war, the need for translations. And so the translator in the play has a very important role. I wanted to see acts of translation and I wanted the audience to understand that confusion. And that's why none of the Arabic [in the production] has supertitles. On a deeper level, the play is about other sorts of translation: The translations between the ghosts and the living, which is kind of a haunting process. So we see most of these characters in the play die and remain alive, or remain sentient. I feel like that movement from the living into the dead is, in and of itself, a form of translation that these characters are trying to negotiate, (Raymond, 2011, Features section, para.11).

At the end of act one, scene two, Joseph presents the lack of cultural understanding between Musa and Kev in a very amusing way to mitigate the intensity of the situation. As the dramatic tension escalates, it flows right away into the next scene as the playwright again manifests Kev's deficient understanding of the nature and culture of the people his government claims he is coming to liberate and set free from the tyrant for a better future. Furthermore, Musa and the two Iraqi locals' reduced speech intelligibility in act one, scene three, may lead to violence. The stage directions introduce the scene mood and tone as follows:

In the dark, chaotic sounds of soldiers pounding on the doors of a home. Yelling, screaming, furniture being overturned. And the sounds continue, lights up on an Iraqi man standing with a sack tied around his head and his hands tied behind his back. Kev enters with Musa. A woman runs on and goes to the man. Her sudden entrance goes entirely against procedure and freaks Kev and Musa out, (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.18).

The woman nervously asks Musa and the soldiers to get out of her house. Joseph makes the Iraqi characters use their local Arabic dialect to portray the magnitude of tension and high anxiety involved in the scene. The dialogue goes as follows:

Kev: (To man) I need you down on the ground! Hands behind your- Sir? SIR? I need you down on the GROUND! DOWN on the GROUND!

Musa :(In *Arabic*, to man) Inteh tehtaj tinzil lil... [You need to go down to].

أنت تحتاج تنزل

KEV: What are you telling him?

Musa: What?

Woman: Makoo shee elkoom ehna! Roohoo! [There's nothing here for you!

Go away!]

ماكو شيء ألكوا هنا

Kev: What are you telling him?

Woman: Me sawaine shee ghalat.Roohoo! [We have nothing wrong. Go

Away].

ماسوينة شى غلط. روحو!

Musa: I am telling him what you said!

Kev: What the f...?

Musa: I am TRANSLATING!

Kev :(*To man.*) You speak English? Hey, sir, you speak f...ENGLISH.

Man: Hathe shee-yreed? [What does he want?]

هاذة شیرید؟

Woman: Ma a 'roof, daykhereboon illbait. Yreedon yakthook wiyahoom [I don't know. They're wrecking the house. They want to take you away!]

ما عرف. دی یخربون البيت. یریدون یأخذوك ویاهم!

(Kev *pushes the man.*)

Kev: You speak f... English, I said!

Musa: He doesn't speak English!

Kev: F...that, man. Tell him to kneel down. I'm goanna count from five!
5...4...3...2...

Musa :(*over Kev.*) Yireed -kum thnain-nat-koom terka'oon. [He wants you both down]

یریدکم ثنیناتکم ترکعون

(The man and woman kneel down. Kev bumps into a large wooden chest and nearly falls over.)

Kev. What is in this chest here? Hey you speaka Englisha?

Musa: They don't speak English! Stop yelling! You don't need to yell.

Kev: That's what you gotta do, man or these towelheads will f... you, man.

No. offence, but that's like the rules.

Musa: Just tell me what you want to tell them and I will translate. Okay?

Kev: Don't f...tell me my business, Habib, (*Bengal Tiger*, 2011, p.18-19).

As the communication decreases and remains at a very low level between the two parties with Musa in between the two cultures, the audience recognize that the characters are probably lost in translation and that they are trapped in a kind of a cultural disability. Indeed, act one, scene three, is remarkable in highlighting the disappointments and insecurities many translation acts may embrace. The encounter that both Kev and Musa get involved in, in act one, scene three, during the night raid with the two Iraqi locals, is somewhat volatile and is fraught with danger as Arabic and English are confusingly being used at the same time and because of the unrecognizable content of the chest. The tension intensifies as the man and his wife gaze at Kev while he is ready to shoot them at any moment. Musa recognizes the intensity of the situation and decides to interfere to reduce the panic of the woman after her husband had appealed to her to keep silent.

Kev :(Re: the man and woman talking.) See that's what I'm talking about. (Kev goes to the man and woman and stands about them in a threatening manner.)

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU!

Musa: You don't need to do this!

Kev: What's in the BOX?!

Musa: (To woman.) Shinno bil sundog? [What is in the box?]

شئو بالصندوق؟

Woman: BUTANIAT! BUTANIAT! [BLANKETS! BLANKETS!]

بطانيات! بطانيات!

Musa :(To Kev; accidentally in *Arabic*.) Buttaniat!

بطانيات!

Kev: What? What the f...did you say!?

Musa: (*To Kev; in Arabic; frustrated.*) Buttatniat! Buttaniat!

بطانيات! بطانيات!

Kev: In English! Speak English, will you?

Musa: what? (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.21).

Musa recognizes his absent-mindedness under the pressure of the situation, but he quickly recollects himself responding to Kev's inquiry while the panicking Iraqi woman is yelling beside him. He answers Kev back, saying:

Musa: Blankets! Sorry! Blankets!

Man: Makoo ba'ad shee moomkin yakh-thoo! Bess sook-tee! [There's
nothing more for them to take! Just be quiet]

ماكو بعد شي ممكن ياخذو! بس سكتي!

Kev: What blankets?!

Musa: In the box!

Kev: What?

Woman: Ukhthoo, boogoo kulshee edne. Mujremeen, kulkum, kul wahid
min edkum. [Take it, steal it, steal everything we have. Criminals, all of

you, every one of you.]

اخذو، بوكو، بوكو، كلشى عدنة مجرمين، كلكم، كل واحد من عدكم.

Musa: BLANKETS! In the BOX! (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.21-22).

Muneroni asserts that this “scene illustrates how translation contains the possibility for linguistic and cultural conflict as well as its resolution,” (2013, p.4). In this very unstable and volatile situation, the anxious U.S. Marine soldier, Kev, squeezes Musa for a rushed and immediate translation while agitatedly pointing his gun at the two Iraqi citizens. Kev, who sounds uneducated and stereotypically American serviceman, expects a literal, word for word pattern of translation that mechanically reproduces the source language sentences and phrases into their target language equivalents. As Musa cannot instantly recall the English identical word for “*Buttaniat*” while hearing the Iraqi woman speaking, Kev’s anxiety and impatience with Musa’s retrieving process intensifies his tension and he develops a feeling that Musa-the Iraqi interpreter- may be conniving with his country folks.

In fact, there is a logical fallacy and a kind of metaphorical claim in the field of translation; that to translate is sporadically and periodically to betray. The claim seems to have stemmed from an Italian origin. The connotative meaning is that all translations are provisional and imperfect in a sense. There is always a kind of loss in the translation process. It may even happen because translators are unfamiliar with the context in which the text was written or produced. The issue of untranslatability can make identical translation difficult. Many scholars are in the belief that translation is kind of an approximation or reinterpretation of the original text, that is to say, a para text, paraphrase or imitation as the translation process embraces a lot of constraints, contexts, grammar rules, writing conventions, idioms and expressions. A word for word correspondence is a common misconception. When literally translated, the Italian adage “*Traduttore Traditore*” means the translator is a traitor. This idiom is an Italian proverb, so it loses some of its meaning when literally translated to another language. This meaning loss in the process of translation, encapsulates the core of the phrase. “*Traduttore, traditore*”, as a phrase, calls attention to the recognition that translation implies in essence, a betrayal of the authentic

meaning of the original. The Italian idiom describes the inability of translation to regenerate formal equivalence-form and content- and dynamic equivalence-effect-of an original text into a receiving one as a form of betrayal.

Muneroni holds that this proverb “resonates strongly in this scene [act one, scene three] as it stands for both a linguistic subversion and military treason”, (2013, p.5). Furthermore, Emily Apter asserts that the notion of betrayal in translation is not a characteristic of one particular culture as “translators in Guantanamo Bay became a different kind of target; as prime suspects in the eyes of the U.S. military, a substantial number were charged as AL Qaeda infiltrators”, (2006, p.15). Furthermore, the excerpt highlights the difficulty of normal communication in “a world of multiplicity -represented here through the multiple languages”, (Proud fit, 2017, p.492). Again, this kind of distrust in the translator is once more repeated in act one, scene six, when Uday Saddam Hussein charges Musa with exposing the country to danger by working with the invaders and leaking home information to them. Uday says:

Uday: ... (Soliloquizing)...These U.S. troops? What do they do? They come into my home and they steal everything I have like common little thieves. Like piranhas. I had piranhas, I would know. And it is these hungry, greedy little Americans, who you work for. You work for them to kill us. To steal our oil...
Mansour.

Musa: No.

Uday: No?

Musa: I do not work for the Americans.

Uday: You can lie to me. Mansour, you cannot expect me to lap up your shit like the dogs you work for. *You*, Mansour: a traitor in everyone's midst.

(*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.36-37).

The general effect produced in the scenes where the American soldiers interact with Iraqi locals is typical of similar scenes in the play where the communication sounds cacophonous, and discordant. Similarly, one of the reasons a translation goes without the original authenticity of the meaning or the context is lexical gaps and the consequent problems when translators use similar words or phrases to communicate their original linguistic equivalents or when they make adjustments to word choices. Other times, the receptor language may lack an equivalent vocabulary to express the puns or the word plays when used in the original text. However, the betrayal adage is usually used when translation challenges are discussed. Though the Italian expression may have no literary antecedents, translation loss may be unavoidable. A good translator is the one who manages the possible loss of equivalent meaning in translation and finds as much as he can compensating gains. In the below extract, Musa is quite aware that Kev is very skeptical of him, on the two levels of loyalty and translational honesty. This is manifested in Kev's dubious tone and indicting language in his conversational exchange with Musa when the latter is trying to translate what the two Iraqi locals said about the chest to the US soldier.

Musa: She says there are... *(To woman; Arabic.)* Shgil-tee? [What did you say?]

شكلتی؟

Kev: Wait. What?

Woman: Makoo shee hanak! Bess Buttaniat, makoo ghair shee! [There's nothing in there! Blankets and nothing else!]

ماكو شی هناك! بس بطانیات ماكو غیر شی!

Musa: Nothing! There's nothing—

Kev: That's bullshit. She said a lot more than *nothing*. I don't speak Iraqi, but

she said a lot more than *nothing*. (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.20).

The short conversational extract addresses the concern of translation conveying more or less, than what the leading source says. Furthermore, Musa unfortunately, is not even trusted by his own people. In the same act, the Iraqi lady calls him names and accuses him of being a traitor for working with the invaders and supporting them against his own country. When Tiger appears to Kev at the end of the night raid, he enters into a nervous breakdown and Musa convinces him to hand the gun over to him. At this moment, the woman recollects her courage, and starts throwing blankets at Kev while calling them both names and accusing Musa of betraying his own country. The last part of the scene develops as follows:

Woman: Ente la shai, ente ma i'ndek shee, inte mejnoon, farigh, kulkum, Demertoo haeyatne b gheba'kum oo lu'abkum il ashwa'i-yeh! [Nothing, you've got nothing, you're crazy, empty soulless fool, all of you, ruining our lives with your stupid, mindless game!]

انت لا شيء ، كلشي ماعندك ، أنت مجنون ، فارغ ، ماعندك رحمة
، كلکم ، دمرتو حياتنا بغبانکم ولعبتکم العشوائية!

Kev: I 'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!

Woman: Ente! Wean rayih? [You! Where are you going?]

أنت! وين رايح؟

Musa: Ani rah-arooh. [I'm leaving].

انى رح اروح .

(Musa looks at the gold gun, then puts on his pants, and starts to leave.)

Woman: Ente det-boog, mithilhum, haramee, haramee a'adee!

[You're stealing, just like them! Stealing, a common thief!]

أنت دتبوك، عينا مثلهم! حرامى، حرامى، عادى!

Musa: Joozee Minnee. [Leave me alone].

جوزى منى.

Woman: Rooh, rooh ilbaitek ya kha'in, ya haramee! [Go! Go home, you
traitor, you thief]

روح! روح البيتك يا خائن، يا حرامى!

Musa: Hathe moo melteh... [This gun, this gun does not belong to him.]

(*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.24)

Mona Baker investigates the issue of equivalence in translation in her book *In Other Words: A Course Book on Translation* (1992) where she comes to a conclusion that word for word equivalence in translation is kind of mirage. Literatim or seamless translation may result in a target text that sounds foreign or is foreignized. Though a full equivalence in translation is a value in itself, however it is unimaginable to achieve perfectly "since no two languages are identical," (Nida, 2000, p.126). In fact, too much literalism can be a hindrance to comprehensibility or full understanding of the meaning. In fact, the act of translation seems to be more complicated than the two procedures of decoding and recoding to include more operations such as analysis, deconstructing, transference and reconstructing.

In act one, scene ten, we are further exposed to one of the puzzles of the act of translation. The point is that there is a potential for danger and violence when translation is conducted in war zones. Tom accompanies Musa to a leper colony to find the spot where he has hidden Uday's gold toilet seat. Since the whole building is raided and flattened to earth, he requests Musa to speak to a woman hoping that she may guide them to the whereabouts of a bag which he cannot locate in the middle of the debris. As Musa is unaware of the type of the bag Tom is looking for, he asks Tom, "what kind! Big bag? Little bag? /Luggage?" (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.59). Lexically speaking, there might be multiple words for different bags, but Tom gets

impatient and asks Musa just to “Translate”. Ironically speaking, when Musa, in a mood of frustration, uses an all-inclusive word for bag to explain Tom’s original discourse to the local woman, she responds with an interrogative statement. She says: (*Arabic.*) Ya chees? [A bag?].

یا جیس؟

Musa: What kind of bag?” (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.59).

That means that the Iraqi woman does not have a clue of Tom or his bag, or that she is anticipating further clues to identify the bag that is the main purpose of the trip to the leper colony. Muneroni contends that, “the ambiguity of her reply qualifies translation as a difficult process articulated across languages and cultures, instead of as a product resulting from mere word substitutions.” (2013, p.6). Furthermore, Joseph Graham (1985) asserts, “the operation of language already includes translation, just as it requires difference.” (p.7).

In his canonical essay *Des Tours de Babel* (1985), Jacques Derrida explores the problems caused by translation. He argues that currently, Babel is associated with confusion in general. As God punished the people who wanted to build a tower to heaven and challenge the power of God in the universe, language was confused, and the tower builders could not understand each other when God destroyed the tower and disbanded their assembly. This act, says Derrida, initiated the need for language translation and rendered it next to impossible to be fully translated. Since, the biblical city is called Babel even before the confusion, he ends up claiming that there is a kind of impossibility in translating Babel. As translation is both a debt and a commitment, man cannot carry out the duty, as he does not know which meaning he should follow to make the most appropriate interpretation or entire meaning compensation. He concludes that the riddle of the translation will not be figured out and that the legacy of the biblical account of confusion will possibly continue.

Joseph asserts that the translation of the Arabic sentences can be ignored in the play’s performance to create a sense of displacement. He seems to point out the critical role translation plays in communication and conveyance of meaning in real life by stating that the language of the initial source must undergo a series of

investigation, creative guessing, interpretation, and hermeneutical analysis to sift the grain from the chaff before deciding on one's translational choices in terms of language, semantic equivalence and syntactical rules. In act two, scene nine, Kev gives voice on the stage to a monologue in Arabic in the ghostly war-torn city of Baghdad. He raises his head up to speak to God Almighty, appealing to the creator to grant him peace of mind and to heal his ailments. He says:

Kev: (*Arabic.*) Anee tayeh bil sahra'. [I am lost in the desert]

انى تايه بالصحراء .

[Take my hand, heal my severed body, take me from the desert. Let my mind find peace].

اخذ ايدى، اشفى جسمى المكطع ، اخذنى من الصحراء. خلى بالى يرتاح.

(*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.56).

Death, not life transforms this poor human being into a more considerate person who can sympathize with other fellow human beings like Musa. He only acquires these new potentials after death. Translation grants an afterlife to the seemingly dead text with new possibilities in a new sign language. Kev is a text transformed into Arabic and he now is given a revival and new life possibilities. Translation is an in-between channel and a passage through which the original source/text/body is revived.

In fact, many scholars have argued that language and power are interlinked. Despite the fact that language is a key factor in communication, it creates a capability to share ideas, thoughts, dreams, and wishes. Given simple definition of language as a method and system of human communication used by a specific country or community, those who speak and understand a certain language are members of a community. Speaking and understanding a particular language grants one a membership in a community. Language offers the person who speaks it the power of belonging to a linguistic community. The more powerful your linguistic abilities, the

more creative you can be. Furthermore, language is a main aspect of identity expression. The more you are proficient in a language, the more linguistic capital you possess. When one's identity is damaged for whatever reasons, language can help rebuild the wrecks and facilitate identity search. Pierre Bourdieu (1991) holds that:

Linguistic utterances or expressions are always produced in particular contexts or markets, and the properties of these markets endow linguistic products with a certain value. On a given linguistic market, some products are valued more highly than others; and part of the practical competence of speakers is to know how, and to be able, to produce expressions, which are highly valued on the market concerned. This aspect of the practical competence of speakers is not uniformly distributed through a society in which the same language, such as English or French, is spoken. For different speakers possess different quantities of 'linguistic capital'- that is, the capacity to produce expressions a propos, for a particular market. Moreover, the distribution of linguistic capital is related in specific ways to the distribution of other forms of capital (economic capital, cultural capital, etc.) which define the location of an individual within the social space...The more linguistic capital the speakers possess, the more they are able to exploit the system of differences to their advantage and thereby secure a profit of distinction, (p.18).

Bourdieu argues that the linguistic ability an individual possesses, the better social, cultural and economic space he may enjoy. That is to say, he might be more qualified to benefit by and make the best of what he calls, "the profit of distinction". Taking into consideration Musa's improving linguistic competencies as an interpreter, he is also aware of two points of view. One of them belongs to his own people and nation. Indeed, he is better informed than others are though at times, especially at the beginning of the play, he sounds a bit confused.

Following the series of offences aimed and hurled at Musa in the first seven scenes of act one, he collects enough courage to strike back in act one, scene eight, and gets himself involved in several verbal confrontations with the two U.S. soldiers by cataloging them as "Johnny". When Musa asks Tom for weapons in return for the gold gun, the confrontation gets intensified as the conversation moves from just using stereotyping to throwing outright accusations at each other. It all starts this way:

Tom: My name's not Johnny!

Musa: My name's not Habib.

Tom: What's your problem, man?

Musa: You don't listen.

Tom: You WORK for us! I could have you fired, how would you like that?

When Musa talks business with Tom in the leprosy colony scene and tries to strike a deal, Joseph makes the two parties articulate how they straightforwardly view each other. The encounter goes as follows:

Tom: Jesus. What do you want?

Musa: Do we have a deal?

Tom: What do you WANT? I 'm not going to make a deal unless I know what you want.

Musa: But you're willing to negotiate?

Tom: (enraged).I am willing to kick your f...head in, Habib! What the f...do You want? (Beat).

Musa: I want weapons.

Tom: You want Weapons.

Musa: Guns, ammunition, and hand grenade. And then I will give you the gold gun.

Tom: Oh, Yeah, Okay. Because I am an *arms dealer*, Habib. I'll get you a

bunch of f... Weapons. Who do you think I am?

Musa: You are a Marine and you are a thief.

Tom: Yeah and I get you weapons. Then what? Next thing I just going to
give some gun . And shit to a terrorist?

Musa: I am not a terrorist.

Tom: Yeah, then what are you?

Musa: I am a gardener.

Tom: Don't get metaphorical with me, prick. You're all the f...same.

(*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.54.55).

Furthermore, when Musa discovers that Tom is back on duty in Iraq intending to restore the gold gun and the gold toilet seat looted from Saddam's palace, he accuses him of greed and money-grubbing. He faces him with this reality. Furthermore, he tells him right in his face that: "You have no investment in this gun; it does not mean anything to you outside of the fact that it is gold. This gun has a history. But you, you're looting, so you have something, something to take home. Well, I don't care about what you have to take home, Johnny", (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.54).

Besides, according to postcolonial theory, language and power are interlinked. Alvarez and Vidal (1996) contend that:

Translation is an excellent vehicle for conveying the typically Foucauldian binary essence of the opposition power/knowledge: power is intimately related to knowledge, information, and especially to the manner in which that information is conveyed and the way of articulating a wide range of discursive elements in the TT which behave according to extremely subtle strategies, (pp.5-6).

Musa is quite aware of the imperial culture of his invading employers and of the fact that they have no history to be even compared to the history of the gold gun that represents the riches and culture of his own country that they are looting. His confrontation with the U.S. soldiers is based on the confidence he earns by improving his linguistic competency of the language and culture of the invaders. When Tom tells him, “you work for us! I could have you fired”, he confidently answers back by telling him “my English is getting better. Maybe I get a job at CNN”, (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.54). According to Walter Benjamin, translation is a liberating act and the translator himself is a liberator, (Bassnet, 1996, p.22). As “nothing has meaning in isolation” said Alvarez and Vidal (1996), therefore, “in order for translation to exist, there must have been not only a perfect assimilation of the linguistic content, but also of the experience of the other culture, without the pressures of one ‘superior’ culture over another” (p.3). The many conversations, between Musa on one side and Tom and Kev on the other, prove that Musa has already got rid of the pressure of the power of the American culture on his mentality as an Arab Iraqi subject by calling the two U.S. marine soldiers names and accusing them of theft. When Tom refuses to provide Musa with the bunch of weapons, he asked for in exchange for the gold gun, Musa reminds him of the new liberal- capitalist society he came from. Additionally, in the leper colony scene, both Tom and Musa are negotiating a compromise over a cache of Weapons. The conversation goes as follows:

Tom: Yeah, Okay, you're an artist. Gold gun. Where is it?

Musa: And the weapons?

Tom: I'm not getting you a bunch of f...weapons, okay?!

Musa: Then you're not getting the gold gun! This is not complicated!

Capitalism! Thank you! Now you want something for nothing?

Tom: What do you want with a bunch of weapons, anyway?

Musa: What do you think I have to my name? A stupid job with the U.S. military? And what about when you all leave? What will I have then?

I'll have guns and bullets I can sell because that is the only thing worth anything. Is that so crazy?

Tom: Yeah, it's crazy.

Musa: I am tired do you understand? I am tired of making the same mistakes OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN. I always work for the wrong people. I always serve the tyrants. Not anymore. I am tired of being made a fool. (Tom walks away from Musa, rubbing his eyes, exhausted.). It's a simple deal. What you want and what I want. Isn't this how the world is supposed to work? (A long beat between them.)

Tom: (Not looking at him; still rubbing his eyes.) She wasn't that young.

Musa: Do we have a deal? (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.55-56).

Emberto Eco (2013) argues that even though translation is an interlingual endeavor; we can claim that it is also an act of negotiation. Maria Guzman (2006) comments on Eco's statement saying that "Echo explicitly and usefully indicates that the translator participates in an inherently collective exchange, which ought to be called a "negotiation" so as to mark it as an act that is disinterested", (pp.193-194). To Guzman, the translator has a significant role in underlining the unseen negotiation process of the exchange. Lawrence Venuti (2000) considers translation as much more sophisticated than just a communicative act. As translation engraves the source text into the target culture, so, "it never communicates in an untroubled fashion because the translator negotiates the linguistic and cultural differences, basically domestic, drawn from the receiving language and culture, to enable the foreign to be received there. The foreign text is not so much communicated as inscribed with domestic

intelligibilities and interests” (p.468). To Venuti, translation is ideologically and politically bound and the work in translation can be influenced by the acumen and common sense of the public and other institutions. Thus, we need to regard any translation as a product of a certain historical moment. Actually, the killing of Tom in the play can be understood within this point of view. At the end of the play, Musa does not know why he killed Tom exactly, but he goes beyond his cultural role to take revenge upon Tom who, like his government, is trying to screw him up by obtaining the gold toilet seat in return for meaningless promises. In addition, the confrontation, no doubt, unveils the play's denunciation of intercultural stereotyping and highlights the cultural binary divisions that are revealed in war time moments. The irony is that the so-to-speak saviors turn out to be thieves, looters, rapists and liars.

Additionally, Joseph, by building his play around the character of Musa the translator, redefines his role in terms of his presence rather than absence. He even casts more light on the development of his role, and function in the process of translation across history. Translation is a key instrument in history though its nature has always been believed to be controversial. Philosophical cogitations about the issue of translation have initiated a space for translation scholars and theoreticians to view the translator as an active, visible subject and translation itself as a transformative, transactional, creative and interpretative process and not a form of passive writing or copying. In fact, the advent of the translation studies cultural turn helped the critical inquiry to migrate from texts and intended meaning to the issue of translation as an act within culture and the active role of the translating subject in the production of cultural products.

Invaders usually use military power to conquer and control other countries and peoples. Sometimes, the colonized peoples develop their resistance strategies to defend their countries, culture and themselves. This may take military or cultural forms on the road to freedom and liberation. Though Joseph's play addresses diverse themes, it also portrays the power of translation and translators when used in conflict areas to oppose the invaders. Despite the fact that imperial powers can win military wars, they can be easily defeated on the ethical and cultural levels. Simply, they can lose a war in translation. It is pointless to assert that one of this research paper aims

is to portray how translation can heal the wounds caused by the offensive and condescending language used by the invaders' soldiers and media. Elena Basile (2012) states that:

Language scars may not be as visible as skin scars, yet they do exist, if anything because the evolution and change of languages goes hand in hand with the evolution and change of civilization, with the manifold histories of love and violence that inform their, in turn expanding and collapsing boundaries, the movements of people within, between, or against them, (pp.151-152).

Scholars have thought of translation as a kind of meaning transfer from an original source to a receptor source for hundreds of years. In the second half of the 20th century, some translation studies scholars maintained that the act of translation is over and beyond intercultural transfer. Since then, says Tymoczko, translation is “seen as an ethical, political and ideological activity, not simply as a mechanical linguistic transposition or a literary art”, (2010, p.3). Therefore, no doubt, translation can be deployed in broad-ranging cultural and ideological disputes whether within or between cultures. Meaning transfer is not exclusive of other uses and functions of translation. Hence, Tymoczko asserts that translators are also visible cultural figures who are most probably engaged in a kind of resistance to injustice, oppression and colonialism, and in the production of discourses and representations, (2010, pp. 16-17). Despite the fact that there might be no apparently permanent adversary or ideological opponent in general to which the notion of resistance can be assumed to point to, nevertheless, descriptive studies scholars of translation who are in the habit of using this terminology usually, says Tymoczko,

ascribe resistance in translation to diverse and highly variable opponents including colonialism, imperialism, neo-imperialism, capitalism, western domination, specific regimes such as that of the United States, various oppressive social conditions, the patriarchy, bourgeois norms, Christianity, and other religious dominant discourses (in a variety of cultures), dominant literary conventions, dominant linguistic norms and many other,(2010, p.8).

In fact, translation, says Bassnet, is never an innocent act. On the contrary, “it is like all (re)writings is never innocent. There is always a context in which the translation takes place, always history from which a text emerges and into which a text is transposed.” (Quoted in Bassnet, 1996, p.21). Moreover, Michael Cronin (2003) argues that translation scholars should perceive their notion of translation as part of our daily experience, and consequently it matters in everyone's life. An individual's experience of translation is, no doubt, associated to one's collective history, (p.3). Given Cronin's notion that there is a kind of analogy between everyday exchanges and translation experience, and that translation reflects a nation's subscription to universal citizenship, therefore:

What happens in ‘real life’ translation is similar to what happens in ‘real life’ dialogue: there are misunderstandings, silences, interruptions, refusals to understand, distortions, voices that impose themselves over one another. We see that translation may well be a site to see who is invited to speak and who is not, or even who is allowed to have a voice. This perspective brings to the fore questions about power structures and tensions as inherent to translations, (M. Guzman, 2009, p.198).

This is actually happening in the entire play between the American soldiers and the Iraqi characters. Unlike Benjamin's notion of the task of the translator, Cronin, as well as L.Venuti, provide a different perspective about the translator's responsibility in the process of translation. They similarly believe that his mission is influenced by the historical moment in which the act of translation is practiced and the collective space in which he is operating and interacting. Simply, to them, a translator is an active participant in jotting down or blocking the narrative that constructs culture in actual ways. Translation, like writing, is never an innocent act. It is part of the social. In act two, scene eight of the play, Musa confronts Tom that the girl that he hired to do a hand job on him was under age and that he is lying about losing his arm on the battle- field. The exchange goes as follows:

Musa...She was too young for you.

Tom: What?

Musa: The girl. She was too young for you.

Tom: What are you talking about? She was a prostitute.

Musa: She was too young.

Tom: I gave her money.

Musa: I'm telling you she was too young.

Tom: It was a hand job.

Musa: Listen to me .Listen to me.

Tom: What?

Musa: Listen to me.

Tom: *what?* I'm listening!

Musa: She was... Too Young.

Tom: Fine, she was too young. Arrest me. What the f...are you still doing here? You like watching in on this shit?

Musa: You told me to be here. You told me this was official military business. Official business! Fickly Fick! This is not what I signed up for.

Tom: Why don't you just leave then, Habib?

Musa: You lost your hand in battle? I know about your hand, Johnny. (*Tom holds his hand, unconsciously self-conscious about it*).

Tom: I got blown off.

Musa: It got beaten.

Tom: How do you know that?

Musa: Word gets around. (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, pp.52-53).

Joseph is underlining two points here. First, Musa, the interpreter, is scandalizing the American soldiers who believe they can have sex with an underage Iraqi young girl for money, something they cannot even do in their own country, which criminalizes this kind of behavior. Secondly, they are lying pertinent to their duties, tasks and plans in Iraq. Musa is actively resisting the American version of the story. He is simply constructing a different narrative of the U.S. conquest of Iraq. He is the channel through which the original version of the text is metaphorically reinterpreted and rewritten in history. After all, we recognize the translation through his presence, not absence.

Muneroni states that *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* winds up on a sad note where Musa loses his humanity and shoots Tom in the leper colony scene. Therefore, Uday draws out our attention to this loss of humanity by highlighting the two edges he is moving between: "Sometimes we change. As people. This is the type of shit they teach you in boarding school. Like you: how one day you are translating, and another day you are shooting people because they annoy you," (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.65). Musa, despite his unhappy situation, still hopes to go beyond ordinary limitations. He harbors a desire to transcend over what Uday and Tom represent; simply a crazy humanity. Musa informs Uday that he will not be like him. He discloses to him that, "I won't be like you? I am myself. I'm myself," (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.67). Proudfit asserts that one of the influences of post structuralism on postcolonial theory is that postcolonial subjectivity is never settled and stable, but is always developing and never taking one shape. Uday alludes to this notion at the end of the play when he interrogates Musa for the reasons that made him kill Tom. Due to Homi Bhabha, the postcolonial subject is neither one thing, nor the other, on the contrary, it is a hybrid being that occupies what Bhabha calls, "a third place" thus it challenges the notion of binaries. The recognition of subjectivities kindled through intercultural exchange... has made a "schizophrenic" world," Says Bhabha, (Qtd in

Proudfit, 2017, p.493). Indeed, the interaction between the characters, esp. the Americans and the Iraqis, is marked by what Proudfit calls “hetero-linguistic misunderstanding,” (p.493). However, he proclaims that the play’s main metaphor is refraction that he defines as “the phenomenon of light bending when it passes from one medium into another” (p.493). Metaphorically speaking, Joseph made Kev tell us that what he means by refraction is that the characters are broken and that their world has already become refracted since they have trodden in the zoo. It seems that the many characters that are losing parts of their bodies or being mutilated such as Qusay is a result of intercultural encounters. Hence, Joseph’s delineation of Iraq as a postcolonial contact zone alludes to the fact that “Joseph’s characters long for stable and singular subjectivities,” (2017, Proudfit, p.494). Violence results in broken-into-pieces ghosts and animate topiaries that populate the play’s second half. As ghosts haunt characters, the attempt of Tiger to change his nature/refraction is a failure. The haunting ghosts may refer to the fact that violence on earth is unfading and ineffaceable.

Nevertheless, Musa is keen to survive his dilemma though with his visiting ghosts. He even tells Uday that he will continue his translational creation of topiary animals since he believes that, “This is my garden”, that is to say my country, (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.66), and “I made this place” (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p.68). He even asserts his creative ability, and willingness to live with his traumas once more. He tells Uday, “I will live with your voice, okay? I will live with it. It does not matter because my hands belong to me. And my hands have their own memory. And when I put them on a plant, they create something. They will create something”, (*Bengal Tiger*, 2012, p. 68). In the play, translation is linked to the notion of creativity, resistance, survival and the afterlife. Natural trees are transformed into topiaries. Indeed, the art of creating topiaries “functions as a metaphor for literary and cultural translation [and] provides transcendence because it initiates a dialogue with the divine. This divine, however, is located profoundly in the humanist view of the play...The idea of creation is inherently tied to that of survival and provides the characters with a sense of the future”, (Muneroni, 2013, p.9). Change or salvation is a possibility in the play for sinning humanity. It can be achieved via translation, (Spencer, 2007, p.409). Additionally, translation is viewed as an inevitable endeavor to a new recognition of the sacred, (Muneroni, 2013, p.9).

In drawing things to a close, one can say that in the text's gloomy description of declining humanity, Joseph is appropriating translation as a set up to address the crisis of humanity. He also seems to employ translation as a metaphorical revival of the source language and as an intermediate area where cultural and linguistic negotiation can occur. The dramatic text sets out to draw both translation and death as roughly a middle point between two states. It is in this new space that characters get into areas of themselves that were previously unavailable to them. Furthermore, in this new station, they acquire new cultural and linguistic competencies that enable them to transform themselves, to operate in heterogeneous contexts, and function in this liminal zone. They are situated between two worlds and have access to insights, knowledge and illuminations that have not been previously made available to them. Tiger returns from his death to philosophize on life, and the ruthless world we live in, and on the blind principles of western capitalism. He becomes the philosopher narrator of the entire tales and could pass judgements on them. Kev, on the other hand, accepts another language and temporarily adopts a different prayer form to appeal to God to heal his pains and reduce his sufferings. Most importantly, Musa, the interpreter, has changed from a person who is willing to assimilate into the culture of the colonizers to a cultural resistance agent who uses translation, and his linguistic and cultural capabilities to strike back at the multiple abuses and forms of humiliation he and his country people are subjected to at the hands of the invaders. Joseph puts translation at the heart of the play and employs it as a form of transaction, transformation, and communication. Again, translation is also introduced as a kind of empowerment. As language becomes more indecent in war zones, the new linguistic competencies of Musa surprises the colonizers. His acquired linguistic capital gave him an advantage over the invading army soldiers. Therefore, Musa gets the best of Tom by knowing more about him. In act one, scene eight, Musa develops a more mature ethical sensibility and tells him that the girl is too young for sexual abuse. He also refuses to give the gun back to Tom. Moreover, he tells the soldiers that they are looting. He strikes back at the American soldiers when they call him *Habib* by calling them *Johanny*. He even uses a derogatory language to curse them.

There is a reference to translation and its start in the story of the tower of Babel where all the languages of the world have emerged. Hence, the story of Babel can

explain the confusion of characters in the play, and the role translation is playing in the world by providing a hope of reconciliation. Nevertheless, the play itself is an evidence that imperial powers can simply lose a war on the cultural and ethical levels; that is to say, the Americans lost the war in translation.

All things considered, Rajiv Joseph is a new voice in contemporary American drama and theatre. His dramatic vision in *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* builds on small life details, intercultural encounters, communicative interactions and events of our world and rises to a dramatic world of universal truth and metaphor. Additionally, his elusive narrative moves forward from the plain-spoken to the surrealistically absurd in his endeavor to cast light on the hot spot issues of the day. His dramatic work lives on the haunting subtext. An alert observer of life and contemporary politics, Joseph is fully aware of the damage that humanity can experience by living in these hard times. Again, he has an insight into the great things the theatre can come up with and do.

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حرب خُسرِت في الترجمة: مقارنة معتمدة على دراسات الترجمة لتحليل مسرحية
"الفهد البنغالي في حديقة بغداد للحيوان" للكاتب المسرحي الأمريكي
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المستخلص

يعالج الكاتب المسرحي الأمريكي راجيف جوزيف في مسرحيته "الفهد البنغالي في حديقة حيوان بغداد" قضية غياب التواصل بين الثقافات والحضارات في عالمنا المعاصر ودور الترجمة كجسر لإعادة التوافق في عالم إنساني بئس وقاس. ويقدم الكاتب جوزيف في مسرحيته التاريخ المعاصر في صورة سريرية مؤطرة بلحظات الغزو الأمريكي لدولة العراق في عام 2003 في خلفية الأحداث. ولذلك نرى شخصيات العمل المسرحي تموت وتعود إلي الحياة مرة أخرى لتناقش وتتداول معاني الحياة والموت ولا منطقية صراع الانسان مع غيره في العصر الحالي. وتتبع هذه الورقة البحثية تطور شخصية المترجم العراقي المحلي موسي منذ ظهوره في المشهد الثاني من المسرحية وهو يبحث في المعجم عن بعض الكلمات الإنجليزية غير المألوفة وصراعه مع جنود الغزاة الأمريكيين ودفاعه عن نفسه وثقافته وموطنه متسلحاً بفنون اللغة والترجمة وفاضحاً همجية السلوك الأمريكي في مقابل حضارة الشعب العربي العراقي. وتلقي الورقة البحثية الضوء على فن الترجمة ودور المترجم وتطوره عبر التاريخ حتى مراحل ما بعد الاستعمار حيث يزداد الاعتقاد بأن الترجمة فعل مقاومة ضد أشكال عديدة من الاستعمار والامبريالية والظلم متعدد الأوجه. وتبدأ الورقة البحثية بفرضية خسارة الأمريكيين الحرب على المستوى الثقافي رغم انتصارهم العسكري الكاسح وتقدم الأدلة من العمل المسرحي ومن آراء النقاد على صواب الفرضية ناهيك عن إثباتها نصاً ولغة وبحثاً.

الكلمات المفتاحية: جوزيف- الفهد- الترجمة-العراق- متعدد الثقافات.