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## **Universidad de Valladolid**

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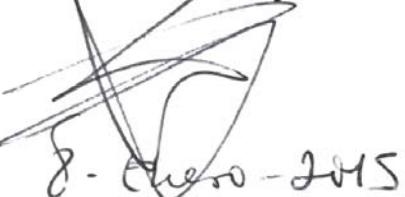
### TRABAJO DE FIN DE GRADO

The translation of metaphor in  
the poetry of Derek Walcott

The Arkansas Testament

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*"Different cultures represent reality according to different metaphors, so mutual understanding means making metaphors converse with each other."*

## METAPHOR AND CULTURE IN TRANSLATION

Stefano Arduini (University of Urbino)

### ABSTRACT

Poetry is a great means of expression that allows us to get closer to the cultures of other countries. It is also one of the genres where words implicitly carry more social and cultural associations. Therefore, transmitting these nuances is a challenge for the translator.

From this premise, in the present paper, we will analyze the most problematic issues that intercultural communication poses in the context of English-Spanish poetic translation, comparing the results of the translation from disparate cultures (Caribbean cultural tradition) with others that are closer together (European cultural tradition).

To this end, we will first take a theoretical approach to the state of the question, where we will focus on metaphor and its inseparability from the culture where it is born. In addition, we will take a second, more practical approach, taking as a basis for our analysis the work of Derek Walcott *The Arkansas Testament*, in which we analyze those fragments that are richer from a translating point of view regarding metaphor, comparing the proposal of the original version with the solutions offered by the target language and briefly commenting on the techniques used by its translators.

The statistical analysis of the results shows that within those cultures with a shared cultural heritage, the original imagery tends to be retained. However, in the disparate ones, the trend is toward an equivalent image standardized in the target culture or toward making the meaning explicit. This allows us to conclude that while we cannot venture to say that there is an optimal method of translation, it is tested with respect to this group of poems in particular, that any kind of metaphor is perfectly translatable as long as we achieve to produce a similar effect and get the work closer to the target audience.

This illustrates the importance of knowing as a translator, not only the languages but also both cultures and explains why it is often legitimately justified to sacrifice strict fidelity to the original text. The aim is finding a balance between being literal to the original message and adapting it to the communicative situation of the public for whom the translation is intended.

KEYWORDS: metaphor, culture, English-Spanish literary translation, poetic translation, translation techniques, Derek Walcott, *The Arkansas Testament*.

## **RESUMEN**

La poesía es un gran medio de expresión, que nos permite conocer la cultura de otros países. Asimismo, es también uno de los géneros donde se encuentran implícitas más asociaciones sociales y culturales, por lo que transmitir estos matices es un reto para el traductor.

A partir de esta premisa, en el presente trabajo analizamos los problemas que plantea la comunicación intercultural en el ámbito de la traducción poética inglés-español, comparando los resultados de la traducción desde culturas dispares (tradición cultural caribeña) con otras más próximas entre sí (tradición cultural europea).

Para tal fin, realizamos en primer lugar una aproximación teórica sobre el estado de la cuestión, donde nos centramos en la metáfora y en su inseparabilidad de la cultura de origen. Igualmente, en segundo lugar, adoptaremos un enfoque eminentemente práctico, tomando como base para nuestro análisis la obra de Derek Walcott *El Testamento de Arkansas*, en la cual analizamos aquellos fragmentos más ricos desde un punto de vista traductológico en lo que respecta a la metáfora, comparando la propuesta de la versión original con las soluciones que nos ofrece la lengua meta y realizando un breve comentario de las técnicas empleadas por sus traductores.

El análisis estadístico de los resultados muestra que en las culturas con un recorrido cultural compartido se tiende a retener la imagen metafórica original. Sin embargo, en las dispares se tiende a buscar una imagen equivalente estandarizada en la cultura meta o a explicitar el sentido. Por lo tanto, concluimos que, aunque no podemos aventurarnos a afirmar que exista un método de traducción óptimo, queda probado que por lo que respecta a este grupo de poemas, cualquier clase de metáfora es perfectamente traducible siendo los principales objetivos producir un efecto similar y conseguir acercar la obra a la audiencia meta.

Esto ilustra la importancia de conocer, como traductor, no sólo los idiomas sino también ambas culturas y explica por qué a menudo es legítimamente justificable que la estricta fidelidad al texto original se vea muchas veces sacrificada. Se trata de encontrar el equilibrio entre la literalidad para con el mensaje original y la adaptación de este a la

situación comunicativa del público destinatario de la traducción.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** metáfora, cultura, traducción literaria inglés-español, traducción poética, técnicas de traducción, Derek Walcott, *El Testamento de Arkansas*.

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## Introduction

Traditionally, metaphors and their translations have always attracted the interest of researchers. This is particularly true in poetics, the field in which they emerged. In recent times, several books, articles and theses have been devoted to the study and discussion of this fruitful topic.

While the vast majority deal with possible ways of translating metaphor in widely disparate languages, we will try to turn this aspect around and conduct a study of two languages that seem to be more closely related: English and Spanish. We will consider two different cases. A first one, where there is a close cultural relationship, as in the poems about Europe and America, whose metaphors would be familiar to us, and a second one concerning two faraway cultures, as in the case of the poems about the Caribbean, whose metaphors are likely to be seen, in our eyes, as innovative.

All this turns into a challenge because we are not only talking about comparing two languages, but also two cultures with totally different frames of reference and ways of thinking.

The starting point of our study is the analysis of the characteristics of the English poetic metaphor and the examination of the changes it may go through when translated into another language, in this case, Spanish. For that purpose, we will take as basis the work of the St Lucian poet Derek Walcott, author of *The Arkansas Testament*.

Since the success of his poetry has crossed beyond the borders of the English-speaking world, it is conceivable that its translators have managed to capture an important part of the wealth of its original metaphorical images in the target language. Therefore, we present the hypothesis that the widespread belief of non-translatability of metaphor and hence the tendency to simply transfer it literally in its original form due to its exclusive character, losing all or part of its original metaphorical sense, can be challenged.

Our aim will be, at a general level, to find out how they have achieved this and to understand what has led them to use certain techniques and not others. And to that end,

we intend to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To explore and understand the poetic work of Derek Walcott and its characteristic duality.
- To approach literary translation and more specifically the modality of poetic translation from a theoretical point of view.
- To configure a proposal of definition and classification of metaphor.
- To make a comparison of two groups of poems: one with exotic metaphors and other with more familiar ones on the basis of the way each faces the treatment of metaphor as well as the techniques used for this purpose.
- To conduct a quantitative study of the translation techniques used and their frequency.
- To prove with empirical data, based on all the above, that it is feasible to translate metaphor if the translator starts out with a primarily cultural intention.

## **Material and Methodology**

We begin our study with the construction of a bilingual corpus, consisting of the two texts we have chosen as the basis for our work: the collection of poems by Derek Walcott, *The Arkansas Testament* and its Spanish translation *El Testamento de Arkansas* by Resines and Bevia.<sup>1</sup> As a work that would fall under the category of Postcolonial Literature, our choice is motivated precisely by its wealth of metaphors and its marked exoticism and transcultural character.

Its dual structure consisting of two groups of poems belonging to two remote and totally different cultural backgrounds: "Here", in reference to his native Caribbean, more faraway and exotic, presumably with very little in common with the target language, and "Elsewhere", about the other countries he visited during his travels around the

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<sup>1</sup> Walcott, Derek. *The Arkansas Testament*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014.  
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world, set mainly in Europe and the USA with which the target culture shares greater ties. This serves as the basis for a contrastive study of the treatment of the innovative metaphor in English-Spanish poetic translation and facilitates a parallel approach in context and not in the abstract.

In a second step, we will conduct a search on each of the two groups for all types of figurative language by selecting those items that seem to be more controversial traductologically speaking, the so-called *rich points*.<sup>2</sup>

Before proceeding to our analysis, we would like to point out that for a better understanding, in each case, a brief explanation of the meaning of the metaphor has been included, as well as the title of the poem to which it belongs, and its subject. Apart from a brief definition, if the terms of comparison contain specific cultural references with which the Spanish reader may not be familiar, in order to make them more illustrative.

Finally, we discuss the translation strategy used in each case, determining its adequacy to that context. It would be verified if it fulfils the requirements of what we understand as a good translation, reflecting the original as much as possible and at the same time ensuring the proper understanding of the readers.

Once this has been done in detail with the most representative examples, we will carry out a statistical study of the translation strategies most used in each group of poems, in order to verify the hypotheses with the results obtained.

All this is preceded by a brief theoretical introduction about the author and his work, the definition of poetic translation, what we mean by metaphor, its different types as well as its connection to the concept of culture and an overview of the classification of strategies proposed by scholars to translate this kind of language, on which we will rely upon along our analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> Agar, Michael. "Culture: Can You Take It Anywhere? Invited Lecture Presented at the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, University of California at Santa Barbara." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 5.2 (2008)

To this end we proceed as follows:

### **The author: Derek Walcott**

As he defines himself, with the blood of many different cultures, “*I who am poisoned with the blood of both*”<sup>3</sup>, Derek Walcott was the first Caribbean native writer to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. Born in Castries, the capital of the island of St. Lucia in the West Indies, a British protectorate and formerly French colony and a descendant of African, Dutch and English roots, his life as well as that of many of his contemporaries was developed between two worlds, a fact that he attempts to reconcile in his work.<sup>4</sup>

Born to a British father from whom he inherited his affinity for painting but raised by his mother, a native school teacher, his early years were divided between the colonial world of the capital on one hand and the local heritage of the rest of the island on the other hand. This allowed him to have free access to art, culture and classic European literature and traditions and at the same time to the native popular literature of oral character.<sup>5</sup>

Later he moved to Kingston, Jamaica where he completed his undergraduate studies at the University of the West Indies. The institution in which, as well as in his native St. Lucia and Grenada, he worked as a teacher later on.

His interest in theater made him spend long seasons in Trinidad, where apart from working as a journalist, he committed himself to creating a unique theater project for the island, an initiative that earned him the award of a scholarship to study at The Circle of New York’s Square Theater.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Walcott, Derek. “A Far Cry from Africa.” *In a Green Night: Poems*, 1948-1960. London: Cape, 1969.

<sup>4</sup> Oblender, David G., ed. “Derek Walcott.” *Contemporary Black Biography*. Detroit: Gale Research Inc, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> Thieme, John. *Derek Walcott*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999. 8.

<sup>6</sup> Derek Walcott b. 1930, The Sea at Dauphin. <<http://snewmanblog.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/walcott-sea-at-dauphin.pdf>>

Currently, he lives between his native St. Lucia and the United States, where, having an acknowledged prestige, he teaches at some of the most important universities including Columbia, Yale and Harvard.<sup>7</sup>

Walcott began writing at an early age and has published prolifically since then. His work originates precisely in the cultural syncretism that surrounds him, a legacy that he puts on paper in English with hints of Latin, French and Patois. Throughout it, he reflects the history, scenery, daily life and customs of the people of the island, the best way of giving voice to the plurality of Caribbean society.<sup>8</sup>

His mastery of lyric, narrative and epic poetry as well as his renowned playwrights owes much to the reading of various authors of the European tradition: Homer, Dante, Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Baudelaire<sup>9</sup> and of the New World: Whitman, Neruda and Césaire. All them very present and referred to throughout his texts.<sup>10</sup>

Among his most notable titles, special mention should be made of his volumes of poetry, several of them landmarks in West Indian literature: *In a Green Night*, with poems like *A Far Cry from Africa* and *Ruins of a Great House* that launched him to fame, the autobiographical *Another Life* and *Sea Grapes* and later works, such as *Midsummer*, *The Star-Apple Kingdom*, *The Fortunate Traveler*, *Collected Poems* or *The Arkansas Testament*.

As well, within his narrative, stands out the poem *Omeros*, the contemporary story of the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer placed throughout the Caribbean. Finally, *Ti-Jean and His Brothers*, *Dream on Monkey Mountain* and *Pantomime* are his most well-known theater plays.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Paravisini-Gebert, Lizabeth. *Literature of the Caribbean*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2008. 216.

<sup>8</sup> "Derek Walcott." *Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*. 2014. Columbia University Press.

<sup>9</sup> Hamner, Robert D. "Introduction: Out of the Ordinary, Derek Walcott." *Callaloo* 28.1 (2005): 1-6.

<sup>10</sup> Handley, George B. *New World Poetics: Nature and the Adamic Imagination of Whitman, Neruda, and Walcott*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010. 77.

<sup>11</sup> Augustyn, Adam., ed. *Contemporary Authors: 1945 to the Present*. New York: Britannica Educational Publishing, 2013. 167-169.

### **The work: The Arkansas Testament**

This collection, dedicated to the Irish poet Seamus Heaney, is considered one of the most notable books of poetry by Derek Walcott. The act of traveling, a recurrent subject throughout his writing and a symbol of the encounter between cultures is taken up again here to reflect the poet's own division as colonized.<sup>12</sup>

So, the book is divided into two parts: "Here", 17 poems evoking his native Caribbean, and "Elsewhere", everything that develops outside of there, 22 poems fruit of its western part with a broad scope: Italy, Germania in Roman times, Wales or Central Arkansas.

These poems, many structured in beautiful quartets, show a skillful use of rhyme. Some very personal, others full of literary and cultural references, they demonstrate both the dichotomy between these two worldviews and in turn their proximity and interdependence.

Among them, the most popular and notable in the first part are *The Lighthouse*, the poem that begins the book, which evokes the mixture of sweet and bitter feelings that come to the poet upon returning to his native Castries during the encounter with an old friend and *The Villa Restaurant* and *The Light of the World*, in which he exalts other forms of beauty, either the terracotta waitress at a restaurant or the traveler on the bus, symbol of his people. From the second part, there is *Fame*, a depressing description of the flip side of being famous, *For Adrian*, a moving elegy for the death of a child, and *Summer Elegies* which relates a love story. The work culminates with *The Arkansas Testament* in 24 stanzas, which recounts his vulnerability as a mulatto in white southern USA.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Goddar, Horace I. "Untangling the Thematic Threads: Derek Walcott's Poetry." *Black Writers' Guild. Kola. The Free Library* (2009)

## Poetic Translation

Translation and poetry have long been considered incompatible. The very nature of a poem differentiates it completely in terms of translation from any other text. A translated text always differs from the original, being its reproduction or exact copy in another language a mere illusion. A lack of literalness that is increased even further in poetic translation.<sup>14</sup>

In poetry, form and content are fused into an indivisible whole in which every detail, thoroughly studied, seamlessly integrates into the set and whose slightest change would cause the collapse of the whole. Meter, rhyme, rhetorical devices, special use of vocabulary, rhythm patterns... features that given the uniqueness of each language, are strictly non-transferable to any other.<sup>15</sup>

While this fact is true, it is also paradoxical that actually there have always been poetic translations, many of them reference works, and this is something that continues to be published and to be well-received by the public.

To address this circumstance, we will make a review of the evolution from the ancient to the current approach in poetic translation, following the classification proposed by the Russian linguist Efim Etkind (qtd. in Larson 58)<sup>16</sup>.

The more traditional currents advocate whether by communicativeness or by literariness. The former is a strictly functional translation limited to the literal meaning behind the one of figurative type employed by the source text. It puts first the transmission of the content, just the opposite of what prioritizes poetry, aesthetic value. However, the latter attaches as greater as possible to the original. It tries to bring the reader close to the style of the author. Far from claiming any poeticity, it rings artificial in the target language for containing many additional annotations in order to explain those nuances that it is not possible to reflect in the main text.

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<sup>13</sup> Parini, Jay., ed. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of American Literature*. London/New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. 274-278.

<sup>14</sup> Raffel, Burton. *The Art of Translating Poetry*. Pittsburgh: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988. 11.

<sup>15</sup> Pollard, David E., ed. *Translation and Creation: Readings of Western Literature in Early Modern China, 1840-1918*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1998.

This approach would include the following strategies:

- *the informative translation in prose*, without poetic aspirations, aiming to provide the reader with a general idea of the source text.
- *the interpretive translation*, combining paraphrase and analysis with translation relegated to a subordinate role.
- *the approximate translation*, in which being not possible to transfer the formal characteristics of the source text, the content is prioritized.
- *the allusive translation* that reflects somehow the poeticity of the source text but using poetic and stylistic devices in only a few verses from the beginning of the target text.

The further away the cultures and languages involved, which inevitably influences their prosody, the more likely it is that these translation methods would be used.<sup>17</sup>

Translation, thus understood, acts as a medium to bring the receiver to the understanding of another language, but entirely without poetic value so the poem ceases to be such in the target language. The close relationship of content and form in a literary text cannot be transmitted only by words, it requires the recreation of similar expressive effects. To fail to transfer this from the original is betraying the source and confusing the reader.

This approach to translation came about due in part to the fact that well into the twentieth century, poetry was not conceived in another format than under the suffocating traditional metric forms. The development of poetic prose and free verse gave way to the implementation of a freer translation of interpretative type, defending losing the fear of loss of rigor and precision in favor of naturalness and fluidity. Even though not all the formally methodical as the original, now, the reader is given a true poem. This implies the complete reformulation of the concept of translation in the field of poetry. From this moment on, the translator does not just transfers from one code to another, but their artistic and creative side begins to be appreciated in the re-creation of

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<sup>16</sup> Larson, Mildred L., ed. *Translation: Theory and Practice, Tension and Interdependence*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1991. 58.

<sup>17</sup> Llácer, Eusebio V. *Introducción a los Estudios sobre Traducción: Historia, Teoría y Análisis Descriptivo*. Valencia: Universitat de València, 1997. 58.

the original text in a new language to the public from another culture, almost as a new poet.

Under this option would be included:

- *the imitative translation*, in which the translator writes another text, personal creation, based thematically on the original poem that inspired it.
- *the recreational translation* that seeks to recreate the original poem in its semantic and formal set, so that no excessive literalism destroys the aesthetic harmony, or gives too much importance to the form to the point of undermining the sense.

Poetic translation understood as a real rewriting job of recreating the original poem in the target language while retaining its essence. The aim would be to go through the translated poem and find that the reader does not perceive the artificiality involved in building a poem in the target language based on an original in another language.<sup>18</sup>

The purpose is to create a text with a dual function, the product of a foreign poem, but at the same time with enough autonomy as creative writing in the target language. While it has a number of factors determined in advance by the author, effects or variants can be also added in order to achieve an equivalent with the same expressive power.<sup>19</sup> It is in this aspect where the challenge of a poetic translation lies and precisely what makes it fascinating.

## **The metaphor**

Metaphor, as a stylistic process, has a universal scope. We could define it as a rhetorical device whose primary function is the identification of two realities *the tenor*, what is being compared (or actual term itself) and *the vehicle* (or metaphorical term

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<sup>18</sup> Pascual, María L. "Un Hito en la Poesía Inglesa Traducida en Antologías: Estudio Descriptivo de la Poesía Inglesa 1945-1948 de Marià Manent." Tesis Doctoral. Universidad de Córdoba, 2000.

<sup>19</sup> Gallegos, José A. "El Capricho de la Traducción Poética." *TRANS: Revista de Traductología*. 5 (2001): 77-90.

evoked) based on a similarity, shared implication or membership.<sup>20</sup>

Being a corpus of small size and focusing our analysis on such a specific topic for which it is not always easy to find examples, we will expand the meaning of metaphor to all metaphorical figurative language including some examples of simile and personification. Although, very similar in spirit, the simile makes comparison explicit through a link: like, resembling to... and personification as ontological metaphor, establishes a relationship of humanization.

To translate metaphorical language is actually translating thought patterns and, therefore, this rhetoric resource becomes a central issue in any study of translation as it shows how it is a process that, actually, has more to do with the relations between cultures than between languages.

### **The metaphor and the culture**

Before we begin, we should reflect on what it is what we mean by culture. We will follow here one of the first definitions of culture from the point of view of cognitive linguistics. In words of the American anthropologist Goodenough (qtd. in Kittel 495)<sup>21</sup>, culture must be understood as “the forms of things that people have in mind, their models of perceiving, relating and otherwise interpreting, which define and characterize them as such”.

Cultural models are thought of as organizations of human experience shared by a group of people, mental representations of the world specific of a certain culture. Therefore, since the metaphor is a figure mainly open to interpretation, its understanding lies deep within the linguistic and cultural lore of the people within which it was born.

It is in metaphor where culture and language show their inseparability. Metaphors in our languages are not just a way of naming but also a way of thinking. They are not merely

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<sup>20</sup> Richards, Igor A. *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965. 93.

<sup>21</sup> Kittel, Harald, ed. *Traduction: Encyclopédie Internationale de la Recherche sur la Traduction*. Berlin/New York: W. de Gruyter, 2004. 495.

an ornamental linguistic phenomenon for expressing a similarity, but mirror the different conceptual systems that structure our world. They are a reflection of cultural models and how these can be related to each other.

The relationship takes place between conceptual systems and not between languages, talking therefore of translation of metaphors means trying to understand how they work within cultures.

A conception that identifies with the two main literary trends in the analysis of metaphor: literalism and figuralism.<sup>22</sup> Literalism, the traditional approach, believes that metaphor is an element of purely ornamental character. A departure from the canonical language that can be replaced without further loss. However, for figuralism it is no longer a rhetorical element. Inherent to the very nature of language, it becomes irreplaceable.

Since the mechanisms for metaphor comprehension are hardly attached in its nature to the language and consequently culture they are born in, its replacement when translating by a literal equivalent expression in the target language is not sufficient, we will not obtain anything beyond mere linguistic information extracted out of its specific cultural context.<sup>23</sup> We must therefore understand metaphor as a hybrid structure<sup>24</sup> that, in order to operate, the signifier must be understood by the receiver as long as it is connected to a metaphorical interpretation in a concrete cultural legacy. The translator's task is therefore to reflect both aspects in translation.

Many metaphors are conventionalized, that is they are often used in any language and culture. Those with a physical basis, the so-called primary metaphors, based directly on a bodily experience, in our interaction with the environment, are good candidates for universal concepts.

However, often it is cultural and social reality, which helps us to grasp the meaning of a metaphorical expression. Most metaphorical concepts are linked to purely cultural

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<sup>22</sup> Fuertes, Pedro. "Metaphor and Translation: A Case Study in the Field of Economics". *La traducción: orientaciones lingüísticas y culturales*. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid (1998): 79-95.

<sup>23</sup> Samaniego, Eva. "Prescripción y Descripción: La Metáfora en los Estudios de Traducción". *TRANS: Revista de Traductología*. 6 (2002): 47-62.

<sup>24</sup> Velasco, María S. and Pedro A. Fuertes. "The Translatability of Metaphor in LSP: Application of a Decision-Making Model." *Revista alicantina de estudios ingleses*.14 (2001): 73-92.

activities and experiences. They are the result of tradition, education or lore. That is, there are metaphors very common in a language or culture, the meaning of which is not easily understood by the members of a different one. It may happen that several related languages use the same or a similar image to express a concept. But this is not always the case, as we know, sometimes every language has its own images. A well understood metaphor in one culture may have entirely different meanings in another part of the world.<sup>25</sup>

In turn, according to their degree of innovation, two types of metaphors are distinguished: *the traditional or classical*, culturally-shared and *the novel*, specific to a determined culture.<sup>26</sup>

The *novel metaphor* also called living metaphor is the one that, not being yet integrated into the linguistic system, produces an effect of strangeness and surprise on the receiver. This can occur whenever a poet creates a new metaphor as well as when a metaphor is transferred from a certain language to another in which it is completely unknown, as occurs in the case of the use of literariness within poetic translation.

For its part, *the traditional, lexicalized metaphor* refers to those clichés that have survived over time, remaining fossilized until the present day and already belonging to the shared lexical background and therefore conceptual scheme of the majority of cultures.<sup>27</sup> While preserving its rhetorical quality, we have become used to them through repeated use and they result already familiar to us. In the case of Western civilization, they mostly had a classical Greco-Roman or biblical origin.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Gutiérrez, Regina. *Estudio Cognitivo-Contrastivo de las Metáforas del Cuerpo: Análisis Empírico del Corazón como Dominio Fuente Inglés, Francés, Español*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010.70-76.

<sup>26</sup> Abrams, Meyer H., and Geoffrey Harpham. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011. 133-134.

<sup>27</sup> In a world history written by and for Europeans, here should be recalled what the scholar Edward Said refers to as "cultural imperialism." While traditional metaphorical references mentioned are shared by the different countries that conform the so-called Western world based on a common history and culture. For their counterparts in what formerly was the colonial world these have been rather imposed.

*"An eurocentric discourse that assumes the normality and preeminence of everything occidental (even the literary canon) correlatively with its representations of the oriental as an exotic and inferior other".*

(cfr. M. H. Abrams. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2011. 236.)

<sup>28</sup> Samaniego, Eva. "Translations We Live by: The Impact of Metaphor Translation on Target Systems." *Lengua y Sociedad: Investigaciones Recientes en la Lingüística Aplicada*. 1st ed. Universidad de Valladolid: Secretariado de Publicaciones e Intercambio Científico, 2005. 61-82.

This shows that there are static metaphors and metaphors that may vary from one language and culture to another, part or entirely. In those cases, we cannot conform with a mere correspondence, since we would risk distorting the meaning conveyed in the target language. The translatability of the figure will be based on the linguistic and cultural points of contact that share the source and the target text. Therefore, we can presuppose that the greater translatability would be that of the most traditional metaphors, probably present in both cultures. However, if in the own language there are already difficulties for understanding novel metaphors, this increases even more for a non-native.<sup>29</sup> Thus, being more difficult to translate cultural metaphors if compared to universals ones.

### **The metaphor in Derek Walcott's work**

While Derek Walcott's metaphors are in most cases quite specific and suggestive, which could lead us to think that they are particularly evocative and easy to understand; they are also primarily based on the Caribbean or the other places visited by the author during his life, which makes them extremely local and specific from a cultural point of view. Therefore, they are likely to cause problems for the translator if the reality described by the metaphor does not exist in the target language and if it does not correspond to their member's perception of the world.<sup>30</sup>

A multitude of variables influence the difficulties of translation of the metaphor in Derek Walcott's work mainly product of exploiting the peculiarities of the language of origin, both of extralinguistic character (the employment of cultural references nonexistent or uncommon in the target language) as well as intralinguistic (word plays, idioms, typical expressions, etc.)<sup>31</sup>

This implies that the translation of the author's metaphors does not depend on an abstract set of rules, but on their particular function within the text. Speaking of

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<sup>29</sup> Lowery, Denise. "Helping Metaphors Take Root in the EFL Classroom." *English Teaching Forum* 51.1 (2013): 12-7.

<sup>30</sup> Newmark, Peter. *A Textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice-Hall International, 1988. 107-108.

<sup>31</sup> Leppihalme, Ritva. *Culture Bumps: An Empirical Approach to the Translation of Allusions*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1997. 1-2.

metaphors in translation means trying to understand how they work within cultures. If we merely transfer a metaphorical expression word by word into a foreign context, we will only obtain partial and poor results. The relationship takes place between conceptual systems and not between languages, therefore, to obtain a translation of quality, we must metaphorize again.

We consider particularly interesting to analyze the translation of this figure of speech, in order to try to discover to what extent metaphor is translatable in two cultures as far away and close as the Caribbean and the Spanish and the strategies used by the translators to do so.

For our analysis, we follow the classification of translation possibilities of metaphor proposed by Newmark (qtd. in Arduini)<sup>32</sup>:

1. "Reproducing the same image in the TL (Target Language)"
2. "Replace the image in the SL (Source Language) with a standard TL image"
3. "Translation of metaphor by simile"
4. "Translation of metaphor (or simile) by simile plus sense"
5. "Conversion of metaphor to sense"
6. "Deletion"
7. "Same metaphor combined with sense"

Accompanied by a brief commentary about the treatment of the cultural references they contain, based on the general classification of translation techniques proposed by Hurtado Albir.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Arduini, Stefano. "Metáfora y Cultura en la Traducción." *Tonos digital: Revista electrónica de estudios filológicos*. 4 (2002)

<sup>33</sup> Hurtado, Amparo. *Traducción y Traductología*. Madrid: Cátedra, 2001. 269-271.

*Adaptation, linguistic amplification, amplification, borrowing, calque, compensation, linguistic*

## Analysis and study of the corpus

Starting from the theoretical bases previously explained, we will analyze below the metaphorical expressions of the different poems in the collection that we considered most significant for the purpose of our work.

These have been divided into different groups, based on those aspects that are most often metaphorized: flora, fauna, the beauty of women, the colors, the smells, the sounds, the landscape, the crafts, as well as proper names (references of historical or mythological type, personalities, works and place names).

Also, we have tried, although it has not always been possible, to include in each an example of the three main geographical areas and therefore cultures that reflect the work: Caribbean, European and American.

### Flora and Fauna

The first area that I would like to deal with is flora and fauna. Throughout the poems that conform "Here", the poet stops at the metaphorical description of tropical landscapes of his native St. Lucia. Thus, many metaphors refer to exotic plants and animals, e.g. the poem *Lighthouse*, in which he remembers the breadfruit in the patio of his childhood; *Letter to the Old Guard*, in which the churning of the leaves of the palm trees recalls to his mind the music of Remembrance Day, or *Cul de Sac Valley*, in which his pronunciation of the Creole language mimics the hoarse echo of leaves.

*[...] Far as that crackling noise* | *[...] Lejanas como ese crepitante sonido*

---

*compression, discursive creation, description, elision, established equivalent, generalization, modulation, particularization, substitution, literal translation, transposition and variation.*

Translation techniques that due to limit of extension and not being the focus of our work, we will just mention here and explain in more detail below those that are employed in the various examples discussed in our analysis.

*of a boyhood climbing the wind,  
the kites of breadfruit leaves rise  
from the dry yard of my mind*

*de una niñez trepando por el viento,  
las hojas del árbol del pan se elevan como  
cometas desde el seco patio de mi mente*

**Breadfruit:** evergreen carpenter tree native of South Pacific, with oval, yellowish fruit and lobed rhomboid shaped leaf.<sup>34</sup>

In this first case, the translators, while maintaining the Spanish-coined equivalent of the original cultural referent *árbol del pan*, make explicit the metaphor of kites talking about tree leaves and transform it into a simile through the link *como*.

*[...] All is so clear now I recall to mind  
the rustling plumes of the four Royal Palms*

*[...] Todo está tan claro hoy que me viene a la memoria  
el sonido de las frondas de las cuatro Palmeras Reales*

**Royal palm:** palm tree native of the West Indies, widely used as ornament in countries of tropical climates because of its large size and the striking shape of its leaves that give the foliage the appearance of feathers.<sup>35</sup>

The Spanish translation limits to make explicit the meaning of the metaphor, replacing the feathers evoked by its real referent, which is simply foliage.

*[...] their echo: Mahaut!  
Forestière! And far,  
the leaf-hoarse echo  
of Mabouya!*

*[...] a su eco: ¡Mahaut!  
¡Forestière! ¡Y a lo lejos,  
El ronco eco de hojas  
de Mabouya!*

**Mabouya:** tropical shrub climber, with elliptical leaves and white or pink

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<sup>34</sup> “Breadfruit.” *The Archives of the Rare Fruit Council of Australia*. <<http://rfarchives.org.au/Next/Fruits/Breadfruit/BreadfruitMutiny02-80.htm>>

<sup>35</sup> Henderson, Andrew, Gloria Galeano, and Rodrigo Bernal. “Royal Palm.” *Field Guide to the Palms of the Americas*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997.

flower.<sup>36</sup>

Being present the explicitation of *leaves* in the original English, whose form does not vary either in Spanish, the metaphorical image of *Mabouya* is reproduced without further specification.

In the next set of poems, entitled “Elsewhere”, more specifically in *A Quartet of Propertius*, their protagonists imagine Italy, which they only know partially from paintings, from their island in the West Indies. In this case, the painter Claude’s chiaroscuro is compared with the fambloyants in Castries bay at sunset.

*[...] Although the harbor of Castries has never seen Gaudi,  
the ferns of flamboyants at twilight are exactly like Claude's.*

---

*[...] Aunque la bahía de Castries jamás haya visto a Gaudí,  
las frondas de helecho de los fambloyanes al atardecer son idénticas a las de Claude.*

.....

Claude Lorrain, pintor francés del s. XVIII famoso por sus paisajes con umbríos primeros planos.

**Flamboyant:** tree very abundant in the West Indies, arranged in a parasol shape with a characteristic red flower and leaves similar to those of ferns.<sup>37</sup>

In this case, the meaning of the metaphor is explained, both speaking of fern fronds and adding a brief footnote in reference to Claude, a French painter based in Italy.

In *The Arkansas Testament*, two of the best known conflicts of the early history of U.S., the Indian Wars and the American Revolution, are metaphorically remembered through an analogy with the types of trees in the area.

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<sup>36</sup> Little, Elbert L and Frank H. Wadsworth. “Palinguán.” *Common Trees of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 1964.

<sup>37</sup> “Flamboyant Tree.” *Buzzle*. <<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/flamboyant-tree.html>>

*[...] Wounds from the Indian wars  
cut into the soft plank tables  
by the picnic lake, and birches  
peel like canoes, and the maple's  
leaves tumble like Hessians*

*[...] Hay heridas de las guerras Indias  
talladas en las planchas de madera blanca  
de las mesas junto al lago de las excusiones,  
y los abedules se despellean como canoas, y  
las hojas de los arces caen como  
mercenarios alemanes*

**Hessians:** German troops hired by the British Crown to fight for them during the American Revolution, which earned them the nickname of mercenaries by the Americans.<sup>38</sup>

Maple and birch, tree species of the vast forests of Arkansas, being unlike previous, usual species in our environment, present no problem of translation and their coined Spanish equivalent is maintained.

While *canoes* does not provoke any problem, the second term of the comparison *Hessians* could result conflictive. Instead, it is used a standard image in the target language, *mercenarios*, replacing the original referent and the subsequent clarification of its origin.

Regarding animal species, in *Latin primer*, Walcott recalls his past in the islands as a school teacher, when he considered the frigate bird as his phoenix; in *Gros-Ilet* describing the environment of this village, metaphorically compares an old tire with the spine of a porpoise and in *to Norline*, which was dedicated to his wife, he turns the term into a metaphor of memory and the passage of time.

*[...] The frigate bird my phoenix,  
I was high on iodine*

*[...] El rabihorcado era mi fénix,  
yo estaba embriagado de yodo*

**Frigate bird:** tropical seabird species of hooked beak, dark plumage and a bag of bare skin on the throat that turns red during courtship.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> "What was a Hessian?" *USHistory.org*.

<<http://www.ushistory.org/washingtoncrossing/history/hessian.htm>>

<sup>39</sup> "Frigate Bird." *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*. 2010. Encyclopedia Britannica.

For translating *frigate bird*, it is employed its common name in Spanish *rabihorcado*. So, the original metaphorical image is preserved. However, instead of the English juxtaposition, the metaphor is made explicit by adding the verb to be.

[...] *And sometimes, like the top of an old tire,  
the black rim of a porpoise.*

[...] *Y ocasionalmente, como un viejo  
neumático,  
el negro lomo de un delfín.*

**Porpoise:** small cetacean of the dolphin family, common in oceanic waters, black on top and with a characteristically blunt snout.<sup>40</sup>

Rather than its faithful equivalent in Spanish *marsopa*, *porpoise* is replaced by a more common metaphorical image in the target language. It is used as a hypernym, a similar species that results more familiar to the reader, the dolphin.

[...] *to memorize this passage  
of a salt-sipping tern,  
like when some line on a page  
is loved, and it's hard to turn*

[...] *para memorizar este pasaje  
de una golondrina sorbedora de sal,  
como cuando se ama una línea en  
una página, y se hace difícil pasarla.*

**Tern:** small sea bird, similar to the gull, of black and white plumage, long wings and a forked tail.<sup>41</sup>

This metaphor is translated by using a cultural equivalent, a metaphorical image already standardized in the target language. Its Spanish form *charrán* or a possible amplification like *gaviota* are substituted by *golondrina* since the context *salt-sipping*, already suggests to the reader what it really deals with.

On the other hand, in “Elsewhere”, similar metaphors appear in the poem *Sunday at the Old Republic*, which describes the monkey of a veteran during a sunset in Rouen.

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<sup>40</sup> "Porpoise." Op. cit. note 36 p. 18

<sup>41</sup> "Tern." Op. cit. note 36 p. 18

*[...] his marmoset's  
questioning tail and eyes  
that seem always amazed  
at the chain around its waist*

*[...] el interrogante de la cola  
y los ojos de su mono,  
que parecen siempre asombrados  
por la cadena que rodea su cintura*

**Marmoset:** small long-tailed monkey, long valued as a pet, with characteristic steal and reddish or blackish fur, that inhabits the South American jungles.<sup>42</sup>

The term *marmoset* is amplified to an image more accessible to the reader, the hyperonym *mono*. Likewise, the original personification of the tail in English is made explicit. It no longer questions but transforms itself into a question mark.

In the description of a fruit plantation in Central America, in the poem of the same name, Walcott metaphorically speaks of a flock of birds floating on the bare branches of the trees.

*[...] In spring, in the upper provinces  
of the Empire, yellow tanagers  
float up through the bare branches.*

*[...] En primavera, en las provincias altas  
del Imperio, tanagras amarillas  
se ciernen entre las ramas desnudas*

**Tanager:** small songbird, villager of rainforests, with a plumage of bright colors: yellow, blue and green.<sup>43</sup>

In this case, the cultural reference *tángara* is maintained, but the metaphorical image of birds floating breaks, the literal sense of the action is explicated, now they hover above.

In *The Arkansas Testament*, the poet in his journey through the streets of Arkansas, whose history was constructed by blacks and whites, metaphorically sees the southern sunlight as a mongrel dog who comes to greet him. As well, the exploitation of resources on American soil by the Mormons transforms into the dust that chokes the snouts of gophers.

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<sup>42</sup> "Marmoset." Op. cit. note 36 p. 18

<sup>43</sup> "Tanager." *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. 4rd ed. Boston: Houghton, 2004.

[...] *I watched the shell  
of a white sun tapping its yolk  
on the dark crust of Fayetteville*  
[...] *Abounding light  
raced towards me like a mongrel  
hoping that it would be caressed*

[...] *Vi la cáscara  
de un sol blanco golpeando su yema  
sobre la oscura corteza de Fayetteville*  
[...] *Una luz saltarina  
corrió hacia mí como un perro mestizo  
esperando ser acariciada*

**Mongrel:** term used to refer to the animal result of interbreeding, especially a dog of mixed or indeterminate breed.<sup>44</sup>

Although instead of the literal *mongrel*, it is added the previous explication of dog, the simile is faithfully reproduced.

[...] *I watched its gold bars explode  
on the wagon axles of Mormons*  
[...] *their wide oxen road  
raising dust in the gopher's nostrils*

[...] *Vi explotar sus barras de oro  
en los ejes de los carros de los Mormones*  
[...] *su ancho camino de bueyes  
levantando polvo en los hocicos de los  
perritos de las praderas*

**Gopher:** type of burrow rodent abundant on American soil, of earthy color with long claws and teeth. It digs underground tunnels in search of food or shelter.<sup>45</sup>

Again, avoiding the most faithful Spanish equivalent, *taltuza*, which would bewilder the reader for excessively specialized, it is employed a metaphorical image that works on the target language, a rodent more typical and generally more well-known also native of the US, *perritos de las praderas*.

## Women's beauty

Through the analysis of both sets of poems, we can see how are described the

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<sup>44</sup> "Mongrel." Op. cit. note 36 p. 18

<sup>45</sup> "Pocket Gophers." *Living with Wildlife*. <<http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/gophers.pdf>>

features and beauty of local and foreign women.

Thus, within “Here” in *The light of the world* and *The Restaurant Villa*, natives are portrayed as panthers with ebony mouths and eyes of slate colour.

The author compares the smell of a woman that he encounters on the bus with that of a panther. As it is a species with which we are familiarized in the West, it is maintained the same metaphorical image as in the original.

*[...] I imagined a powerful and sweet  
odour coming from her, as from a still panther*

*[...] Imaginé su aroma poderoso y dulce,  
como el de una pantera en reposo*

*[...] it was like a statue, like a black  
Delacroix's*

*Liberty Leading the People, the gently bulging  
whites of her eyes, the carved ebony mouth,  
the heft of the torso solid, and a woman's*

*[...] era como una estatua, como un  
Delacroix negro*

*La Libertad guiando al pueblo, la suave  
curva del blanco de sus ojos, la boca  
en caoba tallada, su torso sólido y  
femenino*

More or less exotic, these two types of wood, mahogany and ebony are quite common in Spanish. Therefore, we cannot talk of cultural adaptation but of modulation. The adjective that goes with *carved* is adapted to a more natural and standard collocation for Spanish-speakers: *caoba tallada*. However, with this change, it is lost the double meaning of the word in English, also used to refer to African Americans.

*That terra cotta waitress,  
elbows out, seems to brood  
on her own shape, her irises  
now slate, now hazel-hued*

*[...] Esa camarera de terracota,  
con los brazos en jarras, parece cernirse  
sobre su propia forma, sus iris  
unas veces color teja, otras avellana*

It occurs similarly with another material slate, which is used as a metaphor of the eye colour. As a way of adapting it to the context, in which it is made repeated reference to brown tonalities, *slate* is modulated to *tile*, a product often made from this material,

which allows to attach it to the other tone *hazel* in a more homogenous way. Also metaphor fades in favor of description aiming to be as clear and explicit as possible: *sus iris unas veces color teja, otras avellana.*

On the contrary, already in “Elsewhere”, the receptionist in *The Arkansas Testament* has the sight of corn and denim color, the curves of the diva of *Verse de Societé* transform her in a Madame Butterfly of rounded wings and the rough ways of the protagonist of *Menelaus* make her mere white trash.

[...] *“How’ll you pay for this, sir?  
Cash or charge?” I missed the  
chance of answering, “In kind,  
like my colour.” But her gaze  
was corn-country, her eyes frayed  
denim. “American Express.”*

[...] “*¿Cómo desea pagar, señor?  
¿En efectivo o con tarjeta?*” Perdí la  
ocasión de responder, “*En especie,  
como mi raza.*” Pero su mirada  
era ingenua, sus ojos algodón  
deshilachado. “*American Express.*”

In this case, being impossible to keep the original metaphor without causing artificiality in Spanish, *su mirada era maíz campestre*, the figurative meaning of the original is explicited employing the adjective *ingenua*, in reference to that purity and innocence that used to be associated with the rural.

Metaphorical image that is taken up, partially retained, in a second term. Instead of using the word *vaquero* that could bring some American local color, the focus is placed on the culture of arrival. The eye tone *frayed denim* is translated by the more neutral cotton, through which the color of the girl eyes cannot sadly be longer guess.

[...] *Now the only thing as great  
as an empire is a diva. An hourglass. It’s  
why the most symmetrical digit is an 8 -  
spectacle aside, a round-winged Butterfly.*

[...] Hoy sólo una diva es tan grande  
como un imperio. Un reloj de arena. Es  
por ello por lo que el dígito más  
simétrico es el 8 -  
aparte de unas gafas, una Madame  
Butterfly de alas redondas.

This strophe shows the necessity, not only of linguistic knowledge, but also of literary creativity and resourcefulness on the side of the translator. In the context of a diva show, rather than just the literal translation of *a butterfly of rounded wings* that would be too poor, the translators opt for the discursive creation *Madame Butterfly* in reference to the opera of the same name.

*[...] through her smoke-grey  
eyes, I saw the white trash that was  
Helen: too worn-out to argue  
with her Romany ways.*

*[...] a través de sus ojos, gris  
humo, vi la basura blanca que era  
Helen: demasiado agotada para  
combatir sus costumbres gitanas.*

.....  
*White trash:* apelativo que se aplica a los pobres no negros del sur de los EE.UU.

This example demonstrates that metaphor not only pervades literary language, it is also very present in the ordinary language expressions of our daily lives. The same metaphor *white trash* is reproduced in Spanish through the calque of the original American expression, clarifying in a footnote what it refers to.

### Colours, sounds and smells

Another aspect that is also very striking are the different tonalities, sounds and smells that the poet associates with diverse cultures. In *Latin Primer*, the sunset in his native Antilles is described by the pigment of a native snail; in *A quartet of Propertius*, the light of orange tonalities becomes gamboge, a pigment employed by the painter Giotto; in *Ocean Nox*, in the description of the ocean at night, the moon is a quarter like an Iranian dagger and in *The Testament of Arkansas*, the sunset through the pines has the blue and red colors of the US national flag and the dawn paints the houses in a Confederate gray.

*[...] one drop from the sun's murex  
stained the foam's fabric wine*

*[...] una gota de la púrpura del sol  
teñía de vino el tejido de la espuma*

**Murex:** marine gastropod common in tropical waters, with a long spiral-shaped

shell and numerous spines, of which the tyrian purple pigment is obtained.<sup>46</sup>

In its translation into Spanish, the English figurative metaphor *the sun's murex*, which refers to the evening light, is replaced by its literal meaning *the sun's purple*.

*[...] What sort of moon will float up through the almonds like a  
bobbing marker in the surf of trees?  
A quarter-moon, like an Iranian dagger?*

---

*[...] ¿Qué clase de luna emergerá flotando entre los almendros  
como una oscilante boyas en el oleaje de los árboles?  
¿Una media luna, como una daga persa?*

*[...] the calabashes were quietly going out of their gourds,  
the barrack walls were turning as gamboge as Giorgione*

---

*[...] las güiras salían silenciosamente de sus calabaceras,  
las paredes de la cabaña se iban tiñendo de un tono  
anaranjado a lo Giorgione*

**Gamboge:** orange or brown resin obtained from trees of the family of *garcinia* of Asian origin. Once solidified and powdered acquires a very intense yellow color suitable for pictorial use.<sup>47</sup>

The same occurs with the verse *as gamboge as Giorgione*, that the Spanish translation reduces again to explicit its literal meaning, *un tono anaranjado a lo Giorgione*.

Instead of being faithful to the terms used in the original which would provide *un cuarto creciente como una daga iraní*, the simile is modulated to a standard image in the target language in order to try to sound as natural as possible, resulting in the expression *media luna* and a more usual collocation for dagger, *persa*.

<i>[...] Over Arkansas, they can see between the swaying cracks</i>	<i>[...] Sobre Arkansas pueden ver a través de los cimbreantes huecos</i>
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<sup>46</sup> "Murex." Op. cit. note 36 p. 18

<sup>47</sup> "Gamboge." *Worthless Words for the Day*. <<http://home.comcast.net/~wwftd>>

***in the pines the blue of the Union,  
as the trunks get rustier.***

*entre los pinos el azul de la Unión,  
mientras los troncos se vuelven cada vez más  
rojizos.*

The American flag has 13 red and white stripes representing the original 13 colonies that declared independence from UK and a rectangle on the top with a blue background and 50 stars one for each state of the Union.<sup>48</sup>

***[...] Dawn was fading the houses  
to an even Confederate grey.***

*[...] El alba iba fundiendo las casas  
en un homogéneo gris Confederado.*

The Confederation was the Republic conformed by the 11 Southern states that seceded from the USA in order to preserve slavery and the rights of the states, dissolved after its defeat in the American Civil War.<sup>49</sup>

Other colors like the blue of the Union or the Confederate gray, referring to the color of the uniform of the Confederate soldiers, historical phenomena with which we are more familiar, are transferred directly by a calque. However, the double meaning of *rusty*, red but also oxidated or outdated is lost in the translation into Spanish *se vuelven cada vez más rojizos*, which opts by its most explicit sense.

As for the sounds, in “Here”, within the poem *Letter to the Old Guard*, the clank of metal and cymbals is reminiscent of the tinkling of a game of magic and in *Oceano Nox* as well as in *The Arkansas Testament*, ancient African dances become, respectively, the reggae of a fault or the jive of the bumps’ gait. Also in the latter, the sweet smell of Arkansas is compared to a barn opening.

***[...] he hears the chink-a-chink  
of brass and cymbals, when the  
crowd’s outcry kept the pigeons  
circling Piccadilly Circus***

*[...] recuerda el resonar  
de metales y címbalos, cuando el  
alboroto de la multitud mantenía a  
las palomas en vuelo en torno a*

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<sup>48</sup> Znamierowski, Alfred. “Stars and Stripes.” *Flags of the World: An Illustrated Guide to Contemporary Flags*. London: Southwater, 2000.

<sup>49</sup> “Confederate States of America.” Op. cit. note 36 p. 18.

Piccadilly Circus

**Chink-a-chink:** magic trick, in which four metallic objects (coins, weights or bottle caps) are arranged in a quadrangular way and seem to move on a mat with only the aid of the barehanded games of the wizard.<sup>50</sup>

Metaphorical expression that the Spanish translation replaces by a verb that expresses its literal meaning *resonar*, searching explicit understanding on the part of the receiver.

[...] **Hugging walls in my tippler's hop  
-the jive of shuffling bums,  
a beat that comes from the chain-**

[...] *Abrazado a las paredes en mi danza de  
borracho -el jive arrastrado de los vagabundos,  
un ritmo que proviene de las cadenas-*

.....  
Nombre de un baile y un ritmo de jazz con improvisaciones.

In this case, the original metaphor is maintained, aided by the context and the small description that follows, *ritmo que proviene de las cadenas*, taking the loanword from English and clarifying its meaning in a foot page.

[...] **the original fault  
unsettled by the shallows' dark commotion;  
he sings a reggae in a moon so bright  
you can read palms by it.**

[...] *la falla original  
alterada por la oscura commoción de los bajíos;  
canta un reggae bajo una luna tan brillante  
que se pueden leer las manos a su luz.*

The same occurs with other types of dance, for example reggae, that being more generally known is transferred from English without further clarification.

[...] **Arkansas smelt as sweet  
as a barn door opening. Like horses  
in their starlit, metallic sweat,  
parked cars grazed in their stalls.**

[...] *Arkansas tenía un olor tan dulce  
como el de la puerta de un establo al  
abrirse. Como caballos con su metálico  
sudor iluminado por las estrellas,  
los coches aparcados pacían en sus*

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<sup>50</sup> “Chink-a-Chink.” *MagicPedia*. <<http://www.geniimagazine.com/magicpedia/Chink-a-Chink>>

|      *cuadras.*

While barn has more the sense of a place to store grain, the translator chooses to adapt the metaphorical image to the context, employing a functional equivalent. Since later on, a group of parked cars is compared with a herd of horses, it is employed the word *establo*, which sounds certainly antithetical.

## **Landscapes**

The metaphors used in describing the landforms and reliefs present in different parts of the world and the forms that acquires the water, element almost omnipresent in Walcott's poetry, are also quite revealing.

In "Elsewhere", set in the Italy of Propertius, sand dunes crumble as travertine marble; in *Summer elegies*, that celebrates the author's love for Cynthia, the Caribbean Bay in summer undulates with the waves movement like the resulting chips of carving wood; in *OCEANOX*, the crashings applaud launching whitecaps into space and in *The Testament of Arkansas*, Rhode Island islands are scattered as if they were wheat.

*[...] sand scorches  
and crumbles like the massive blocks made of travertine  
and stars burn at night as far as the empire's torches*

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*[...] la arena se abrasa  
y desmorona como gigantescos bloques de mármol travertino  
y las estrellas arden por la noche lejanas como las antorchas  
del imperio*

**Travertine:** porous limestone of light yellow color used in construction since Ancient Rome.<sup>51</sup>

The Spanish translation retains the original simile although adds a prior clarification, explaining what type of material is being referred to, marble.

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<sup>51</sup> "Travertine." *The Stones of Rome*. <<http://www.romeartlover.it/Stones.html>>

<i>[...] The bay shines like tinfoil, crimps like excelsior</i>	<i>[...] La bahía resplandece como papel de aluminio, se ondula como virutas de madera</i>
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**Excelsior:** commercial name for the curly wood shavings used as packing material for transport and protection of fragile items.<sup>52</sup>

Being this trademark unknown in the Spanish-speaking world, the translator decides to keep the simile but paraphrasing its sense, *se ondula como virutas de madera*.

<i>[...] Let her light dissolve (...) dulling the cheers of an applauding crowd of breakers flinging whitecaps into space</i>	<i>[...] Dejemos pues que su luz se disuelva amortiguando los vítores de una multitud de rompientes que aplaude lanzando cimas de espuma hacia el espacio</i>
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The rest of the metaphor remains intact in its Spanish translation. However, as there exists no equivalent term for *whitecaps*, a kind of wave with a foamy white crest, the translator chooses, rather than a description that would be too extensive, to create a metaphor within metaphor and speak of *cimas de espuma*.

<i>[...] A light, without any noise, in amber successive stills, stirred the waves off Narragansett and the wheat-islanded towns.</i>	<i>[...] Una luz, sin sonido alguno, en sucesivas imágenes fijas en ámbar, agitó las olas frente a Narragansett y las ciudades-isla en un mar de trigo.</i>
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Being *wheat-islanded towns*, a metaphor difficult to be transferred into Spanish for its formulation, the translator recurs to the use of compensation and amplification. The impossibility of employing the metaphor *wheat-islanded* (*atrigadas*) together with the only transferable term *ciudades isla* is compensated through the amplification *en un mar*

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<sup>52</sup> Bobick, James E. "Excelsior." *The Handy Science Answer Book*. Pittsburgh: Carnegie Library, 2011.

*de trigo.*

As well, Walcott parodies its route from the Caribbean to USA, a land in which he still feels weird, equating it to the trip that takes a cockroach on the carpet of his hotel room until a South of shallows strangely familiar to him.

*[...] A roach crossed its oceanic  
carpet with scurrying oars  
to a South that it knew, calm  
shallows of crystalline green.*

*[...] Una cucaracha cruzó la oceánica  
alfombra con precipitados golpes de remo  
hasta un Sur que conocía, tranquilas  
aguas poco profundas de un verde cristalino.*

**Shallows:** those areas within a surface of water with less profundity.<sup>53</sup>

So, instead of choosing its coined Spanish equivalent *bajíos* that would sound excessively specialized for this context, the translator opts for the description of its meaning: *aguas poco profundas*.

Other metaphorical references as *drenched ramparts*, referring to the cliffs, *locked harbors* or *freckled forest* literally *murallas empapadas*, *puertos cerrados* or *bosque pecoso* have been also modulated seeking greater poety: *empapados acantilados*, *bahías con el cerrojo echado y bosque moteado* respectively.

## Crafts

It occurs similarly with metaphors related with trades, also very significant in terms of the description of the lifestyle of the different peoples mentioned in his poems.

At *The lighthouse*, a poem in which the poet recalls the old days in Castries, he refers to poetry as the craft of verse. Already in “Elsewhere”, *Streams* set in Wales, see the miners faces blackened with coal as if they would be American minstrels and in *The Arkansas Testament*, the typical hunter cap DEERE takes the floor.

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<sup>53</sup> "Shallows." Op. cit. 36 p. 18.

[...] **For more care in the craft of verse,**  
**kneel, for the sand's moonlit linen.**

[...] *Para sentirte más protegido en el oficio de poeta arrodíllate, por la arena, lienzo iluminado por la luna.*

Here, instead of the calque *el arte del verso*, the translator chooses to make explicit the meaning of the metaphor, employing *el oficio del poeta*.

[...] **In the green coaling station  
of our harbour, (...) we saw the frayed  
knots of miners with minstrel faces**

[...] *En la verde estación carbonera  
de nuestra bahía (...) veíamos las deshilachadas  
reuniones de mineros con rostros tiznados como  
cómicos*

**Minstrel:** cómico, muy popular antiguamente, que cantaba con la cara tiznada para imitar a los negros.

[...] **Two doors down, a cafeteria  
reminded me of my race (...)**  
**Four DEERE caps talking deer hunting.  
I looked for my own area.**

[...] *Dos puertas más abajo, una cafetería  
me recordó el motivo de mi carrera (...)*  
*Cuatro gorras DEERE hablaban de la caza del  
ciervo. Busqué mi propio lugar.*

**DEERE:** Marca de maquinaria industrial y agrícola cuya pronunciación es próxima a la de ciervo (deer) en inglés.

In the case of *minstrel faces* and *four DEERE caps*, the term employed for the metaphor is explained in a footnote. However, while in the case of *DEERE* the loanword remains, the one of *minstrel* vanishes being substituted by the adding *rostros tiznados* and the amplification *como cómicos* that transform the metaphor into a simile.

### Proper names

As for the references of historical or mythological type, place names or characters that Derek Walcott includes within the metaphors throughout his poems, the trend is, as it usually occurs in translation, not to translate them or to use instead their institutionalized equivalent.

So occurs with the names of places in his native St. Lucia: *La Navidad... desde la ciudad a Vieuxfort, de Vieuxfort a Castries, alivia el camino entre los pueblos.*

The muses to whom he dedicated his poems: *Su traqueteante zumbido te excluye, Philomene, como a la estrellas de tu cocina de carbón.*

The personalities from literature and music: *chamuscando el techo de la mente como una novela de Hardy / a través de las tiznadas cuencas de ojos huecos como oboes oíamos esos trémulos scherzos de Beethoven.*

The geographical areas visited: *una ronca voz de locutor embalsamaba los Black Hills ordenaba regocijarse al Mojave.*

The mitological figures from in and out of his island: *La cabeza de Holofernes se pudre en un cuchillo de pelar patatas /el renqueante cazador con pies de ciervo Papa Bois, es tan sólo un clon de Pan.*

Preferred books and paintings: *esos andrajosos peones que pasaban las hojas de mi Libro de las Horas. / era como una estatua, como un Delacroix negro La libertad guiando al pueblo.*

Streets: *las estrellas... esos puntos conectados por líneas de los pasatiempos infantiles, que completo farola tras farola hasta La Place.*

Famous buildings: *el yeso azul tras su cabeza es mi Capilla Sixtina.*

Trade marks: *dos pilares de dorado whisky Johnnie Walker.*

And a long etcetera.

## Results

As we mentioned earlier, we started from the study of the translation strategies of 30 metaphors, 15 from the “Here” section including exotic metaphors from the Caribbean area and 15 from “Elsewhere” with metaphors of both western European origin as well as U.S. (See Appendix I). Thus, we will proceed to analyze them first statistically and then we will elaborate some graphics of the results obtained in order to contrast the strategies of translation of metaphor that predominate on those cultures closest to ours, with which we share a cultural background and those, which are more distant, with which we will presumably have less points in common. All this aiming to compare how the translator faces the treatment of metaphor in each case as well as to analyze the techniques and methodology he uses for that purpose.

**Table 1**

Type and number of metaphor translation strategies applied in each group.

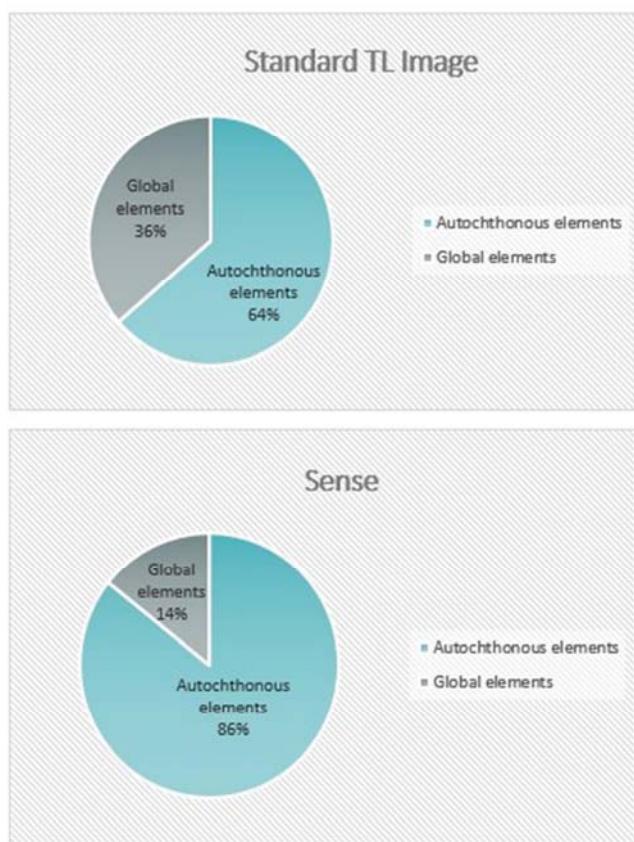
	HERE	ELSEWHERE
<b>1. Reproducing the same image in the TL</b>	4	3
<b>2. Replace the image in the SL with a standard TL image</b>	6	4
<b>3. Translation of metaphor by simile</b>		
<b>4. Translation of metaphor (or simile) by simile plus sense</b>	1	1
<b>5. Conversion of metaphor to sense</b>	4	3
<b>6. Deletion</b>		
<b>7. Same metaphor combined with sense</b>		4

If we look at the resulting comparison chart, we can see that in the second column, which corresponds to “Elsewhere” with metaphors containing cultural references that share countries of the Western world and consequently supposedly more familiar, there is a greater tendency to retain the original metaphorical image either alone or accompanied

by a clarification of its meaning in a footnote.

However, in the case of the first column representing the group of poems “Here”, with metaphors employing tropical cultural references, the trend is to focus on the reception in the target language and the point is to find a standard image that captures the original meaning and in turn is easily understood by the receiver.

If we make a detailed analysis of the techniques of substitution by meaning or a standard image in the target language, we realize that the autochthonous elements (fauna, flora, sounds, pigments...) are the richer points in what refers to the poetic nature of metaphor. They are the most innovative, but at the same time more problematic. Most of the translations with an equivalent metaphorical image or restricted to meaning contain references of this type.

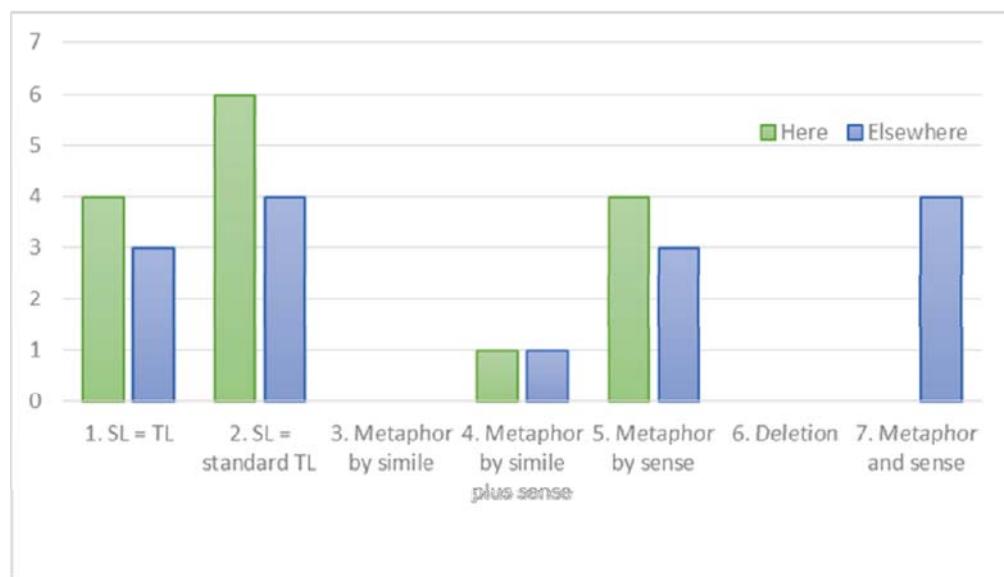


**Fig.1.** Comparison of percentage of substitution techniques according to references’ origin.

Also, sadly it is often impossible to reflect the figurative and rhetorical devices used in the source language without falling into artificiality. So, the translator sees himself

forced to simply translate the metaphor's literal meaning without going beyond. The frequency of this technique is relatively medium in both cases.

The frequency of replacing the metaphor by a simile or a simile plus sense is very low due to space constraints and because the ideal is to be faithful and modify as little as possible the structure of the original text and the wishes of the author, more even in the case of poetry.



**Fig.2.** Frequency of metaphor translation strategies by group.

Finally, we must remember that it must always be taken into account the variation of the language with which we are working. As mentioned earlier, we are dealing with cultures and not only with languages. Just as we cannot simply associate English with England and USA, other many cultures throughout the world have English as first language, including the Caribbean; surely if the target language of this translation would be Latin Spanish instead of peninsular, these results would differ much due to their common cultural heritage and a geographical situation that allows greater contact. Probably, many of the references mentioned in the metaphors would be more familiar, which would favor the intact transfer of many more metaphorical images.

## Conclusion and Further Research

To meet the final purpose of this paper, which is the analysis of the translation of

metaphors in the work of Derek Walcott, *The Arkansas Testament* in order to find out what strategies have been carried out and check their degree of effectiveness, we must first go back on certain concepts:

Languages, as emanating from a specific community, are a reflection of a culture in a particular space and time in its history and therefore involve a number of defining metaphorical references that characterize them. This legacy, repeated nowhere else in the world, brings difficulties to be translated. Recognizing the limitations that arise, it is the translator's task to find appropriate means to suggest or evoke these metaphors in the given culture.

Faced with this challenge, he must seek a path between subordinating the proposal to the original text in order to preserve local color (to some extent at the cost of the receiver's understanding) and opting for a more neutral cultural equivalent lacking the weight of the original, yet more accessible to the receiver.

It is demonstrated then, taking up again our initial hypothesis that metaphors – although according to their category, use, context and the cultural background of the three groups involved in the process (poet, translator and reader) – far from being utopian, are nevertheless perfectly translatable, when subjected, as we have seen, to the different existing translation procedures.

Their analysis leads us to the conclusion that there are no worst or best strategies or even an optimal cultural strategy to translate metaphors, but the skill consists in trying to find one that suits best the context and specific communicative situation.

Since almost all of the essence of a poem rests on the culture and experiences from which it originated, this must be brought to the reader in an accessible manner, and here metaphor has an unavoidable role.

Assuming that the integrity of the original cannot always be retained, it is precisely on this point of making the message available to the reader of the target language, which we must begin to adopt a conception of translation as going a step beyond the mechanical transfer from one code to another. Moreover, when dealing with poetry, we

have the added constraint of handling with a special form of translation, which although has at the same time the unique expressive help of rhythm, imagery and rhyme inevitably involves sacrificing the terms and nuances of the original to adapt to the required short format.

As we are targeting to a non-native audience, whose culture and society are foreign to the context from which the collection of poems originated, many of the metaphors particularly significant or irreplaceable for the original audience for which it was intended do not need to be equally so for the reading enjoyment of those readers who are not so familiar with that language and culture. It would be probably sufficient to provide a series of more general cultural concepts supported by explanatory information when necessary.

The intercultural position of the translator as mediator between cultures resembles that of the reader. The translator acts as an accomplice that guides the reader's journey. At a poetry reading, the public fully use their intercultural skills, willingly accepting a foreign cultural system as their own, in exchange of which is the ultimate goal, enjoy the poem.

Finally, it would not be fair to conclude without mentioning the possible future lines of research and practical applications of this type of works. An increasing number of studies dedicated to the translation of metaphor in different languages are being carried out. Beyond being limited to the theoretical framework, they expand into outlining what are the most appropriate methods for improving the quality of poetic translation for the public.

Regarding their pedagogical use, they also have a place in translation class, as aids for future translators, and as another way for students to learn and immerse themselves in the culture of origin.

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