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## **A Study of Persian-English Narrative Poems Translation: Focus on Key-Phrase Allusions**

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### **Abstract**

Allusions in literary texts are among the elements which can cause intercultural misunderstanding. In this study, the translation of the allusions of two narrative poems selected from Nizami's *The seven Images (Haft Gonbad)* were studied. To this end, the frequent types of implicit allusions were extracted from the poems: *The Black Dome* and *The White Dome*. Next, the original text was compared with its English translations to identify whether these allusive meanings were found and transferred in their translations. To achieve this goal, Leppihalm's (1997) model of translation strategies for key-phrase (KP) allusions was employed. The findings indicated that the most frequent strategy selected by the translators is literal translation. Rendering the poems into English literally, the translators ignored the implicit meanings underlying the allusions. The findings can have implications for translating literary texts.

*Keywords: Allusions, Intertextuality, The Seven Images, Translation Strategies*

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## 1. Introduction

Intertextuality establishes how images of other texts come to the mind through some other texts (and utterances within texts), much in the same way as signs point us in the direction of what they refer to (Hatim & Munday, 2004). It is a “signifying system which operates by connotation” and extends the boundaries of textual meaning (Hatim & Mason, 1990). Readers are able to engage with choices of meaning in a text through linguistic and literary competences. Such engagement requires an understanding of literal and figurative languages. Of course, understanding cultural and social factors plays an important role in our comprehension of cultural concepts. Among cultural concepts, allusions are examined in this study.

The occurrence of allusion, which is a culture-oriented literary device, is more challenging for translators than the semantic or syntactic difficulties of a text. Translators should transfer the meaning of such devices to the target text (TT) as closely as possible. Translating allusions is considered a reader-centered process. According to Hatim and Mason (1990) translators should find TT equivalents for allusions of the source text (ST) in such a manner that what has intentionally been covered is not explicitly explained, while the meaning of allusions is retrieved.

Nizami’s works, especially *The Seven Images*, which is going to be studied here, are rich in scores of literary elements like “subtle allusions”, word plays, elaborate structure, “abundant imagery” and “esoteric symbols”. Several of his works display a tendency towards mysticism. (Cross, 2010)

The given work, indeed, is replete with culture-bound terms, so if the translator does not pay attention to this point and only tries to transliterate the lines, the work will undoubtedly lead to a non-sense. Nearly, in each page there are found many words, phrases or lines extracted from the Holy Quran or parts which are related to Iranian ceremonies as well as mythical beliefs. The mythological allusions, which constitute a great part of this selection, different explicit or implicit references to religious tales and references to other literary works, are observed. Ignoring these hints has nothing but getting a superficial perception of the tales and what is going on in them.

### 1.1. Research question

The present study aimed to answer the following question:

What are the translation strategies applied by the translators to translate allusions in Persian poems to English?



## 2. Literature Review

We will find allusions in a text when it makes an implicit or explicit reference to another text (Montgomery, 2007). In a work of literature, it is a brief reference, explicit or implicit, to a person, place, event, or to another literary work or passage (Abrams, 1971). Overall, allusions are transcultural (shared by both source and target culture), or they might be culture-specific, that is, they can be understood by audience of one specific culture. Poetry is among those literary areas attracting a great number of critics to work on its different figurative devices. Harold Bloom is one of those critics who discusses allusion in poetry. In his books on literary influence and poetic tradition, Bloom discusses allusion as "one means of Freudian defense by which poets have tried to maintain their literary identities in the shadow of their precursors" (in Wheeler, 1979, p. 2).

Kirillove (2003) writes that allusion is 'a special metaphor' and 'a type of textual implication'. For him allusion is always indirect, in this way the reader and writer should share some knowledge so that the supposed effect will be achieved, of course the degree of effectiveness of an allusion relies on the amount of knowledge shared by them. He singles out five categories of allusions listed as follows:

- a) Historical allusions (such as people, places, events);
- b) Literary allusions (such as characters, settings, plot);
- c) Biblical allusions (including texts from Old Testament, New Testament);
- d) Popular cultures (related to contemporary people, places, events, literary works, works of art);
- e) The arts (related to music, works of art, theatre/film).

Allusions are commonly made to the Holy Scriptures, rhythmic passages, myths, famous fictional or historical characters or events, political issues, and

literary works. They can be used in prose and poetry. So, they can be sorted into some thematic groups: religious allusions, musical allusions, mythological allusions, historical allusions and/or political allusions as well as literary allusions. Some of them may overlap like historical and political allusions since all political references are related to a historical period. Cultural allusion, another name for musical allusion, was introduced by [Ruffner \(2009\)](#); he goes beyond the literature extending the scope of allusion to involve cinema, TV, film and music.

### *2.1. Translation Strategies*

Upon the words of [Montgomery \(2007\)](#) the significance of a literary text is due to its relationship with other texts. In cultural texts, effects and meaning of intertextual aspects of those texts are found if the reader has active knowledge of them, that is to say, he can recognize and recall appropriately what they refer to. Even-Zohar (1978, in [Bassnett, 2007](#)) proposed that the quality and type of translations are determined by the historical situation and the importance degree of the translated texts' relies on the receiving culture.

According to [Baker \(2009\)](#) cultural translation is found in various contexts and senses. She believes that no particular strategy for translation of cultural items is suggested and she puts forward a "perspective on translations that focuses on their emergence and impact as components in the ideological traffic between language groups" (p.67). Translating allusive devices may not be as easy as it is conjured. There are some reasons: firstly translating allusions like other elements of a literary text is mostly dependent on the writers' culture. Secondly, allusions bearing connotations whose translation makes a lot of problems and they need some skills on behalf of translators (in [Salo-oja, 2004](#)).

Zou, et al (2010) assert that translating the allusive items is pragmatic and should be guided by the Skopos Theory. In pragmatic translation, readers are taken into account. Audience of the TT do not often accept the cultural images of the ST but these images should not be omitted and their translation may appeal to



‘relevance theory’ in which the focus is on connotations of words. This theory was proposed by the German linguist and translation consultant Gutt (1991, in [Pym, 2010](#)).

## 2.2. *Potential Strategies for Translating Allusions*

When translating literary texts, translators should do their best to represent almost the culture of the ST for their readers, in such a case the readers may almost get the same effect as what ST readers got. This is especially important in highly allusive works such as the one discussed in this study.

In order to translate allusions, two cultures are involved in the translation and their literary as well as pragmatic aspects on the textual level are also taken into account. Allusions are meaningful only in the culture or subculture in which they originate and may convey nothing in other cultures ([Leppihalme, 1997](#)). As [Montgomery \(2007\)](#) points out “allusion can be used simply as a way of adding cultural value to a text.” (p. 156)

Nord (1990) discussed the translation of quotations; the procedures proposed by her are also used for the translation of allusions. These procedures are as follows:

- a) *Direct quotation*: the ST quotation is inserted into the TT without any change,
- b) *Transcription/ Transliteration*,
- c) *Substitution*: the ST quotation is rendered by means of an existing TL formulation,
- d) *Literal translation*,
- e) *Paraphrase*: the meaning of the ST is conveyed in the TT,
- f) *Adaptation*: the ST quotation is replaced by an original TT quotation,
- g) *Expansion/Reduction*: an explanation adapted to the background knowledge of the target- cultural reader is added to the context of quotation or an explanation adapted to the background knowledge of the source cultural reader is omitted,
- h) *Omission*: the quotation is omitted or replaced by another device ( in [Ruokonen, 2010](#)).

Gambier (2001) suggested some strategies for translating allusions and culture-specific items, these strategies are listed below:

1. Deliberate omission: transferring the meaning by a common noun,
2. Literal translation,
3. Addition of definition, a paraphrase or explanatory note,
4. Cultural substitution,
5. Compensation: the functional value of the element is preserved according to Nida's dynamic equivalence,
6. Borrowing (ibid).

Leppihalme (1997) made a distinction between proper-name allusions and key-phrase allusions. Proper-name (PN) allusions have a proper name, including names of real-life or fictional characters and features associated with such names and Key-phrase (KP) allusions have no proper name.

Strategies proposed for proper names are not related to the scope of this study so they are ignored. Strategies which could be used in these two stories are derived from lists of potential strategies that were proposed by [Leppihalme \(1997\)](#).

1- Use of a standard translation, if available (A), 2- Literal translation (minimum change), without regard to connotative or contextual meaning there is thus no change that would aim specifically at the transfer of connotations (B), 3- Adding extra-allusive guidance to the text, including the use of typographical means to signal preformed material (C), 4- Providing additional information via footnotes, endnotes, or other explicit explanations that are not included in the text (D), 5- Introducing textual features that indicate the presence of borrowed words (marked wording or syntax (E), 6- Replacement by a preformed TL item (F), 7- Rephrasing the allusion with an overt expression of its meaning, in other words, making its meaning overt and dispensing with the allusive KP itself (G), 8- Re-creating the allusion by creatively constructing a passage that reproduces its effects or other special effects created by it (H), 9- Omitting the allusion (I).



The strategies (A) and (B) seem to be the same. (A) is as an accepted translation for a particular KP allusion in TT. Thus, as [Leppihalme \(1997\)](#) states, it is the *minimax* strategy for transcultural KP allusion, and readers enjoy recognition and participate in the literary process (115).

In strategy (C), the translator uses some external signs in order to show that he is borrowing an allusive KP from ST. For this purpose the translator applies inverted commas, writes in italic or bold form or s/he adds some words into parenthesis to focus on allusion and attract readers' attention. This method usually is employed where some phrases or lines are extracted from Holy Books or literary works. Adding extra information (D) in order to fill the gap between two cultures is another common strategy applied in many cases. Such information are not mentioned within the texts but they appear as footnotes, endnotes or other explanations at the end of a chapter or end of the book.

In strategy (E), using stylistic contrast may lead into recognition of allusions. For example, the translator uses an archaic language for translation of the phrase extracted from Bible in a modern work. Names used for this strategy are 'internal marking' and 'simulated familiarity'. In strategy (F), we see the replacement of an allusion from ST by a specific equivalent allusion from TT. This strategy is very attractive but it may seldom occur. It is usually limited to the translation of idioms and proverbs in a literary work and does not occur in the present research. When a translator uses strategy (G), he renders the allusion in sense and allusive meaning may be lost. However, the meaning of the given phrase is not conveyed through such a common name.

Using strategy (H) - creation of allusions for readers of TT - the translator tends to be so creative that he can find an adequate equivalent; in other words, here translators take the role of an author. The frequency of such a strategy is very low. Finally, in the last strategy-omission- allusion is ignored in translation and

its meaning is not also transferred. It may be used as the last resort, however, it is not recommended.

Three categorization of translation strategies have been proposed for allusion which share rather similar steps. Various studies have been done on the translation of allusions in English and Persian. Almost all investigators followed Leppihalme's suggested classification and strategies to translate proper nouns (PN) and key-phrase allusions, because in this way strategies for each type are studied in detail. We refer to some of the studies, relevant to the present research, which have been done on the translation of allusions.

In "Authorial Style in English/ Persian Literary Translation: Focusing on Key-Phrase Allusion", Farahzad and Zaheri (2018) concluded that in their study there was a tendency to follow "audience –focusedness" in the treatment of allusions and an "author-focused approach" was not adopted. Delnavaz and Khoshsaligheh (2020) in the paper entitled "Anglophone allusions in Persian dubbing: the case study of Tarantino's films" applied Leppihalm's strategies . The results showed that *direct translation* and *literal translation* were frequently used for the translation of proper names and key-phrase allusions. Salehi (2013) in her study explored the translation of allusions in subtitling of four films which referred to other films and introduced a lot of allusions. The results of her paper, "Translating of Allusions in Subtitling from English into Persain", indicated that "minimum change" and "to keep the name unaltered" were frequently used. Additionally, she found that functions of allusions were distorted or undermined in many cases.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Corpus

To carry out this research, two English translations of the two tales - *The Black Dome* and *The White Dome*- from Nizami's a selection of poems, *The Seven Images (Haft Paykar)* were examined and compared with the original Persian text. The first translation was extracted from Cameron Cross (2016) and Cameron



Cross's (2010) papers on *Haft Paykar*, and the second one was done by C.E. Wilson (1924).

The researcher selected these two stories for the present study because no English translation was present for other stories in Cameron Cross's works and at the time of the study no other English translation was available. In the first translation, some lines were selected and translated into English. Since a direct translation would result in many lines, the stories were abridged in re-narrating and many lines were ignored, the translator added extra information just for some parts. The second translator did it line by line literally.

### *3.2. Procedure*

The two translations were studied with respect to some frequent types of allusions supposed to be studied in this research. All examples of these types of implicit KP allusions were extracted, then their Persian equivalents were represented. The collected data (KPs) were analyzed and the comparative study was done on the basis of strategies for translating allusions suggested by Leppihalme (1997) to find whether these translated works can represent implicit allusive meanings. Her classification is by far the most detailed of the three categories discussed before.

## **4. Data analysis**

### *4.1. The Story of The Black Dome*

Bahram, the king, who was dressed in black visits his sable-skinned Indian beauty who was also dressed in black. He spends his entire Saturday, the day of Saturn, with her. At night she tells him the following story.

"Once upon a time," she says, "A king in China travels to a town the residents of which dress exclusively in black. After living a year in that city without disclosing his own identity, he gains the confidence of a butcher who agrees to disclose the mystery of the town to him.

One day, the butcher takes the king to the outskirts of the town to some ruins. There, he places the king in a basket and lets him be transported to the land of the Queen of the Fairies. The queen welcomes the king and places thirty of her attendants at his beck and call, the king desires her but finds no recourse. Eventually, overcome by passion, he forces himself upon the queen only to lose her permanently. The queen and her fairies disappear into thin air and the king finds himself in the same basket descending to the butcher. In memory of his unrequited love, from then on he, too, dresses himself in black, even after he returns home." ([Bayramuglu, 2011](#))

#### *4.2. The Story of The White Dome*

Bahram on Friday visited the pavilion of his Persian beauty. He wore a robe as white as snow and a headdress, adorned with a white feather, to be agreeable to the Persian queen. The queen, wearing a white dress made of the softest silk and a headdress to match, welcomed the king. The king was amused for the day and, at night he was told the last story.

"Once upon a time," she said, "there was a young man who owned his own personal garden, a serene Persian garden. Then, for some reason, one day, he left the garden. When he returned, the door was locked and, from within his garden, loud music and the sound of revelry was heard. The walls being too high to climb and the music too loud to allow him to be heard, he took an ax to the wall and cut himself a hole through which to enter the garden.

No sooner had he entered the garden than he was captured by two women. Pronouncing him an intruder, they beat him mercilessly, bound him, and took him to their leader. The young man explained to the leader that he was the lawful owner of the garden. Hearing



that, the women apologized for their behavior and, to compensate for their transgression, took the young man to the attic. Beyond the wall was a pool made of pure white marble in which beautiful women and girls of all climes swam, played, and made-merry. The young man fell in love with one of the beauties who happened also to fall in love with him. The two, however, could not become intimate. When they got together in the house, the floor gave way, and when they took refuge to the trees, the boughs broke. Passion, they concluded, was not what God had wanted for them. They got married and lived happily ever after." (ibid)

#### 4.3. KP allusions of the domes

*The Seven Images* describes the love story of the King Bahram in symbolic and passionate details. He starts to love seven princesses from seven different parts of the world. Bahram pays frequent visit to each of them, during a week, in the pavilion (dome) built for them. The princesses give him a didactic story each night. (Seyyed Gohrab, 2011)

Having given information on the original text, the researcher is going to analyze all KP allusions of the two stories-the Black and the White Domes-from the viewpoint of the strategies applied for them by each of the translators, allusion types are mentioned after comments.

#### 4.4. KP allusions of the Black Dome

Sample 1:

خیمه زد در سواد عباسی  
زیر زر شد چون آفتاب نهران  
چتر سرسبز برکشید به ماه  
شاه با هر دو کرده بدنامی

روز شنبه ز دیر شماسی  
روز یکشنبه آن چراغ جهان  
چونکه روز دوشنبه آمد شاه  
روز بهرام و رنگ بهرامی

گشت پیروزگون سواد سپهر	چارشنبه که از شکوفه مهر
وز سعادت به مشتری منسوب	روز پنجشنبه است روزی خوب
خانه را کرد از آفتاب سپید	روز آدینه کاین مفرنس بید

(Saeidian, 2007, p.146)

**T1:** \_\_

**T2:** From the Shammāsian temple, Saturday, he pitched his tent on the ‘Abbāsian rug

Bahrām), a lamp illuming all the world, like the sun, under gold became concealed

When Monday came the king unto the moon upraised his fortune-favoured canopy

The day of Mars, and martial (too) its hue;—(on such a day) Bahrām, namesake of both

On Wednesday, from the blossom of the sun when turquoise-hued the blackness of the sphere,

A happy day is Thursday, and ascribed to Jupiter in its auspiciousness.

On Friday when this willow arched and high whitened (its) mansion through the (rising) sun (Wilson, 1924, p. 26)

**T1:** \_

**T2:** literal translation (B)

**Comment 1:** These lines are a brief summary of Bahram’s travel to seven regions of the world to visit princesses. The travel recounts the Prophet’s journey; Mi’raj. The prophet passed through seven stages in a mystical journey. Bahram visits seven princesses in seven planets in seven stages. Each planet has a special color associating with the color of princesses’ clothes. The Prophet journey can be divided into seven stages too (Burgel & Ruymbeke, 2011). (Religious Transaltion).



**Comment 2:** Moreover, Bahram's journey starts from darkness and ends when he rejoins light and whiteness. This story also takes a hint at Iskander's story to find the Water of Life. He goes down into his inner's darkness (the King in *The Black Dome*) to gain knowledge. At the last stage (the King in *The White Dome*), he unites with light and is full with wisdom (Abbasi, 2010). (Literary allusion)

**T1:** omission (I)

**T2:** literal translation (B)

Sample 2:

همه سروی ز خاک و او از نور

تنگ چشمی ز تنگ چشمی دور

(Saeidian, 2007, p. 161)

**T1:** \_

**T2:** Narrow of eyes, but not of heart (was she); each cypress (there), of earth, but she, of light (Wilson, 1924, p.41)

**T1:** omission (I)

**T2:** literal translation (B)

**Comment:** This line describes the princess. In this narrative, the princess appears to be a heavenly creature for the king. In the story of *The Black Dome*, the princess is considered as the forbidden fruit (the story of Adam and Eve) (Zolfaghary, 2016). (Religious allusion)

Sample 3:

در صف زیر جای بگزینم  
پایه بندگی سزای تو نیست

خواستم تا به پای بنشینم  
گفت برخیز جای تو نیست

(Saeidian, 2007, p. 162)

**T1:** \_

**T2:** She said, Arise, (that) place is not your place; the rank of servitude befits you not (Wilson, 1924, p.41).

**T1:** omission (I)

**T2:** literal translation (B)

**Comment 1:** the second line is the princess' reaction to the king when he was approaching her. The Heaven, from the mythological look, is an immortal place in which the female character as the Forbidden Fruit has a holy and unreachable existence (Zolfaghary, 2016).

**Comment 2:** These words alludes to the importance of man as God's Predecessor (*Khalifat Allah*), since the princess has a highly heavenly rank, the man is allowed to be near her. If the man, the King, wants to be accepted by the princess and gain the top reward, which can be a ray of immortality, he must avoid nearing the Forbidden Tree. Not being allowed to enter the elevated world, he is wearing in black (ibid). (Religious allusion)

#### Sample 4:

کس خبر و انداد از آن احوال  
 دیدم آزاده مرد قصابی  
 به کلهداریش کمر بستم  
 چیزهایی برون ز اندازه  
 صید من شد چو گاو قربانی  
 قصه شاهی و ولایت خویش  
 چه سبب کز نشاط بی بهرند  
 جامه های سیاه چرا پوشند  
 صورت ناموده بنمایم  
 وز خلاق نبود با ما کس

جستم احوال شهر تا یک سال  
 چون نظر ساختم ز هر بابی  
 چون به همصحبتیش پیوستم  
 دادمش نقدهای روتازه  
 مرد قصاب از آن زرافشانی  
 باز گفتم بدو حکایت خویش  
 تا بدانم که هر که زین شهرند  
 بی مصیبت به غم چرا کوشند  
 خیز تا بر تو راز بگشایم  
 او همی شد من غریب از پس

(Saeidian, 2007, PP.152-54)



**T1:** line 5: By showering him with gold, that butcher became my prey, like a sacrificial bull (Cross, 2016, p.77)

**T2:** A year I sought to know about the town; but none informed me of the state of things.

When I'd examined into everything, I met a man of frank, ingenuous mind  
(And) when his friendship had been gained by me, I girded up my loins to honour him.

I made him gifts of money freshly coined, and beyond measure (other) things (besides).

(So) the man by that scattering of gold became my prey like sacrificial ox.

I told him (then) the story of myself, the story of my kingship and my rule

The cause, to-wit, my wish to know why all the people of this town were void of joy.

Why without loss they gave themselves to grief, and garbed themselves in black (as those who mourn).

Arise, that I the secret may reveal, and show to you the aspect of the case.

He went in front, I (following) behind, of people there was not a soul with us (Wilson, 1924, p.36).

**T1:** literal translation (B) and omission (some lines) (I)

**T2:** literal translation (B)

**Comment 1:** Animal sacrifice is the ritual killing of an animal as part of a religion. The King's companion with the butcher refers to the myth of sacrifice in Mitra cult. Mitra is an ancient Indian-Iranian god who was lowered to the rank of the judge of the dead. He is a war as well as solar god. Mitra lives in a magical cave. The most important element of the myth is known as "tauroctony", that is killing of an ox by Mitra. This animal, symbolized as strength and fertility, was

killed to give birth to nature. This blood brings the spring and makes everywhere green, that is why the tale of *The White Dome* is full of light, happiness, and bounty (Va'ez & Kardel, 2015).

Of course in this part, we see two sacrifices; the butcher and the King. The butcher is responsible for performing this ritual sacrifice ceremony. On Myths, this ceremony is implemented on the sacrifice's satisfaction. The king is sacrificed for knowing the mystery in the tale. The butcher himself is also a sacrifice; he is sacrificed with the king's generosity (Leeming, 2001). (Mythological allusion)

**Comment 2:** Moreover, this part calls attention to the story of Agamemnon in Iliad. Agamemnon had compared himself to the goddess of hunt (Artemis) and promised to sacrifice the best produce of the year when his daughter Iphigenia was born, but his promise had not been fulfilled. At last Agamemnon accepted that the sacrifice of Iphigenia would please Artemis (Grimal, 1990).

**Comment 3:** lines 3 and 11 also refer to the story of Moses who accompanies Elija (Khizr) to attain self-knowledge (Burgel & Ruymbeke, 2011).

Sample 5:

سوی ویرانه می کشید مرا	چون پریراد می برید مرا
رفت و آورد پیشم آهسته	سبدی بود در رسن بسته
جلوه ای کن بر آسمان و زمین	گفت: یک دم در این سبد بنشین
از چه معنی چنین سه پوش است	تا بدانی که هرکه خاموش است
سبدم مرغ شو هوا بگرفت	چون تنم در سبد نوا بگرفت
خویشتن را بر آسمان دیدم	زیر و بالا چو در جهان دیدم
من معلق چو آسمان مانده	آسمان بر سرم فسون خوانده

(Saeidian, 2007, p.156)

**T1:** lines5-6: looking high and low, I saw myself above the sky!

The heavens had laid a curse upon my head: like the heavens, I remained suspended.



The basket turned into a massive bird that bore him away into the sky! the *sīmurgh* is the mythical bird that lives on Mount Qāf at the end of the world, and often stands, as it does in ‘Attār’s *Conference of the Birds*. *Conference of the Birds*, as a symbol for the divine essence (Cross, 2016, p.57).

**T2:** He cut me off from men as though I were fay-born, and towards a ruin led me on  
There was a basket fastened by a rope; he went and brought it quietly to me.  
He said, A moment in this basket sit, and o’er the heavens and earth display  
yourself

That you may know why all who silence keep are in this manner dressed in black  
attire.

(Then) when my body took (its) place in it, my basket, bird-like, rose into the air.  
When I looked high and low upon the world, I saw myself bestowed upon the  
heavens.

The (lofty) sky had o’er me cast a spell; I found myself suspended like the sky.  
(Wilson, 1924, p.37)

**T1:** extra information (D) and omission (some lines) (I)

**T2:** literal translation (B)

**Comment 1:** The hero, the King, in the first story is sitting in a basket wrapped by some ropes that make him ascend to the sky where several events happened to him. The ropes are like birds here and the butcher plays the role of a guide for the King. The bird of this story is Simurgh, “a mythological creature of annihilation and rebirth. It is a prominent symbol of mythical transcendence and union with the Divine Essence.”(Cross, 2016. P.57) (Mythological allusion)

**Comment 2:** The king’s flight refer to the myth of Kai Kauos’ (Kay Kavus) ascend to the sky (Davani, et al. 2015). He was in conflict with some evils that tempted him to know more. You read in *Shahnameh* that Deev attended before

him saying that the King didn't know anything about the secret of the universe. These words touched off him to fly to the sky. So he figured out how to design a throne to ascend. It was made of wood and gold, four long poles were attached to the corners of the throne and at the top of which some pieces of meat hung. Four hungry eagles raised it. They struggled to rise to reach the meat so the throne was raised. Nevertheless, they could not do it so they gave up attempting and the King was left by eagles in the desert of Cathay (Zimmern, 2000). (Literary & Mythological allusion)

Sample 6:

یابی از شمع جاودانی نور  
که این همه نیش دارد آن همه نوش  
همه ساله به خر می می خند

گر شبی زین خیال گردی دور  
چشمه ای را به قطره ای مفروش  
در یک آرزو به خود بر بند

(Saeidian, 2007, p. 170)

**T1:** If you can stay away from this fancy for a night, you'll obtain light from an everlasting candle. Don't sell a spring for a drop of water, for that will only sting you, while this is entirely wholesome. If your door is closed on one desire, you'll laugh in joy forever. (Cross, 2016, p.79)

**T2:** This fancy if you put off for a night, you'll gain light from an everlasting lamp

Sell not a whole stream for a single drop; for this has only stings, but honey, that. Close on yourself the door of one desire, (and) ever (after) smile with joyousness (Wilson, 1924, P. 46)

**T1:** literal translation (B)

**T2:** literal translation (B)



**Comment:** Again, this part is the princess' reaction to the King when he was approaching her. Reference to the story of Adam and Eve; If they had avoided being tempted to near that Forbidden Tree, they would have lived in Paradise forever (Zolfaghary, 2016). (Religious allusion).

Sample 7:

ناشکیبی و بیقراری من	چونکه دید او ستیزه کاری من
تا گشایم در خزینه قند	گفت: یک لحظه دیده بر هم بند
گفت: بگشای دیده بگشادم	چون یکی لحظه مهلتش دادم
خویشتن را در آن سبد دیدم	چونکه سوی عروس خود دیدم
مونسم آه گرم و بادی سرد	هیچ کس گرد من نه از زن و مرد
ترکتازی ز ترکتازی دور (Saeidian,	مانده چون سایه ای ز تابش نور

2007, p.179)

**T1:** lines 4-6: When he opens his eyes again,

He finds himself alone in the basket

No man or woman near; alone,

My sole companion sighs and groans;

Without light's radiance, like a shade.

In many ways, the tale is a replica of the Orpheus myth, for although the bard's overwhelming love for Eurydice can bring him down to the underworld and transgress the bounds of mortality, he cannot, in the end, keep himself from looking back to satisfy his desire for certainty, and thus fails to save her (These lines were translated by Julie Scott Meisami (1995) (in Cross, 2010, p.47).

**T2:** My obstinate persistence when she saw, (all) my impatience and disquietude, She said (to me), A moment close your eyes, ut sacchari receptaculi portam aperiam.

Quum id quod petis nudaverim, open your eyes and take me to your breast.

A moment's respite when I'd given her; Open your eyes! said she, I opened them.  
Turning to her with eager glance, I saw—that I was in the basket as at first!  
No man or woman near me, I alone, my sole companion only bitter sighs.  
(Wilson, 1924, p.50)

**T1:** Extra information (D) and omission (some lines)  
(I)

**T2:** literal translation (B)

**Comment:** Orpheus played lyre and cithara so sweetly and surprisingly that all creatures were entranced with his music. He fell in love with Eurydice and they got married but the age of their happiness was not much long. Once in forest, Eurydice was bitten by a snake and died. Upon some advice, he descended to the Hades, god of the Underworld. There, he played music and Hades, affected by it, let Orpheus take Eurydice with him but there was one condition; Eurydice could follow her spouse but Orpheus was not allowed to look back. They would come out to the light from the Underworld. He was not patient enough to follow the promise and lost her again for ever (Grimal, 1990). (Mythological allusion)

Sample 8:

برخود افکنده از سیاهی رنگ	سوی شهر خود آمدم دلتنگ
چون سیه ابر از آن خروشانم	من که شاه سیاهپوشانم
دور گشتم به آرزوی خام	کز چنان پخته آرزوی به کام

(Saeidian, 2007, p.180)

**T1:** \_\_

**T2:** I reached my city with contracted heart, colored, (as one might say), with (deepest) black.

I who am king of those who dress in black in grief cry out, as does a (thunder) cloud,



That I whilst longing eagerly fell far from such a Moon with wish ungratified.  
(Wilson, 1924, p.51)

**T1:** omission (I)

**T2:** literal translation (B)

**Comment:** Another part of the story; the King in black, his mourning, the city of people in black and melancholic atmosphere, represents the myth of *Farvardenegan* Rituals (Davani, et al., 2015). Some mourning ceremonies are held in honor of “a god-like hero”, Siavash who is the Kayanid prince suffering a tragic and undeserved killing. This feast is held in Farvardin 19 (April 8). (Literary & Mythological allusion)

According to Ferdowsi, Shiavash was the king of Iran in Zoroaster or near-Zoroaster period. Bahar calls him “martyred regetation-god”. On farmers’ belief, nature is green if fertilizer god dies and goes under the earth. Therefore, he dies to give life to nature and go back to nature in the spring (Fathi, 2016).

### ۳/۳.3.2. KP Allusions of the White Dome

Sample 1:

بر در باغ داشتند یتاق	دو سمن سینه بلکه سیمین ساق
چشم نامحرمی نیابد راه	تا بر آن حورپیکران چو ماه
یافتندش کنیزکان گستاخ	چون درون رفت خواجه از سوراخ

(Saeidian, 2007, p. 296)

**T1:** \_\_

**T2:** Two jasmine-bosomed ones of silvery limbs were keeping order at the garden gate;

So that no alien’s eyes should (dare to) gaze upon those (radiant) Moons of hūrī face.

(Then) when the master entered by the hole, the girls found him devoid of shame and rude (Wilson, 1924, p.171).

**T1:** Omission (I)

**T2:** Literal translation (B)

**Comment:** To apply female characters as guides is common in world myths. In the story of *The White Dome*, there are two maidens who guard the garden and lead the King to meet “perfection” that is attained in unity with the princess. Readers remember Beatrice in Dante’s *Divine Comedy* and Isis in the *Golden Ass* by Apuleius (Abbasi, 2010).

When Dante met Beatrice, he fell in love with her. They did not get married, neither had they any contact but the visit had an influence on Dante.

Beatrice takes over as a guide from the Latin poet Virgil, because, as a pagan, Virgil cannot enter Paradise. She is like a savior for Dante. Her presence in Dante’s mind and heart removed evils and he changed into a better person. He allotted to her all his life (Delahunty et al., 2001). (literary allusion)

In the *Golden Ass*, the hero who is called Lucius was curious about knowing about magic. He was transformed into an ass instead of a bird and finally he found salvation by the goddess Isis (*The Golden Ass*, n.d.)

Sample 2:

بر من این دود از چراغ من است	مرد گفتا که باغ باغ من است
وز نشانهای باغ پرسیدند	چون کنیزان نشان او دیدند
مهر بنشست و داوری برخاست	یافتندش در آن گواهی راست
سعی کردند در رهایی او	شاد گشتند از آشنایی او
باز گفتند قصه های دراز	بنشستند پیش خواجه به ناز
که ازو خواجه باد برخوردار	که درین باغ چون شکفته بهار
ماهرویان و مهربانان را	میهمانیست دلستانان را
دیده را از جمال او بهر است	هر زن خویرو که در شهر است



شمع بی دود و نقش بیداغند	همه جمع آمده در این باغند
تا بر آری ز هر که خواهی کام	خیز و با ما یکی زمان بخرام
مهر بر وی نهی و بپسندی	هر بتی را که دل در او بندی
تا نهد سر بر آستانه تو	آوریمش به کنج خانه تو
شہوت خفته در خروش آمد	خواجہ را کان سخن به گوش آمد
طبع با شہوت آشنایی داشت	گرچه در طبع پارسایی داشت

(Saeidian, 2007, pp.298-296)

هر گناهی که هست ازین خاک است	گوهر او ز هر گنہ پاک است
از خطا داده بود بی خلی	کار ما را عنایت ازلی
از چنان کار بد رهایی داد	بخت ما را چو پارسایی داد
نتوان رفت باز پیش گناہ (همان. ۳۱۳)	لیک چون عصمتی بود در راه

**T1:** second stanza: Her essence is pure of every sin; any sin here is of this earth. Divine grace [*ināyat-i azalī*] has delivered our affairs out of sin into flawlessness.)

(When Fate granted us forbearance, it delivered us from this wicked deed.

..... but when chastity is on the road, one cannot turn back to sin.

The youth in this story is very unlike the King; he is compared to the prophet Joseph, especially a paragon of chastity in the face of temptation. He is virtuous and pious, and it seems to all intents and purposes that he has already *found* Paradise and is wise enough to keep it secluded and protected from worldly impurity. It is a testament to the subversive power of love that he doesn't have the women all thrown out on the spot; unfortunately, his gaze is allowed to wander upon the most forbidden of all fruit: a bathing scene (Cross, 2016. P.85).

**T2:** The man replied, The garden is my own; (but) of my branding is this brand on me

When the girls saw his nature they inquired into the features of the garden (claimed).

They found him in (his) evidence correct; anger subsided, litigation fled.

They judged it well to be at peace with him, because they found him of congenial kind.

They were rejoiced to have him as a friend, and set to work to free him (from his bonds)

With blandishments they sat before the youth, and offering explanations (of the case)

Said, In this garden (green), a flowery Spring,—may the proprietor enjoy its fruits!

A feast there is by heart-ensnarers given, beauties of moon-like face, in nature kind.

All the (most) lovely women in the town, whose beauty (seen) gives light unto the eyes,

Have in the garden all together joined, tapers and pictures void of smoke and flaw.

Rise and step out a little while with us, that you may gain your wish from which you please.

Any fair one on whom you fix your heart, to whom you give your love, whom you approve,

We will (at once) bring to your secret nook, that on your threshold she may place her head.

Those accents falling on the master's ears, his dormant passions (woke and) cried aloud.

Though in his nature he had continence, passion was to his nature not unknown ([Wilson, 1924](#), pp.171-177).

Her nature is quite pure of any sin; any offence committed is from me.

The grace of God had given my affairs immunity from harm and from mischance.



Since (my good) fate had given me continence,—they gave me freedom from so ill an act

But still when chastity protects the road, one cannot (think of) going to meet sin (ibid, p.178).

**T1:** Extra information for the second section (D) and omission (some lines) (I)

**T2:** Literal translation (B)

**Comment:** In the last story, there is a pious man who goes to his garden and there are many women there. Having figured out that the man is not an intruder, they came and tried to appease him.

As Cross (2010) said; the scene brings the story of Joseph, the prophet to the readers' mind. Unfortunately, the man was not able to avoid being tempted by a "bathing scene".

He tried to make love with the princess despite her resistance to that action but each time he was stopped by some events which are regarded as God's mercy on him not to near the sin. The holy Quran mentions the words of Joseph to God:

Joseph said: "And I do not hold my own self to be free from weakness; for, the soul is surely prone to enjoin evil, save that whereon my Lord has mercy. Surely, my Lord is Most Forgiving, Merciful." (Yusuf, 53) (Sher ' Ali, 2004). (Religious allusion)

Sample 3:

چمنی بر کنار سروستان  
حوض دیدند و ماه با ماهی  
گره از بند فوطه باز کنان  
یاری و یارگی نداشت چه سود

بود در روضه گاه آن بستان  
آمدند آن بتان خرگاهی  
سوی حوض آمدند نازکنان  
خواجه کان دید جای صبر نبود  
(Saeidian, 2007, p. 299)

**T1:** Lines 3 - 4: ([The women] went towards the pool, coy and flirtatious, loosening the knots of their shirts (Cross, 2016, p. 82)

The physical pain he (the King) feels upon seeing this image of beauty is a common trope of romantic literature, both within Christian and Muslim contexts. For example, in 'Attār's *Manṭiq al-Ṭayr*, "The Conference of the Birds" the pious Shaykh San'ān is inspired by a dream to journey to Rome, where he sees a Christian girl of such beauty, long decades of piety and virtue are instantly incinerated: "all that he was, was no longer / from the fire of melancholy his heart turned to smoke. A similar fate awaits the unfortunate Palamon of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, who, gazing from his prison cell in the top of the tower, "cast his eye upon Emelya, / And therwithal he bleynte and cride, 'A!' " His cousin, Arcite, is sure that Palamon is simply upset at being in prison and tells him to bear it like a man (Cross, 2016, P.82).

**T2:** In the plantation of the garden was a lawn full of the forms of cypress-grove  
The second line omitted

They came with mien seductive to the stream, untying as they came their wrapper bands.

The master saw; no self-control remained; but what avail? He had no friend or help (Wilson, 1924, p.172)

**T1:** Extra information (D) and omission (some lines) (I)

**T2:** literal translation (B)

**Comment 1:** This part is an allusion to the myth of Actaeon and Diana (Artemis). The former who is a young hunter suddenly attends the bathing scene of Diana. She is the goddess of the hunt. Once she, along with some nymphs, was enjoying a bath in spring. Actaeon stumbled upon the scene. The nymphs trying to cover Diana, screamed in surprise. Diana, embarrassed, splashed water upon him and



Actaeon was metamorphosed into a deer and killed by his own dogs (Farber, 1999). (Mythological allusion)

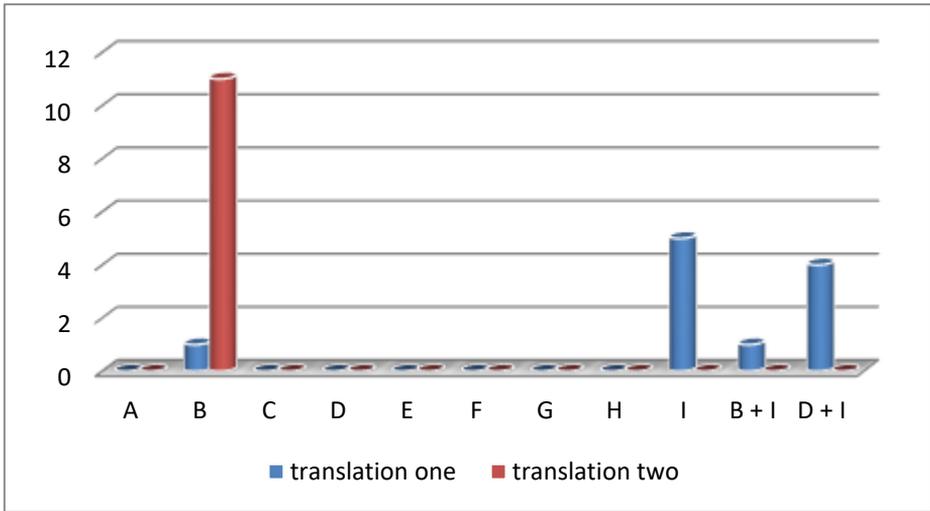
**Comment 2:** In addition, this narrative also alludes to two literary works; *The Circle of Birds* by Attar and Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*. In the former, Shaykh San'an who was a pious man, devoting himself to God for many years, was inspired by a dream to travel to Rome. When he and his disciples arrived there he was tempted by a Christian girl's appearance. He lost his heart his heart to her. The fire of love devastated him totally. Intoxicated himself with wine, he burnt Qur'an and became a swineherd for the girl's love.

And as for Chaucer's *Knight's tale*: After having defeated Creon, Duke Theseus returned and found two young knights (Palamon and Arcite) in the battlefield. He didn't kill them but condemned them to life imprisonment. Both lived in the prison tower for several years. One morning several years later, Palamon and Arcite saw Emelya, Theseus' sister-in-law, in her garden. They fell in love with her. Based on some conditions, they set free from the cell many years later. They both met each other and arranged to duel on Emelya (*Summary of the knights' tale*, n.d.). (Literary allusion)

## 5. Results

The figure below reveals the distribution of the strategies employed by the two translators in each of the allusions which were found in the text. Note that strategies are not used fully and they are replaced by letters.

Two strategies were added by the researcher 'B + I' (literal translation and omission for some lines), and 'D + I' ( adding extra information and omission for some lines), because in the first translation these two hybrid strategies were found in some cases.



*Figure 1:* Frequency of the Strategies Applied for KP Allusions of the Black and White Domes

Eleven instances extracted from the stories (*the Black and the White Domes*) of *the Seven Images*. From among the instances, analyzed in the previous part, the first translator applied the literal translation (B) to translate one instance; however, literal translation was also used in one other case along with omission (B + I), and the strategy of adding extra information (footnotes, endnotes, or other explicit explanation) (D) + omission (I) was used four times and for other five instances, omission (I) was applied. The frequency of other strategies was zero.

As for the second translator, the only strategy applied to translate the instances was literal translation. The frequency of other strategies was zero.

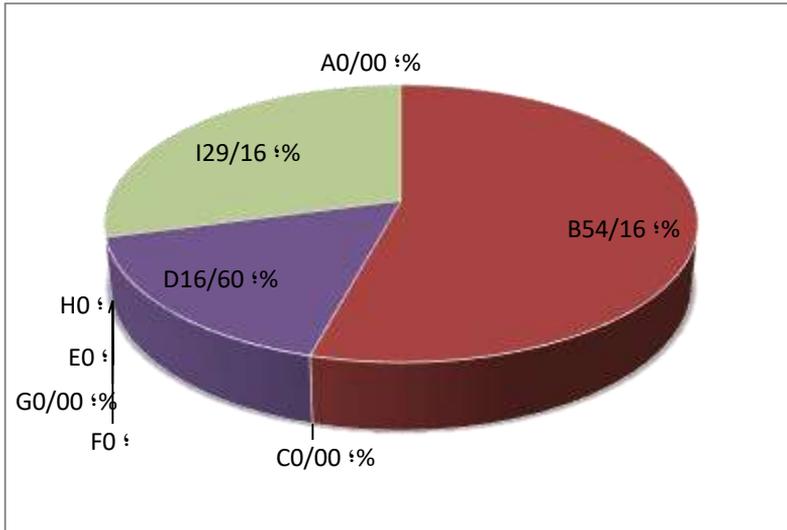


Figure 2: Frequency Percentage of the Strategies Applied for KP Allusions of the Black and White Domes (two translators)

Figure 2 illustrates the percentage of all strategies applied in these two translations. On the basis of this statistics, the highest frequency belonged to literal translation (strategy B). Then omission (strategy I) and adding extra information (strategy D) were respectively the most frequent ones. No instance was found for other strategies suggested by Leppihalme. Hybrid strategies were counted twice ('D+I' and 'B +I').

## 6. Conclusion

This research was to figure out the translation strategies applied by these two translators to convey allusive elements implicit in the two tales- *The Black Dome* and *The White Dome*- of *The Seven Images*. As the results of the study suggest, except for the very few examples in the first translation, there was no hint at or reference to the points and events mentioned by the researcher in either of these

two translations. The researcher observed omission in almost all cases that may show the translators' little attention to the secondary meaning in the poem.

As discussed before, allusion is an organic element of composition in literature, e.g. *The Waste Land* is read alongside the notes Eliot added, in fact, readers find that this poem is a collage of quotations from and allusions to other texts (Montgomery, 2007, p.164). On the basis of cultural differences mentioned previously, and with respect to religious, mythological and literary distance (in this paper, religious, mythological and literary allusions are in focus), the use of literal translation for KPs is not an efficient strategy to convey implicit meanings. The researcher as a sample of ST readers could not get the hidden sense in some lines without studying extra explanations in Persian versions. Indeed, the necessity of adding explanations is more perceptible in the translation because in most parts of the tales more than one line or parts refers to other texts or the events and presumably it is impossible to apply literal translation to all the instances of allusion in a literary translation and convey implicit information in this regard. Apparently, the results suggest that the translators did not go beyond the explicit meaning of the lines analyzed before.

Non-linguistic texts and literary devices (the literary device focused on in this literary text was KP allusion) are not impossible to translate across different languages and translators can do them with some effort. Translators should do their best to represent almost the culture of the ST for their readers, in such a case the readers may almost get the same effect as what ST readers got. This is especially important in highly allusive works such as the one discussed in this study. It is hoped that the findings of this study would be a useful guidance for the translators interested in rendering allusive elements in Persian literature to English.



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