



African Journal of Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (AJASHSS)

المجلة الإفريقية للدراسات المتقدمة في العلوم الإنسانية والاجتماعية

Online-ISSN: 2957-5907

Volume 2, Issue 2, April-June 2023, Page No: 1-8

Website: <https://aaasjournals.com/index.php/ajashss/index>

Arab Impact factor 2022: 1.04

SJIFactor 2022: 4.338

ISI 2022: 0.510

Philosophical Approaches to Literary Translation

Mohamed Sidi Mohamed Sidi Mahmoud*

Professor, Department of English, Nouakchott University, Nouakchott, Mauritania

*Corresponding author: sidimahmoud85@gmail.com

Received: February 24, 2023

Accepted: March 19, 2023

Published: April 02, 2023

Abstract:

This article discusses the philosophical foundations of literary translation tackled by thinkers such as Walter Benjamin, Ezra Pound, Jacques Derrida and Georg Steiner. More specifically, it brings to view Benjamin's call for the protection of the voice of the other, Pound's archaism, Derrida's notion of difference and Steiner's hermeneutic motion. It pinpoints the limitations that characterize their views and the complications that frame their discussions. The article shows the extent to which their models help deconstruct the predominating domestication strategies which lead to the monolithic discourse of representation via translation. That is to say, they deconstruct the hegemony prevailed in traditional Western literary paradigms of translations. However, their models are philosophically oriented, without providing relevant methods for dealing with the linguistic gaps encountered in the literary translation.

Keywords: Translation, Foreignization, Domestication, Culture, Translation Procedures, Inter-Cultural Communication.

Cite this article as: M. S. M. S. Mahmoud, "Philosophical Approaches to Literary Translation," *African Journal of Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (AJASHSS)*, Vo2. 1, No. 2, pp. 1–8, April-June 2023.

Publisher's Note: African Academy of Advanced Studies – AAAS stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Licensee African Journal of Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences (AJASHSS), Libya. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Introduction

The philosophical approach to translation owed much debt to the German romantic age where thinkers such as Johann Goethe and Friedrich Schleiermacher incorporated romanticism, philosophy and hermeneutics to approach translation.¹ However, the scholarly interest in translation as a discipline began only in the twentieth century when the insightful viewpoints elaborated by these thinkers were taken up and developed by contemporary philosophers.² This article aims to discuss philosophical approaches to literary translation, with particular focus on Walter Benjamin's theory of translation, which revolutionizes translation studies in the last century. In the same vein, the article also discusses the translation theories of Ezra Pound, Jacques Derrida and George Steiner. The translation frameworks developed by these theorists help adequately valorize cultural differences in translation and, thus, allow the translator a very active role in the transfer of culture, which frames the original text.

¹Marry Hornby, *The Turns of Translation Studies: New Paradigms or Shifting Viewpoints?* (Amsterdam: Benjamins Translation Library, 2006), 3.

Andy Cheung, "A History of Twentieth Century Translation Theory and its Application for Bible translation," *Journal of Translation* 9, no. 1 (2013): 3, https://www.sil.org/system/files/reapdata/14/62/43/146243287590382592044287238746367616828/siljot2013_1_01.pdf

Benjamin's Afterlife

In his seminal essay "The Task of the Translator", the German philosopher Walter Benjamin develops a model of translation which has great advantages over contemporary translation theory. He endeavors to go beyond the scope of the traditional dichotomous approaches on translation such as literal/free and foreignization/domestication, by claiming the kinship of languages. That is, the objective of translation, for Benjamin, is not to transfer the subject matter; it is rather to reach a particular 'language purity' or 'kinship'.³ When elaborating on Benjamin, Orinica asserts:

What Benjamin does is to shift the focus of the function of translation away from a singular emphasis on and duty to transferral of meaning from one language to another with its concomitant taking of sides: literal or free, source-text/language /culture or target text/language/culture, etc, and allows for the co-existence of another function of translation, that of revelation, albeit momentarily of the reciprocal relationship between languages.⁴

Having transcended dichotomies, Benjamin focuses on the kinship of language, which can be reached by the search for what he calls 'pure language' in translation.⁵ Hence, translation becomes a means to achieve and consolidate the kinship of languages. This implies that the function of translation is to confirm and consolidate the assumed likeness between languages as it unravels the original. Benjamin puts this clearly in a simile in his essay "The Task of the Translator" where he states: "The language of the translation envelops its content like a royal robe."⁶ Implicitly, Benjamin claims that the content is eternal and homogenous, and the function of the translation is to reshape it in an artistic and beautiful form that looks like 'the royal robe'. Here, Benjaminian model seems to be so ideal and philosophic. At this point, pertinent questions have been brought to view: How can the translator materialize the Benjaminian concept of the 'pure language'? Or is Benjamin's concept of "the fresh linguistic air reachable?"⁷

Having viewed translation as art, Benjamin contends that there is difference between the artist's experience with its "temporal effect" and his/her thoughts which are "potentially eternal."⁸ Materializing this eternity is one of the essential functions of translation. In this sense, translation, for Benjamin, is the artistic recreation of a certain text, and the translator is an artist whose challenging mission is to give afterlife to the original.⁹

In Benjamin's view, the original determines the translation methods. For that reason, the translator "must go back to the original, for that it contains the law governing the translation: its translatability."¹⁰ For him, the definitive rendering of the ST is impossibly reachable, for it has two contents: the temporal effect and the eternal content. The former is untranslatable since the context and the style are secreted in a particular period and thus cannot be reconstructed. The latter is translatable since it refers to the linguistic purity shared by all languages.¹¹ Discussing the temporal effect of translation, Benjamin observes:

The obvious tendency of a writer's literary style may in time wither away, only to give rise to immanent tendencies in the literary creation. What sounded fresh once may sound hackneyed later; what was once current may someday sound quaint.¹²

Benjamin projects time as the frame in which the taste and value of literary style take place. That is, translating literary style is something inessential. Explaining Benjamin's theory, Sandor Radnoti considers the temporal

³ Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Laurence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), 18.

⁴ Veronica O'Neill, "The Underlying Role of a Translation: A Discussion of Walter Benjamin's 'Kinship,'" in *Translation and Philosophy*, ed. Foran Lisa (Berlin: Peter Lang AG, 2012), 130.

⁵ Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," 18-19.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁷ Youngmin Kim, "Ethics of Cultural Translation: Ezra Pound and Walter Benjamin," *Foreign Literature Studies* 36, no. 6 (2014): 9, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279315898_Ethics_of_Cultural_Translation_Ezra_Pound_and_Walter_Benjamin

⁸ Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator," 17.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 19-20

¹² *Ibid.*, 18.

effect as “the context” which “cannot be reconstructed as once existed.”¹³ However, one can wonder if there is a concealed context, like the concealed meaning, to be unraveled by translation. If so, the function of translation is to demystify the hidden context of the ST when it was first written. Hocein Moradi asserts that “The context of the present reading of the work could be the hidden context of that work which has remained concealed when it has been written.”¹⁴ In his further elaboration on Benjamin’s notion of the contextual concealment of the meaning, Moradi argues: “the boundary of time as the past and the future is blurred, and the process of construction continues.”¹⁵ Such reading shows the extent to which Benjaminian theory of translation, as afterlife of a particular literary work, is very poetic and complex.

However, there should be a certain degree of faithfulness rather than a perfect rendering of the meaning, which seems to be an impossible task since the translator cannot escape his/her spatial cultural background. Thus, the translator should not muffle the voice of the ST or conceal the original meaning. Benjamin states, “A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not black its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its medium to shine upon the original all the more fully.”¹⁶ Benjamin’s contention of the freedom in the rendering of the meaning is one of his advantages over translation studies in general and cultural translation in particular.¹⁷ His theory valorizes the translator as an artist whose mission is to reconstruct the ST without concealing the original voice of the writer.

In Benjamin’s model, translation procedures are, thus, so problematic and ambiguous. On the one hand, Benjamin argues that literalness is an effective method to achieve good translation, which “echoes the original.”¹⁸ On the other hand, he obliterates the faithfulness in transferring the meaning since translation, for him, is not to transmit the subject matter from ST to the TT.¹⁹ Benjamin then does not take into account the linguistic and cultural differences between source and target languages.

Additionally, Benjamin’s model is vague since it does not provide enough procedures for the process of translating. He does not modulate a valid framework that can solve cultural and linguistic problems encountered by translators of literary prose, particularly in Arabic English translation. Another methodological problem is that Benjamin falls into the trap of homogenizing cultures and languages.

Pound’s Experimental Translation

The American modernist poet-translator Ezra Pound materializes his own Poetic and philosophic vision of translation in his translation works.²⁰ Pound develops his theory through the experience he has accumulated during his practical translations. In his discussion of Pound’s model, Venuti states:

Translation might be “original writing,” in which literary “standards” in the translating culture guide the rewriting of the foreign poem so decisively as to seem a “new poem” in that language²¹.

Pound’s translation, thus, functions to establish his modernist project, “Make it New.”²² In this sense, translation is meant “to absorb and transform the ideas of the ST rather than to reproduce a set of words.”²³ In other words, the target culture reframes the source message. This has some affiliation with Benjamin’s notion of translation as “Royal Robe” which covers the original.²⁴ Hence, the mission of the translator is to rewrite the original in a poetic manner that can enrich the target culture with the values of the SC. Therefore, reshaping the poem does not mean that the foreignness of the ST is to be erased. Rather, the originality is achieved by the archaism strategy.

Pound adopts Archaism as a discursive strategy to translate Italian and Chinese poetry to English. Thus, he goes beyond domestication strategy, which denies the difference between translation and the original. He

¹³Sandor Radnoti, “Benjamin’s Dialectic of Art and Society,” in *Benjamin: Philosophy Aesthetics, History*, ed. Gary Smith (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 129.

¹⁴ Hossein Moradi, “The Afterlife of a Text in Walter Benjamin’s Theory of Translation,” *Journal of English* 1, no. 4 (2011): 53, https://jes.srbiau.ac.ir/article_5598.html

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶ Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator,” 21.

¹⁷ This freedom in the rendering of meaning will be developed by Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere to the Manipulation theory which is one of the key theories in the Cultural Turn of translation studies.

¹⁸ Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator,” 20.

¹⁹ Ibid., 19.

²⁰ Cheung, “A History of Twentieth Century Translation Theory,” 3.

²¹ Laurence Venuti, ed., *The Translation Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 2000), 12.

²² Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 168.

²³ Andy Cheung, “A History of Twentieth Century Translation Theory,” 2.

²⁴ Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator,” 19.

adheres to a foreignization strategy in order to enhance translation. In his reading of Pound's translations of Chinese and Italian poetries into English, Roxana Birsani observes:

An innovator in the field of translation, Pound drew away from the domesticating strategies of the time, which had a tendency to efface and appropriate the difference presented by other literatures, and, acting as a true visible translator strived to emphasize Otherness with all its mystery and exotic flavour.²⁵

It is important, then, to observe that Ezra Pound's model assumes a notion of difference since it emphasizes foreignization as an accurate strategy for translation practice. Without difference, translation will lose its essential role in enriching the target languages with poetics and cultural thoughts of the Source language. Clearly then, loyalty to the source language is one of the main tasks of the translator. In this regard, Dante Rossetti's translation of *Vita Nuova* is criticized by Pound for being apparently biased to the TT at the expense of the ST. For Pound, a good translation is made "by sticking closer to the direction of the original."²⁶ Commenting on his translation of an Italian sonnet, Pound says: "I give the Italian to show that there is no deception, I have invented nothing."²⁷ This shows the objective function of translation. This is serviceable to his poetic and philosophic project since the loyal rendering of the ST enriches English with cultures and geniuses of other languages.

In his translations, Pound establishes stylistic equivalence between the translation and the foreign text. For instance, in his essay "Guido's Relations," Pound admits that he has given his translations "a verbal weight about equal to that of the original."²⁸ However, Pound gives priority to the content more than form. He states: "everywhere in the translation I have sacrificed the crystallized form of the Latin -and any desire I might have had for a classic English verse form—to ample rendering of the Latin thought."²⁹ Thus, he, somewhat, sacrifices literalness in order to achieve equivalence at the thematic level. Accordingly, Pound's approach is useful for the literary translation since it does not violate the poetics of the target language, while, at the same time, it transmits the thoughts of the ST and signifies its foreignness.

Pound was critical to the orientalist discourse of his time which subjected the other's culture to the English linguistic and cultural norms. For Pound, a transparent translation would improve English poetics. He asserts:

England and America have so long ignored [...] Oriental culture. We have misconceived the Chinese for a materialistic people, for a debased and worn-out race [...]. The duty that faces us is not to batter down their forts or exploit their markets, but to study and come to sympathize with their humanity and their generous aspirations [...]. We need their best ideals to supplement our own ideals enshrined in their art, in their literature and in the tragedies of their lives.³⁰

For Pound, the most important task of translator is, thus, the faithfulness to the foreign text by which he/she can supplement the art and culture of the receptor language and, perhaps more importantly, depict the real image of the other. Obviously then, Pound's adheres to foreignization for ideological and political reasons. With Pound, translation becomes a tool by which cultures interrelate with each other. Therefore, Pound's approach to translation goes beyond the Orientalist project of translation, which uses the domestication strategy to construct the 'Other'. In his Chinese translation, Pound, for example, endeavors to portray china instead of inventing it. Foreignization is then a discursive strategy that deconstructs the Orientalist discourse, which frames the Other through translation. Therefore, "Pound's endeavor was directed towards the re-shaping of the cultural background of his time."³¹ His theory of translation is, therefore, fruitful for literary translation since it considers translation as a means for achieving intercultural communications.

Pound's model is advocated by scholars of the cultural turn of translation studies like Laurence Venuti who, following Pound, adheres to archaism and foreignization as translation procedures. This article argues that Pound's model paves the way to the cultural approach to literary translation. Like Benjamin, Pound, however,

²⁵ Roxana Birsanu, "The Image of the Other in Ezra Pound's Translations," *SYNERGY* 5, no. 1 (2009): 122, <http://synergy.ase.ro/issues/2009-vol5-no1/15-the-image-of-the-other-in-ezra-pounds-translations.pdf>

²⁶ Ezra Pound, "Guido's Relations," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Laurence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), 28.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 32.

²⁹ Ezra Pound, "Raphaelite Latin," in *Ezra Pound's Poetry and Prose Contributions to Periodicals*, ed. Lea Baechler, A Walton Litz and James Longenbatch (New York & London: Garland Publishing, 1991), 7.

³⁰ R. John Williams, "Modernist Scandals: Ezra Pound's Translations of 'the' Chinese Poem," in *Orientalism in US-American Poetry and Poetics*, eds., Sabine Seilke, Christian Kloeckner (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 146.

³¹ Birsanu, "The image of the Other in Ezra Pound's translations," 124.

does not highlight strategies to solve the problems resulting from linguistic discrepancies, as is the case of Arabic/English translation.

Derrida's Deconstructionist Vision of Translation

The French philosopher Jack Derrida coins the theory of deconstruction which, to some extent, contributes to the development of translation studies from a philosophical point of view. He destabilizes the premises upon which the proponents of linguistic equivalence build their hypothesis.³² In Derrida's vision, homogeneity of meaning is rejected and therefore substituted by a complex vision of meaning. Commenting on Derrida's deconstruction, Jeremy Munday observes that deconstruction "brought new ways of reading to translation and ..., interrogated some long-held beliefs, such as the primacy and stability of meaning and the sign."³³ Derrida's objective is to deconstruct the hegemony in translation. This has decisive a role in enhancing intercultural translation.

The overall approach of Derrida has some affiliation with Benjamin as he adheres to a new approach to language and translation that completely differs from other Western models, which implicitly consolidate and propagate linguistic centrism. In this regard, Derrida builds on Benjamin's theory of pure language and redefines it as 'différance', which is key term in deconstruction theory.³⁴ This notion of difference is so important that Lewis, E. Philip promotes Derrida's model as a paradigm shift from equivalence to difference.³⁵ In this sense, the difference is the highest pure level to be possibly reached by translation.

Interestingly, Derrida revives Benjamin's theory of pure language, which signifies certain pure levels shared by languages. For Derrida, the linguistic brotherhood is not reachable by strategies of monolingualism since they are colonial processes by which other languages are oppressed. It is necessary, then, to conceptualize new methods of translation that allow for the voice of the cultural Other to shine up through 'the difference' produced by translation.³⁶

On this account, Derrida confronts traditional translation paradigms that mask the voice of the Other through domestication strategies. According to Derrida, the main purpose of translation is to achieve intercultural communication. In this regard, he designs his deconstructionist notion of Différance as a "complex term which refers to the process of the production of difference and deferral."³⁷ Derrida posits his own philosophically oriented model of translation through his conceptualization of the notion of difference. Derrida's model of translation is, therefore, a tool that "retrieves the voice of the Other from behind the Linguistic masking of cultural difference through non- reflexive translation."³⁸ That is why the production of difference is an essential requirement for the translation process. At this point, this article contends that Derrida paves the way for the cultural approach to literary translation.

In Derrida's philosophy, translatability does not preclude untranslatability. In this sense, the text is both translatable and untranslatable at the same time. This can be clearly seen in Derrida's contention that translation is necessary and impossible.³⁹ In Derrida's view, this reciprocal relationship between the translatable and the untranslatable in the text guarantees its "living on.":

A text lives only if it lives on, and it *lives on* only if it is *at* once translatable *and* untranslatable. ... Totally translatable, it disappears as a text, as writing, as a body of language. Totally untranslatable, even within what is believed to be one language, it dies immediately.⁴⁰

"Living on" is, thus, Derrida's vision of translatability and untranslatability, which owes much debt to Benjamin's above-mentioned theory of "translation as after life." Derrida's "living on" transcends the traditional translation

³² Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*, 170.

³³ *Ibid.*, 173.

³⁴ Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies*, 170-171.

³⁵ Lewis Philip, "Measure of Translation Effects," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), 270-271.

³⁶ This idea of difference as a sign of resistance will be taken up by thinkers of postcolonialism to answer back colonial translations.

³⁷ Xin Lin and Shi Cheng, "The Analysis of Translators from the Perspective of Deconstruction," *Asian Social Science* 7, no. 5 (2011): 259, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v7n5p258>

³⁸ James Lindah, "Anthropological Approaches To The Philosophy of Translation" (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 1999), 276.

³⁹ Jacques Derrida, "What is a Relevant. Translation?" trans. Laurence Venuti *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 2 (2001): 183, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1344247>

⁴⁰ Jaque Derrida, "Living on" and "Border Lines," trans. James Hulbert, in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, ed. Harold Bloom (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul PLC, 1980), 102.

paradigms, centering the ST. Derrida decenters the ST in order to achieve difference. This, however, does not mean that the translator is free to manipulate the ST for his own special strategies. As James Lindahl explains:

The linguistic instability revealed by Derrida does not render interpretation a free-for-all, as many fear. Attention to the voice of the Other, the role of the author (or ethnographer), and the deformations that language undergoes in translation, suggest ways in which translation is indeterminate yet requires a responsibility that somewhat limits the play of interpretation.⁴¹

Therefore, Derrida rejects the traditional tendencies in translation studies that domesticate the ST. In his view, the translator must preserve a certain degree of faithfulness to the ST. In a lecture entitled “What Is a Relevant Translation?” Derrida asserts that a good translation inscribes “in the receiving language the most relevant equivalent for an original, the language that is the most right, appropriate, pertinent, adequate, opportune, pointed, univocal, idiomatic, and so on.”⁴² Therefore, for Derrida, the translation should stress its difference so that it can enrich the target culture with new systems and values.

Derrida’s approach is insightful for cultural translation as it questions “concepts such as “truth”, “origin” and “centre”; that is, it rejects methods such as essentialization and homogenization. Therefore, his model has some advantages for literary translation because of its rejection of the hegemony prevailing in traditional Western literary paradigms of translations.

Despite the significance of Derrida’s deconstructionist model in terms of allowing for cultural difference in translation, his vision remains philosophic and appears somewhat impractical for not accommodating practical solutions for the problems the translator might encounter during textual translation. In other words, it functions within the scope of philosophical studies of translation without providing tangible strategies for resolving gaps encountered in literary translation. In short, Derrida’s notion of difference is inevitable but at the same time profoundly problematic.

Steiner’s Hermeneutic Motions

In his landmark book, *After Babel*, George Steiner addresses the question of translation where he presents a philosophical explanation of the assumptions underlining the translation process. Steiner, somewhat, believes in the impossibility of translation, but he, nevertheless, goes on to feature his own hermeneutic perception of the translation process.

Basing his analysis on German Romanticism and hermeneutics, Steiner views translation “as an interpretation of the foreign text that is at once profoundly sympathetic and violent, exploitive and ethically restorative.”⁴³ The translation process is constituted of four phases which Steiner calls the hermeneutic motions: “trust”, “aggression”, “incorporation” and “restitution.”⁴⁴ Steiner comments on the hermeneutic motions as follows: “Being methodical, penetrative, analytic, enumerative, the process of translation, like all modes of focused understanding, will detail, illumine, and generally body forth its object.”⁴⁵ Having stated this, Steiner then suggests that “great translation must carry with it the most precise sense possible of the resistant, of the barriers intact at the heart of understanding.”⁴⁶ Therefore, Steiner invokes Schleiermacher’s foreignization strategy that urges the translator to preserve the ‘foreignness’ of the ST.

In Steiner’s view, the theory of hermeneutic motion is a paradigm shift in translation studies, transcending the sterile traditions of binaries such as literal versus free, which have prevailed in the history of translation. Another advantage of the hermeneutic motions is that it presents a translation model which reconciles between the ST and TT with more attention to the foreignness of the ST. Steiner Summarizes his translation vision as follows:

This view of translation as a hermeneutic of trust (*élanement*), of penetration, of embodiment, and of restitution, will allow us to overcome the sterile triadic model which has dominated the history and theory of the subject. The perennial distinction between literalism, paraphrase and free imitation, turns out to be wholly contingent. It has no precision or philosophic basis. It overlooks the key fact that a

⁴¹ Lindahl, *Anthropological Approaches To The Philosophy of Translation*, 19.

⁴²Derrida, “What is a .Relevant. Translation?” 177.

⁴³George Steiner, “Hermeneutic Motions,” in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Laurence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), 124.

⁴⁴George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 312-435.

⁴⁵ Steiner, “Hermeneutics Motions,” 189.

⁴⁶ Steiner, *After Babel*, 378.

fourfold *hermeneia*, Aristotle's term for discourse which signifies because it interprets, is conceptually and practically inherent in even the rudiments of translation.⁴⁷

Clearly then, Steiner's input into translation studies lies in his relevant philosophical analysis of the process of translation. For Steiner, the archaic translation procedures are not effective because they are not philosophically grounded. Hence, he bases his approach on philosophy and hermeneutics to elaborate his theory of translation.

Additionally, Steiner enlarges the scope of translation to encompass all sorts of human communication. For him: "Inside or between languages, human communication equals translation. A study of translation is a study of language."⁴⁸ He goes further to justify his totalizing model: "The 'totalizing' designation is the more instructive because it argues the fact that all procedures of expressive articulation and interpretative reception are translational, whether intra- or interlingually."⁴⁹ This makes his theory subject to harsh critiques. Mohamed Kharmandar, for instance, observes that in Steiner's model:

Translation substantially loses its academic or disciplinary sense and becomes an unbounded frame that could potentially cover any sort of dialogue... the attempt to attribute any mode of understanding/dialogue to translation rests on shaky ground, because this approach over-generalizes the notion of translation while ignoring relevant philosophical discussions.⁵⁰

Steiner obviously considers all social and linguistic interactions as sorts of translation. This generalization stems from his conviction of translation as a part of language theory. In this regard, he makes pertinent discussions about the relation between translation and language. Importantly, he, like Holmes, views translation as aggression performed by the translator against the translated text⁵¹. Having acknowledged the aggressive nature of translation, Steiner's model is perhaps useful in drawing attention to the importance of the ST's privacy which is subject to the translator's violence. This mode of violence is attributed to the "interpretation."⁵² Since translation is an interpretation of a foreign text, violence is thus inevitable. Here, Steiner is influenced by Heidegger who believes that "understanding, recognition, interpretation, are a compacted, unavoidable mode of attack."⁵³

Interestingly, Steiner puts the four stages of his hermeneutic motions to balance between the TT and ST. Because "the act of importation can potentially dislocate or relocate the whole of the native structure,"⁵⁴ there should be "an outflow of energy from the source and an inflow into the receptor altering both and altering the harmonics of the whole system."⁵⁵ Therefore, employing the four motions will help the translator achieve balance between ST and TT as a key requirement for literary translation.

Despite the significance of Steiner's hermeneutic motions theory, it is still classified within the framework of philosophical approaches to translation studies. It does not provide practical methods for dealing with translation problems encountered in literary translation. This article, however, contends that Steiner's paradigm is, to some extent, fruitful in translating literature from cultural perspectives as it recognizes the violence caused by translation, and hence it designs restitution, the fourth hermeneutic motion; to reconcile the cultural gaps in the TT resulted from translation.

Conclusion

The philosophical approach offers an insightful contribution to the emergence of translation studies as a discipline. Thus, Pound's experimentalism, Benjamin's advocacy of foreignization, Steiner's recognition of the violent nature of translation and Derrida's notion of difference are set out to posit the main principles of contemporary English language translation theory and practice. They ground for the cultural turn of translation studies as they recognize the cultural 'Other' in their translation models. However, their approaches still have some limitations; one of which is that they did not take into the importance of linguistic dimensions in the translation. For this reason, their approaches are not appropriate enough for the translation of literary prose because they do not highlight practical strategies that can solve the lexical, semantic, and stylistic problems resulting from the translation of two different languages such as English and Arabic. Therefore, it is necessary to

⁴⁷ Ibid., 191.

⁴⁸ Steiner, *After Babel*, 49.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 163.

⁵⁰ Mohamed Kharmandar, "A Hermeneutic Critique on George Steiner's Hermeneutic Motion in Translation," *CROSSROADS. A Journal of English Studies* 20, (2018): 84, [https:// DOI:10.15290/cr.2018.20.1.05](https://doi.org/10.15290/cr.2018.20.1.05)

⁵¹ Steiner, "The Hermeneutic Motion," 164.

⁵² Kharmandar, "A Hermeneutic Critique," 94.

⁵³ Ibid., 187.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 188.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 19.

discuss the linguistic models of translation so as to examine the linguistic and cultural problems that might arise when translating literary prose.

References

1. Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator." In *The Translation Studies Reader*, edited by Laurence Venuti, 15-25. London: Routledge, 2000.
2. Birsanu, Roxana. "The Image of the Other in Ezra Pound's Translations," *SYNERGY* 5, no. 1 (2009): 122-130, <http://synergy.ase.ro/issues/2009-vol5-no1/15-the-image-of-the-other-in-ezra-pounds-translations.pdf>
3. Cheung, Andy. "A History of Twentieth Century Translation Theory and its Application for Bible Translation." *Journal of Translation* 9, no. 1(2013): 1-15, https://www.sil.org/system/files/reapdata/14/62/43/146243287590382592044287238746367616828/sil_jot2013_1_01.pdf
4. Derrida, Jacques. "Living On" and "Border Lines." Translated by James Hulbert, in *Deconstruction and criticism*, edited by Harold Bloom, 75-176. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul PLC, 1980.
5. "What is a .Relevant. Translation?," translated by Laurence Venuti *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 2 (2001): 174-200, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1344247>
6. Hornby, Marjorie. *The Turns of Translation Studies: New Paradigms or Shifting Viewpoints?* Amsterdam: Benjamins Translation Library, 2006.
7. Kim, Yougmin. "Ethics of Cultural Translation: Ezra Pound and Walter Benjamin," *Foreign Literature Studies* 36, No. 6 (2014): 7-17. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279315898_Ethics_of_Cultural_Translation_Ezra_Pound_and_Walter_Benjamin
8. Lindah, James. "Anthropological Approaches to The Philosophy of Translation." PhD. diss., University of Western Ontario, 1999.
9. Lin, Xin and Shi Cheng. "The Analysis of Translators from the Perspective of Deconstruction." *Asian Social Science* 7, no. 5 (2011): 258-262. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v7n5p258>
10. Mohamed, Kharmandar. "A Hermeneutic Critique on George Steiner's Hermeneutic Motion in Translation." *CROSSROADS. A Journal of English Studies* 20. (2018): 83-98. [https://DOI:10.15290/cr.2018.20.1.05](https://doi.org/10.15290/cr.2018.20.1.05)
11. Moradi, Hossein. "The Afterlife of a Text in Walter Benjamin's Theory of Translation." *Journal of English* 1, no. 4 (2011): 53-58. https://jes.srbiau.ac.ir/article_5598.html
12. Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. London & New York: Routledge, 2008.
13. O'Neill, Veronica. "The Underlying Role of a Translation: A Discussion of Walter Benjamin's 'Kinship.'" In *Translation and Philosophy*, edited by Foran Lisa, 125-138. Berlin: Peter Lang AG, 2012.
14. Pound, Ezra. "Raphaelite Latin." In *Ezra Pound's Poetry and Prose Contributions to Periodicals*, edited by Lea Baechler, A Walton Litz, and Longenbatch James Ezra. 5-8. New York: Garland Publishing, 1991.
15. "Guido's Relations." In *The Translation Studies Reader*, edited by Laurence Venuti, 26-33. London: Routledge, 2000.
16. Radnoti, Sandor. "Benjamin's Dialectic of Art and Society." In *Benjamin: Philosophy Aesthetics, History*, edited by Gary Smith, 126-156. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989.
17. Steiner, George. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
18. "Hermeneutics Motions." In *The Translation Studies Reader*, edited by Laurence Venuti, 186-191. London: Routledge, 2000.
19. Williams, John. "Modernist Scandals: Ezra Pound's Translations of 'The' Chinese Poem." In *Orient and Orientalism in US-American Poetry and Poetics*, edited by Sabine Seilke and Christian Kloeckner, 145-165. New York: Peter Lang, 2009.