

Contextualized Metaphors of Diaspora in Shahla Ujayli's *Summer with the Enemy* (Metafora Diaspora yang Dikontekstualisasikan dalam Karya Shahla Ujayli, *Summer with the Enemy*)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the use of conceptual metaphors featured in the Syrian novelist Shahla Ujayli's Summer with the Enemy (2021) as characterizing the dislocated self of the narrator (conceptualizer). Written in the context of the Syrian civil war, the highly figurative novel provides new insights into the ways language articulates the cognitive and emotional ramifications of diasporic experience. After escaping the war-torn country, the narrator and protagonist Lamees relates her experience of displacement in Cologne, Germany through trips back to her memories of homeland. Significantly, the narrative unfurls with a heightened sense of space, conveyed by the narrator's physical and spatial imagery that strongly mirrors her mental and emotional states. A close analysis of the figurative language employed in Summer with the Enemy reveals that language does not merely define the displaced speaking subject but also emerges from the contextual knowledge available to the speaker within the given circumstances of displacement and alienation. Employing insights from cognitive linguistics and psychoanalysis, I argue that the metaphors used in the novel are intrinsically conceptualized by the subjective experience of diaspora, thus contributing to the existing scholarship on diaspora in general and on Syrian diaspora literature in particular.

Keywords: Conceptual Metaphors Theory; contextualized metaphors; Arab women fiction; diaspora; abjection

ABSTRAK

*Kajian ini meneliti penggunaan metafora konseptual dalam novel karya penulis Syria, Shahla Ujayli, yang berjudul *Summer with the Enemy* (2021), sebagai cerminan kepada jati diri narator (individu yang mengonseptualisasikan pengalaman) yang mengalami keterasingan tempat. Novel yang sarat dengan unsur kiasan ini, yang ditulis berlatarkan perang saudara di Syria, menawarkan perspektif baharu tentang bagaimana bahasa mengungkapkan implikasi kognitif dan emosi hasil daripada pengalaman diaspora. Setelah melarikan diri dari negara yang dilanda perang, narator protagonis, Lamees, mengisahkan pengalaman beliau terpisah daripada tanah air dan menetap di Cologne, Jerman, melalui perjalanan minda yang mengimbau kembali kenangan di tempat asal. Naratif ini berkembang dengan penekanan yang ketara terhadap aspek ruang, yang disampaikan melalui gambaran fizikal dan spasial oleh narator yang mencerminkan keadaan mental serta emosinya secara mendalam. Analisis terperinci terhadap bahasa kiasan dalam *Summer with the Enemy* mendedahkan bahawa bahasa bukan sekadar mendefinisikan subjek yang mengalami keterasingan tempat, malah turut terhasil daripada pengetahuan kontekstual penutur dalam situasi keterasingan dan pengasingan diri yang dialami. Dengan memanfaatkan pendekatan linguistik kognitif dan psikoanalisis, saya berhujah bahawa metafora yang digunakan dalam novel ini dikonseptualisasikan secara intrinsik oleh pengalaman subjektif diaspora, sekali gus menyumbang kepada khazanah ilmu sedia ada mengenai diaspora secara umum dan kesusasteraan diaspora Syria secara khusus.*

Kata kunci: Teori Metafora Konseptual; metafora berkonteks; fiksiyen wanita Arab; diaspora; kehinaan

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INTRODUCTION

Diaspora has occupied an important place in Syrian literature long before the mass displacement caused by the Syrian war. Syrian writers have engaged with questions of exile, belonging, and reimagining homeland across different historical periods. Alatrash and Alsamad (2020) demonstrate that Syrian literary representations of exile and diasporic identity existed throughout a longer literary tradition of negotiating Syrian identity across geographical and cultural boundaries. The outbreak of the Syrian conflict in 2011, however, intensified these experiences and generated unprecedented representations of physical displacement, loss and attachment to a lost homeland. *The Frightened Ones* (2017) by Dima Wannous explores the deep anxieties of exile in a story of Damascene refugees navigating life and relationships in Beirut. A considerable number of untranslated novels over the last decade by Syrian writers such as Nihad Sirees, Maha Hassan and Mahmoud Aljassim have explored the complex emotional, cultural, and psychological consequences of displacement.

In this context, Shahla Ujayli's narrative foregrounds intimate dimensions of displacement depicting the experiences of women whose relationships to place are reshaped by war and migration. *A Sky so Close to us* (2018) for example, explores identity negotiations through geographical boundaries and intergenerational ancestry by tracing the female protagonist's tale of love, illness and exile. A more poetic and intense picture of the subject's relationship to those boundaries is depicted in her recent novel *Summer with the Enemy* (2021) around which this study revolves. Shortlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction, Ujayli's text provides fertile soil for exploring the influence of context exerted on the conceptualizer's production of language. The rich and highly figurative language of the novel makes it particularly well suited to examine the conceptual framework through which displacement and identity are understood.

Ujayli, who dedicated her work "to the Raqqa of 'her' memory", endeavors to capture the lost childhood homeland through the voice of the narrator Lamees or Lulu as nicknamed. The writer's intricate use of metaphorical tapestry of diaspora is likely shaped by her own experience as a mobile subject, having spent most of her life as a writer and an academic away from her own place of origin. In the book, the writer resourcefully depicts situations of dispersal encountered by the characters and hence creating backdrop knowledge that characterizes the production of language used in the novel. The intradiegetic narrator, Lulu, tells most of the story in flashbacks that alternate with episodes of her current new life in Cologne, Germany. Only a few months back after extremists took over her hometown, she was forced to embark on an escape journey, during which she tragically lost her mother to a mine explosion. Abboud, a childhood playmate with whom Lulu shares most of her precious memories, was born to a Muslim Syrian father and a Christian Czech mother whose marital conflicts led to her departure from Raqqa to Prague leaving little Abboud to struggle with loss and sadness. Carmen, a newly acquainted German friend, is a descendant of a Polish refugee family the remaining members of which had to flee Poland to Germany during World War Two. Besides, Carmen is the sister of Nicholas, the enemy of the title, a visiting professor of astronomy who had a short love affair with Lamees's mother during a research expedition to Raqqa. The lives of these characters, intersecting with the protagonist's journey and the contextual atmospheres they inhabit, intertwine with hers to fashion communicative situations in which metaphorical conceptualization thrives.

The contextual circumstances predominantly manifest in both the diasporic experience of the female narrator and in the backdrop of the story converge to shape the language unfolding her account of post-war diaspora. Significantly, the narrator's physical environment, traumatic

memories of homeland and lack of belonging and integration alongside other characters' diasporic stories create contextual and situational framework for producing contextually induced metaphorical language. Thus, to draw on the terminology of cognitive linguistics, the contextual elements of dislocation and the accompanying traumatic events precondition the linguistic utterances used in the communicative situation that exists between the conceptualizing narrator and the narratee. Through a detailed examination of the metaphorical language communicated in the novel, the study aims to emphasize the vital role the physical, emotional and psychological aspects of context play in determining its linguistic articulation. Moreover, it seeks to reveal that these metaphorical expressions, shaped within the diasporic context, reflect the narrator's diasporic identity while also contributing to broader discourse on diaspora.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholarship on Syrian diaspora literature has increasingly examined how displacement redefines notions of identity, memory and belonging. Alatrash and Alsamad's (2020) study on Syrian diasporic identities examines fractured selves in a number of pre-war texts by literary Syrian figures such as Nizar Kabbani, Muhammad al-Maghut, Zakaria Tamer and Adonis using a decolonial discourse. The study highlights the ways in which Syrian literary works negotiate the tensions between homeland and countries of exile, memory and present experience. Despite its engagement with pre-war texts, the study points out that the post-war diasporic experience cannot be understood in isolation from pre-war experiences of both voluntary and involuntary migration.

More specifically, a recent study on Ujayli's fiction has tackled the spatial experience of diaspora of the female protagonists in both *A Sky so Close to Us* and *Summer with the Enemy*. Chabane Chaouch and Abu Amrieh's (2026) study, "Destroyed Houses as Repositories of Memories: Navigating Diasporic Spaces in Shahla Ujayli's Novels," examines the notion of destroyed house as a site of yearning and memory. In their reading, the physical spaces are significantly represented as repositories of memory that survive even after their material destruction. The house eventually ceases to be merely a geographical location. Rather, it becomes a symbolic site through which the displaced subject maintains an imaginative connection with home.

Taken together, the two studies establish a foundational background for understanding the diasporic experience in *Summer with the Enemy* in which the notions of space and memory play a central role. However, existing scholarship on Syrian diaspora literature employ cultural and social approaches focusing on the concepts of memory, identity and space. More broadly, international scholarship on diaspora and migration in literary studies generally utilizes postcolonial, psychological and socio-cultural approaches (see for example Naimou, (Ed.). (2023), Gardner, & Joshi, (2021)). Less attention is given to the metaphorical processes through which the experience of diaspora is cognitively structured. Thus, while prior studies employed various analytical tools to delve into diaspora in literature, the use of cognitive linguistics to explore how literary texts reflect mental processes like memory, spatial perception, and identity negotiations remains underexamined. The present research, therefore, seeks to fill these gaps in the existing scholarship by shifting the analysis to cognitive linguistics alongside psychoanalysis to examine how metaphorical configurations in Ujayli's novel reveal the subject's experience of displacement.

The use of extended view of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) provides an apt perspective for discussing metaphors in relationship to the diaspora context in which they are produced. Metaphors employed in the literary text are treated as embedded in the subject's contextual experience of diaspora rather than embodied universal linguistic structure as proposed in the 'standard' Conceptual Metaphor Theory. Alongside the metaphorical dimension, reading diaspora through psychoanalytical lens of abjection and subject-formation provides a fresh perspective on the identity negotiations of the displaced subject. Julia Kristeva's concept of abjection is particularly relevant to the notions of identity and boundary disruption recurrent in diaspora discourse.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative interpretive approach to examine the contextualized metaphorical expressions in Shahla Ujayli's novel *Summer with the Enemy* (2021). The analysis combines cognitive-linguistic and psychoanalytic perspectives to investigate both how diasporic experience is metaphorically constructed and what psychological implications these metaphorical constructions reveal. Drawing on the extended view of Conceptual Metaphor Theory developed by Zoltan Kövecses, the study examines selective patterns of metaphorical expressions to unveil the language's relationship to the complex contextual settings of alienation, while Julia Kristeva's psycholinguistic model of development helps to interpret the psychological tensions implied in the language of the diasporic subject. This study will particularly focus on the metaphorical language pertaining to the overlapping influence existing among psychological, emotional and physical sub-contexts that comprise the multilayered facets of the conceptualizer/narrator's diasporic experience.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CONTEXT IN CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS

No doubt, the study of metaphorical language in the discourse of cognitive linguistics has taken a new turn since Lakoff and Johnson published their seminal book *Metaphors We Live By* in 1980. The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) initiated by the linguists opens the way to viewing language far beyond a mere means of communication. Metaphors do not simply imply understanding specific abstract experience by means of concrete or embodied ones. Rather, metaphorical language is viewed as reflecting deeper levels of cognition; we use metaphors not only to talk about how we feel and how we view aspects of our lives, but also how we think about them (Kövecses, 2015a, 2020a). In studies about the interpretation and comprehension of metaphors, the question of context has been of paramount significance to linguistic scholars who attempt to account for metaphors both semantically and pragmatically (See Stern, 2000). Zoltan Kövecses, however, expands on the notion of context as an influential factor in the production of metaphors. He argues for more inclusive Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) by incorporating a contextual factor that opens the way to accommodate several variables existing in the theory. His extended view of CMT identifies the need to embrace contextual factors in the conceptualization of metaphors (2020a, 2020b, 2023). In the new schematic structure of metaphor, Kövecses proposes a mental space instead of a frame to allow more specificity to a given point in the

discourse situation (2020a, 2020b). Thus, singular mapping occurs within a rich tapestry of contextual factors that “can have an influence on which conceptual metaphor [...] is utilized to conceptualize the situation” (2020b, p. 127). In an earlier paper, Kövecses argues that contextual sources from which conceptualizers derive metaphors can be seen in “situational, discourse, conceptual-cognitive and bodily contexts” (2015b, p.109). These contexts which further imply a variety of other sub-contexts from physical situations, cultural aspects and interests to emotions and bodily experience prime conceptualizers to “build the appropriate conceptual pathway between the intended target-domain meaning and the particular experiential content that is primed” (2015b, p. 109). This notion will add non-universal rich contextually determined dimension to the universal embodiment of metaphors in the traditional theory. Accordingly, situating the production of metaphors in relationship to the context would help account for the online use of metaphors derived from conception in working memory besides long-term memory. Such a view would eventually shift conceptual metaphors theory from the level of abstraction to a more pragmatic one in communicative situations.

Bearing in mind the premise of such expansion of the standard CMT, the narrative situation in Ujayli’s novel can be seen as a communicative literary platform for pragmatic investigation of such linguistic approach. An exploration of the metaphors’ deployment in novel offers a practical example of the effect contextual factors can prime on the production of metaphors within particular scenarios. The notion of context used in this study complies with the comprehensive sense as mapped by Kövecses; however, more attention will be given to the intrinsic interaction between the conceptualizer (in this case the narrator) and the contextual aspects encompassing physical, psychological, and emotional ones associated with diaspora. This is where Kristeva’s psychoanalysis and her concept of abjection become particularly relevant.

According to Kristeva, abjection is the manifestation of horror that protects the subject against what “disturbs identity, system, order [...] does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (Kristeva, 1982, 4). Thus, filth, pus, blood, the corpse, crime, forbidden desires are examples of the abject which initiates abjection in the process of making the individuals that we are. In the process of subject-formation, abjection protects us against the dissolution of borders between the clean and dirty/unproper; between the inside of the body and outside; between life and death; system and order, ethics and immorality. The relevance of abjection to the current study lies in the novel’s representation of displacement not merely as physical separation but as an experience that unsettles the boundaries that define the displaced subject. Thus, this psychoanalytical perspective complements the analysis of metaphorical expression in the novel. While the extended view of CMT sets the cognitive dimension of the metaphorical contextual production, abjection enables the study to explore the psychological implications of the metaphorical structure.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

CONTEXTUALIZING NARRATIVE IN *SUMMER WITH THE ENEMY*

The various figurative expressions used in the novel are conveyed in the narration of the main character/narrator who is able to communicate other characters’ experiences alongside her own diasporic one. The diverse implications of the diaspora experience evident in physical displacement, emotional upheaval, and other psychological challenges related to trauma, integration and distrust are primarily filtered through the narrator’s perspective. Accordingly, the

diversity of implications accounts for the various conceptual metaphors articulated in the narrator's delineations of the story.

The diaspora space itself as a physical and emotional concept can be seen as characterizing the context permeating the story. Marked by changes and lack of stability, diaspora space is inscribed in the narrative scenario and the metaphorical expressions generating from it. In fact, the concept of boundaries is never fixed in the diaspora space. Having incorporated the notions of diaspora, border and dis/location, Brah defines diaspora space as "the point at which boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and otherness [...] are contested" (1996, pp. 208-9). The definition notably encapsulates a scene of boundary crisis that the dispersed subject invariably undergoes at certain stages of identity negotiation. With such understanding in mind, it could be inferred that the narrator's boundaries, be they physical, psychological, or emotional are in constant flux of intruding and protruding problematizing the internal and external space of the stranger, to use Kristeva's definition of the foreigner or outsider (1991).

The traumatic past encounters marked by the ravages of war and imposed enclosure are often reawakened by the narrator's current physical situation, materializing as a pervasive sense of estrangement that infuses the language through which she tells her story. Her reflection on her relationship with the place reveals an acute awareness of the physical surroundings interwoven with a profound sense of dislocation and a lack of integration into the new space. From the very first few pages, the narrator's language shows an interest in topographical representation of the surroundings as if striving to familiarize herself with the new environment of Cologne of Germany. Having experienced dispersion from homeland in Raqqa, now Lulu attempts to make sense of her post-war self in the new locale. It is common for an estranged person to engage in imaginative constructions of belonging in the host land (Christou, 2011). Although her morning walk through the streets of Cologne appears idyllic, the narrator's language seems to reflect a troubled relationship with the city. She conveys her consciousness of the new space through the defense mechanism she articulates in her reflection: "In order for a strange city not to swallow you up, you have to seize it by its soul" (Ujayli, 2021, p. 40). The metaphor STRANGE CITY IS A BEAST is employed to convey a neophobic existential unease triggered by the unfamiliar terrain of new environment; however, it may further suggest multiple layers of meaning:

1. being devoured/enclosed within spatial limits is destructive and annihilating
2. dominating the internal space of something empowers the individual
3. the vulnerability of someone or something's often rooted in its interior space

The metaphor used here mainly presupposes that the power of the strange city is derived from its ability to confine or contain the subject. Yet, such power can apparently be overturned by means of the subject's control of the interior space. To express it differently, figuring out the details and the 'body' of the new city may be the only way for the narrator to survive the sense of alienation. Moreover, the metaphor implies a deconstructive hierarchy of the power of the strange place and that of the stranger inhabiting it, since seizing (imposing force on) the soul of the beast will unravel the power structure. With diaspora discourse in mind, it is hard to overlook the political and psychological preconceptions of the narrator who herself has been trapped during the war inside a city destroyed by militants controlling its interior space and restricting people's ability to move freely.

MAPPING DIASPORA THROUGH THE CONTAINER METAPHOR

As the narrative unfolds, the images of being confined or engulfed seem to be frequently recurrent in the narrator's expressions of sentiments and mental states triggered by her unpleasant recollections. The negative association of such imagery of physical limitation highlights the narrator's sense of mental incarceration. As a matter of fact, knowledge about past events stored in the memory is a significant factor of conceptual-cognitive context that primes the use of certain metaphors (see Kövecses, 2015b). Exemplary expressions such as "loneliness *envelops* me" and being "captive to [one's] nostalgia" which employ the CONTAINER metaphor, reveal the inhibiting constraining influence loneliness and nostalgia can respectively have on someone (Ujayli, 2021, pp. 235, 209). Most importantly, such expressions clearly resonate with the limitations of the restricted life the narrator had gone through at some point of her life which significantly prime the metaphorical expressions of being contained.

Although the CONTAINER metaphor appears in a slightly altered form, it persists throughout the novel to convey the narrator's suppression of negative emotions. It becomes more common for the stranger to become herself a container of some kind of private space, a hidden internal room that often threatens to 'seize' the one holding it. The following examples reveal the implication of the contained perilous interior space:

"I've lived my life angry and tortured, avoiding the *black hole in my heart*. I feared *getting close to myself, my inner feelings*. I built barriers against the world so no one would discover how fragile I was *inside*"
(Ujayli, 2021, pp. 258-9) [emphasis added as in subsequent quotations].

"She took me back to *my darkest places*, which I dread approaching."
(p. 204)

"I even felt liberated from the sin [...] which had *lodged* itself in my *deepest darkest depths*."
(p. 235)

Experience is "the snake *lying dormant in our hearts*" (p. 200), (to the conceptualizer "experience" here is equivalent to knowledge about betrayal)

The figures of speech utilized in the above examples suggest that the conceptualizer's interior space is a latent threat to oneself for it is dark, mysterious, heavy, or perilous. In all of the above metaphors, the speaker becomes a container of various damaging contents that vary from secrets, pain, sin to dark memories and dangerous knowledge. The inherent peril of what lies inside such an inner territory of the speaker is furthered in the following metaphorical expression:

I didn't often allow myself to open up and get close to anyone. I truly feared knowing myself too well. If I dared to delve too deeply *into my dark and hidden places*, I imagined I might be capable of anything-robbing, murdering, stealing other women's husbands.
(pp. 221-2)

Thus, what is contained inside the speaking subject is an imminent threat to her entity. If the contents seep out of the inner self, they may contaminate and destroy the subject. As long as the interior space is properly secured, it inspires safety. However, once it attempts to break through the barriers between the inside and the outside, the subject falls into a state of abjection.

CONCEPTUALIZING ABJECTION

The psychological state of abjection marks a moment of uncertainty about the self and intensified by the existence of a threat to the boundaries of the subject. In diasporic experience, threats emerge when the subject's boundaries and sense of identity become destabilized and unable to sustain the former self while struggling to integrate a new one. One of the clearest examples of abjection in which clear boundaries are disrupted in the story is manifested in the scene where Lulu sees her mother's body, mutilated and disfigured after stepping on a mine while fleeing the city.

I found my mother lying dead under the willow trees. Her legs had been sliced off [...] I couldn't tell the right from the left or even let the full picture enter my mind. Her face was not her face. Her bloody flesh spilled over onto her burnt clothes. I threw myself atop her. I didn't know what my form, features or voice was like, but we were not ourselves. I was not myself. And I was looking at two people who could not be us-me and my mother.

(Ujayli, 2021, pp. 185-6)

Not only does the scene of the dead body emphasize the flimsy boundaries between life and death; it does, rather, disrupt any sensical spatial understanding of the self. The sense of abjection features in the narrator's description of her own 'self' as paradoxically residing outside the boundaries of her own self upon seeing the disfigured body of her mother. It is a moment of threat to the 'self' that has lost the defining borders of her own entity. Therefore, the narrative metaphorically reproduces this sense of loss that features in the failure to recognize the subject as intact and whole; "for, when narrated identity is unbearable, when the boundary between subject and object is shaken, and when even the limit between inside and outside becomes uncertain, the narrative is what is challenged first" (Kristeva, 1984, p. 141). The challenge here lies in the uncertain rendering of the narrator's confusion at the scene of human vulnerability and loss in the corporeal world. Certainly, this painful memory keeps haunting the narrator and intrudes into the current conceptualization of the deep-rooted trauma she pushes into hiding. Abjection then arises when a threat to the boundaries is looming and if diaspora space is marked, as Brah contends, by the contest of boundaries, then abjection might be an expected outcome of the diaspora context. It is primarily triggered, then, by poignant memories of a traumatic past that continue to haunt the narrator in the present time alongside the ongoing struggle to integrate with the host environment.

Such problematic sense of belonging to a place is similarly present in the case of Abboud, the narrator's childhood playmate, whose accent "wavered between the heavy Bedouin pronunciation of letters, needed to speak Arabic here, and the sounds of his mother's Czech language" and in "his awkward jokes as successful joking requires that your spirit belongs to a place and knows its contradictions" (Ujayli, 2021, p. 22). Apparently, the awkwardness of Abboud's jokes reflects the linguistic identity crisis frequently reflected in the confusion of his tongue. Such vocal dissonance created a sense of alienation that was significantly intensified after the departure of his Czech mother to Prague. Lulu understands Abboud's sense of alienation to be as though he were spatially "suspended" between two different worlds: he "was suspended between us and Anna, Raqqa and Prague" (p. 22). Not only does the metaphor suggest a sense of dispersal along two worlds and two identities but the notion of 'suspension' significantly assumes lack of solid ground necessary to support one's entity. It metaphorically implies the speaker's conceptualization of Abboud's fragile state and latent propensity to collapse.

CONCEPTUALIZING INTEGRATION

In essence, the estranged narrator's cognitive processes are shaped by the contextual experience of integration that entails both psychological and emotional nuances. Thus, the stranger who enters a new territory keeps struggling in that liminal space incapable of breaking free from the former territory but still cannot be comfortably contained in the new one. It is understandable that the narrator tacitly regards her integration journey either as growing up or as undergoing recovery. On the one hand, she has to learn basic skills from the beginning "I'm going to have to learn how to walk again, how to talk again" (Ujayli, 2021, P. 36). It is evident that adapting to the new life in the new country appears akin to a baby attempting the initial steps in life. In other words, to look at it from the perspective of Lacanian psycholinguistics, such premature advancement into the new phase bears a resemblance to a child's attempts to enter into the symbolic realm in which the child becomes a speaking subject, a subject that does not only signify but is constituted by its signifying practices (See McAfee, 2004; Kristeva, 1984). The symbolic stage marks the child's detachment from the maternal body and the initiation into the paternal Law of the Father; simply into becoming a social human being. For this transition to be successful, however, the child needs to recognize the mother and separate from her as a pre-condition for self-recognition. Such semiotic negotiation, however, is never conclusively resolved in the psycholinguistic development of human beings and keeps resurfacing during moments of identity crisis.

Thus, with respect to the current narrative, the narrator seems to be caught within a state of indeterminacy since she is neither able to perceive herself in the new surroundings, nor able to get soothed by the familiar mother as she explicitly puts it into words: "strangers are comforted by the familiar: it grants them a modicum of confidence and safety. It's like a child far from home looking at their auntie and seeing their mother's face" (Ujayli, 2021, p. 36). The figure of the mother is represented as a necessary requirement in the process of navigating one's path. This connection is further reinforced by a clear association between learning and the maternal presence, particularly evident when the narrator recalls how, at the age of seven, her mother helped her correct her 'crooked' way of walking by accompanying her across the bridge every morning:

I'd become graceful, my gait confident. I did not choose a particular way of walking-it chose my body. I'd been liberated from the evil forces that had been constraining me and I felt I could take on the entire world with my toned, athletic legs.

(p. 77)

Learning how to walk is significantly associated with maternal sustenance. The metaphorical expression of liberation from 'evil forces' views learning to walk less as a physical movement of the body, than a step towards embracing life confidently without being shackled by constraints. In fact, the notion of maternal presence is metaphorically reflected elsewhere in the narrator's memories about the mother-daughter connection underlying this tripartite relationship of maternal provision, being and place. The narrator contends:

with Mama, I always used to feel that there was *no world beyond* our interlocked hands [...] "In our thoughts, we are *walking towards whatever is behind* the hill" [...] She always tried to *push me towards* the things *around me*, just like she wanted to *break free* from the rigid framework she'd imposed on herself"

(pp. 71-73)

Through such confession, the mother clearly symbolizes providence and sustenance, facilitating the child's exploration beyond the limits of oneself.

Nevertheless, the mother may equally serve as a threat to the subject if separation is not properly achieved in the process of maturation. Through this lens, such an imminent threat of the overwhelming presence of the mother can be traced in the narrator's inability to let go of the maternal surveillance as she puts it into words, "my mother occupies a particular place in my mind, an observer looking over my shoulder [... she] leads me to the path, her own path, the path of perpetual loss" (p. 205). Despite the maternal imposition, the narrator seems to recognize that she has to walk her own path in order to save what is left of herself after the war. Obviously, the narrator's language, infused with nuanced implications and connotations of physical space, is presently inspired by the day walk in the streets of Cologne and by deep awareness of her own alienation in the new city.

On the other hand, walking is viewed metaphorically as equivalent to recovering after a major traumatic event. Simply put, learning how to walk is seen as a crucial part of someone's rehabilitation process after losing the ability to walk. Such metaphor for recovery is underscored by the narrator's analogy between recovering from betrayal and learning to walk again after a leg injury or an earthquake "because we lose the feeling of firm land beneath our feet" (p. 199). It becomes extremely hard to trust the "broken limbs" or the ground. Physical progression through walking across various terrains, then, is not only a metaphor for the discovery of one's new self, but also for healing from various prior ailments.

CONCEPTUALIZING PHYSICAL CONTEXT

Spatial expressions, often evoked by the narrator's present physical environment, are stated frequently to articulate both her own and other characters' emotional and psychological struggles. An illustrative example of such affinity between place and language emerges when the narrator relates her own sense of estrangement to the spatial implication of being positioned on the peripheries of a place or with proximity to liminal realms. She extrapolates this contextual factor when commenting on her state of nomadism: "Foreigners don't live in the center of the old town" (Ujayli, 2021, p. 9). Clearly, Lulu views herself as an outsider whose limbo status keeps her seated on the outskirts of the city. Her expression conveys an ongoing sense of dislocation and lack of integration. Early in the novel, she expresses her interest in bridges as sites of hope and possibilities; the hope of possible returns: "I've always loved bridges- they make return a possibility no matter how much time has passed!" (p. 8) Contrary to traditional symbolism, the notion of the bridge here stands as a symbol of lack of rootedness with the new country for it always connects the narrator to the past life and place. The bridge in Cologne draws a significant parallel in the narrator's mind with the Euphrates bridge of her hometown for the landmark at sight brings all the connotations that the other bridge in her memory has been symbolic of. It has been a passage from the hell of war to life and a site of a ritual passage for girls into womanhood as well as for the cursed into freedom: "every girl had to cross the bridge in order to truly become a woman. Moreover, as the tales go, a person is freed from any magic curse as soon as they cross the bridge out of the city!" (p. 155) It is such a preconception about the bridge that perhaps helped Lulu to get rid of the evil forces constraining her ability to walk properly when she was a little girl. The specific knowledge that notably affects the linguistic utterance about the bridge is derived then from the interaction between the physical context on one hand and the individual memory of the conceptualizing narrator on the other.

The implication of the physical contextual factors for the narrator's language cannot be overlooked when exploring the pervasive contrast that the physical surroundings bear on the narration. Unable to avoid comparisons, Lulu seeks comfort by looking for familiar features of her homeland she is simply able to recognize in the architecture and the streets of Cologne. She confesses, though, that "comparisons are exhausting and continually remind foreigners of their foreignness" (p. 36). Yet, drawing comparisons is not only present in her narration but mirrored in her own contextual inspiration in the use of figurative language. One significant example of such comparison is reflected in the metaphors of rivers. The narrator, caught in the binary opposition between of her country of origin and the host land, repeatedly employs the river as an artery and the city as an organism. The narrator states that "the Rhine is like a robust artery through a healthy body" (p. 41) which utilizes the metaphor CITY IS AN ORGANISM. Obviously, the imagery implies that a strong interior supports healthy organism just as robust, functional arteries support the human body. Unlike the immanent dysfunction ostensibly residing in the inner self of the narrator, the river seems to function as a source of nourishment and sustenance to the city of Cologne. The image of the river, however, is unavoidably conceptualized in juxtaposition with the Euphrates River that forms an integral part of the narrator's hometown memories. This conceptual analogy is expressed whenever she speaks about the Rhine River. Right before she employs the river metaphor the narrator evidently states: "I experienced less pleasure than I'd expected in encountering this river. But I'd come from the Euphrates, the holiest river in the world. It is more than two times longer than the Rhine. The Euphrates runs right in front of my house!" (p. 37) Thus, the Rhine River is paralleled in the conceptualizer's mental space with the imagery of the river crossing her hometown, but no longer a source of life and "harmony between humans and nature" (p. 47) as it is the case with the Rhine River in her current situation. The metaphor, hence, is prompted by the physical scene of the Rhine River in contrast with the river of her memory. Accordingly, the past quintessentially intrudes into the present in her language because the physical surroundings and geography bring back corresponding images from homeland.

Significantly, the images distilled from homeland memories bring both pride and pain to the diasporic narrator who cannot simply disavow the past. In her contrast between Western and Eastern churches, she conveys a sense of anguish: "European churches are sublime and majestic compared to Eastern churches, which carry an eternal sadness within them and deliver it as a rite of communion to those who frequent them along with bread and wine" (p. 42). Another metaphor that is pertinent to this inherent contrast between Raqqa and Europe can be communicated in the narrator's words when informing the reader how Anna, Abboud's mother, took him back to Czechoslovakia, "She dragged him upwards, to Europe, and left the rest of us to wade through the muddy 1980s in our developing country" (p. 13). The metaphorical expression implies a confusing hierarchy that places Raqqa or the Middle East at the bottom of the ladder in comparison to Europe. Raqqa is seen as a lower muddy ground where people would like to be dragged from towards the higher cleaner Europe.

CONTEXTUALIZING TRAUMA

It becomes clear that the expressions and figurative utterances used in the novel are extensions of the narrator's experience with trauma, displacement and war. This experiential context plays a significant role in the production of spatial metaphors illustrating inside/outside dichotomy where the inside often inspires claustrophobia, imprisonment, stillness, pressure and darkness while the outside expresses freedom, liveliness, light, mobility and spiritedness. These sets of contrasts can

be seen as the ‘scenarios’, to use Musolff’s term, that provide mental spaces through which metaphorical conceptualization occurs (2016). Betrayal, for example, is spatially depicted as a passage through dark mysterious place, “[betrayal leads] us *through a tunnel* filled of difficult questions” (Ujayli, p.197). The metaphor implies a distressing transitory stage through which the betrayed has no knowledge of what to expect on the way. Betrayal is additionally described as an inhibiting force that imprisons the betrayed one paradoxically inside one’s own self, “we no longer dare to *step outside* of ourselves” (p. 199). While the narrative employs such claustrophobic imagery to allude to negative feelings, it similarly utilizes contrasting metaphors which connote a liberating feeling of freedom. An instance of such figurative expression can be viewed in the narrator’s description of the room as being “flooded by the outside world -lively sunbeams streamed in” (p. 190) on the first night she spends in Germany after escaping the grip of extreme Islamists in her home country.

The narrator’s memories, entrenched with various traumatic moments and negotiations of the self, also prime the production of certain physical and spatial metaphors. In this scenario the psychological and emotional status of the narrator secures the mental framework necessitated for the conceptualizer to produce new metaphors. On one occasion the narrator recalls the sites of ruins wrought by the devastation in her hometown and transformed into dumping grounds only to state afterwards that “the ruins are in our consciousness” to reflect on the state of being a stranger burdened with the heavy load of war repercussions (p. 156). Thus, her memory of destruction instigated by the negative emotions has activated the use of such metaphorical expression. Repulsive as it is, the dumping sites inside human beings resemble the physical ruins grounds that similarly destroy any civilized space. It is the former territory that keeps haunting the stranger as Kristeva puts it succinctly “The foreigner keeps feeling threatened by his former territory, caught up in the memory of a happiness or a disaster- both always excessive” (Kristeva, 1991, p. 4). Since the former territory is associated with pain and loss of happiness in diaspora context, it is notably present in the narrator’s discourse.

The context of war and its atrocities prevalent in the narrator’s mental reminiscences has a bearing on her communication of vigorous linguistic utterances. In other words, her figurative expressions appear to evoke tones of force and ferocity. When the narrator describes her long-awaited meeting with Abboud in Germany, she says:

He clutched at me, *hurting* me more and more with his *squeezing*, as if he were *juicing* memories, his childhood, and a lost place out of me, as if he were seeking to recover that which we had been *forcibly* removed from, like a *missing finger*.

(Ujayli, 2021, p. 236)

Even though the account depicts passionate moments of intensity and reclamation of a lost era, it is difficult to overlook the reminiscent force insinuated in her words and the rhetorical imagery. She contends that this physical contact has made her “come to terms with the pack of wolves that had been snapping at my heels [...] loss, war, fear, alienation, betrayal, immigration, sorrow, pain, forgetting, disrespect, being an orphan, being a refugee (p. 237), an image which similarly draws a brutal picture at the time she is supposed to be describing a moment of self-reconciliation. Another example of such forceful vocabulary is expressed in what appears to be the best therapeutic treatment of betrayal metaphorically put as to “*burn* all bridges with your betrayer-partner” (p. 204) (the Arabic equivalent for ‘burn’ in the original text is ‘destroy’ or ‘obliterate’ which sounds even more violent). This therapy is prescribed for what the narrator disturbingly describes as the biting of “placenta” to portray the tormenting feeling of betrayal (p. 207). Furthermore, fear is also ascribed such an intense power as “a disfiguring emotion” (p. 235) which

poignantly affects human beings undergoing such circumstances. The use of such unsettling powerful vocabulary and particularly in the metaphorical language augments the impact of the war context psychologically and emotionally on the narrator.

CONCLUSION

It has been argued that the metaphorical language employed in Shahla Ujayli's *Summer with the Enemy* is shaped by the conceptualization of diasporic experience of the narrator. Adopting a combined approach of cognitive linguistics and psychoanalysis, the study has examined the relationship between the narrator's figurative language in a selection of metaphorical expressions and the context of diaspora in which it is produced. The narrator communicates her experience in the new host country within variable circumstances that predetermine the production of certain linguistic structures. Metaphorical language appears to be structurally integral to the articulation of the diasporic consciousness of the speaker who perceives and negotiates the layered contextual settings of alienation, trauma, betrayal and war. By working within the framework of the extended view of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CTM), this study offers a fresh perspective on the analysis of metaphorical language in literature on diaspora. While the study presents a practical implementation of the extended CMT, it contributes to the broader field of literary diaspora studies and to the growing scholarship on Syrian diaspora literature. Additionally, it enhances our understanding of the implicit meanings underlying the language used in Ujayli's novel. Future research could build on this perspective to further broaden research on a wider range of fictional texts as sites for understanding the influence of contextual factors on the conceptualizer's production of language across different communicative situations.

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