

## Why Named? A Socio-cultural and Translational View of Proper Names in Jordan

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### **Abstract**

*Names are cultural words referring to elements deeply rooted in the culture of a given speech community. In Arabic, as the case might be so in other languages, quite many proper names are richly loaded with cultural connotations, historical events, culture-specific metaphors and some other types of allusions. Naming could be looked at as an act of labeling persons or places whereby some meanings or concepts are poured into a linguistic form permissible by the phonological, morphological as well as the semantic rules of a given language system. The present paper is investigating the multifarious social and cultural allusions loaded in a sample of Arabic names, though with special reference to the Jordanian setting. The analysis further displays the social, psychological and cultural motives behind opting for certain names that are related to climatic, religious, political and romance backgrounds.*

### **Introduction**

Names are generally viewed as cultural words or words that refer to elements deeply rooted in the culture of a speech community. Yet, the study of proper names within the framework of cultural literacy has not received much attention in the body of linguistic research. The authors of this article admit the fact that it is basically motivated by a related previous work done by Hanaoka (2002:28-42), also available at ([http://wwwsoc.nii.ac.jp/jais/kaishi2002/pdf/03f-hanaoka\\_02\\_.pdf](http://wwwsoc.nii.ac.jp/jais/kaishi2002/pdf/03f-hanaoka_02_.pdf)), and thus will be frequently quoted, though the focus of which is the problems that proper names may pose for translators and interpreters in media. In Arabic, as the case could be so in other languages, quite many proper names are richly loaded with cultural connotations, reference to historical events, culture-specific metaphors, and some other types of allusions. The cultural literacy of the speakers of a given speech community includes, within their knowledge multitude, a specific knowledge of proper names representing appropriate schemata for the referents of such names, as Hanaoka (ibid) puts it. The multifarious allusions that proper names can bear have specific meanings in the culture and language in which they arise, while the same may not necessarily hold true in others.

Naming is in reality a process of labeling persons or places whereby some meanings or concepts are poured into a linguistic form permissible by the phonological, morphological as well as the semantic rules of a given language system. The act of naming whose purpose is to identify and modify the referent relies heavily, as we believe, on borrowing in that the characteristics of a physical object and/or certain abstract concepts representing values and virtues are borrowed. It is true that different cultures may reflect varied views of the world of experiences; yet, similar conceptualizations of both the physical as well as the cultural world are still available cross-culturally and linguistically. Therefore, borrowing as the ground for naming or labeling things and humans can be of internal and external sources. Within the Arabic context, when a name is borrowed whether internally or externally, usually the referent is a figure or a celebrity behind whom there is a historical event or story representing a uniquely significant contribution to either a local or a global legacy. Naming in this respect, manifests a wishful act in that the newly born human being is hoped to have the same traits, and thus an equal input or involvement into the development of a particular life endeavor.

Thus, this psychologically and socially motivated aspiration voiced out through naming can be looked at as one of the main reasons behind the circulating of certain names in which parents are seeking pride, among other values and virtues. Some favored names of highly adored people can cross the gender boundaries, and hence are conferred, as is the case in Arabic, on both males and females. For example, the borrowed name 'Guevara', though a male name in the alien source is bestowed to girls in Arabic-speaking communities.

Although the meaning of this name, if it has any in the donor culture, is very unlikely to be present within the consciousness of the foreign users, i.e., what 'Ernesto Che Guevara' did or achieved becomes its meaning. In reality here, not only is the name borrowed but also the cultural allusions it has as a revolutionary leader known for guerrilla warfare, which can embody not only an individual ambition but also a societal one.

Likewise, the name 'Saladin' is profusely used in the Arab communities, again as a cultural word referring to elements deeply entrenched in the Arab-Muslim history. Saladin (Salah Addin Yusuf Ibn Ayyub, 1138-1193) is not only a source of attraction to Arabs but also some of his most ardent admirers have often been his Christian biographers. They, as much as the Arabs, have referred to his almost perfect sense of cultured chivalry. It is said that the crusader knights learned a great deal about gallantry from him. For example, when the Crusaders took Jerusalem in (1099), they murdered virtually all of its inhabitants, boasting that parts of the city were knee-high in blood. When Saladin liberated the city of Jerusalem in 1187, he spared his war prisoners giving them time to leave and safe passage. The name, therefore, is heavily loaded with cultural allusions and aspirations that another 'Saladin' may be repeated to liberate the holy city of Jerusalem which is currently under occupation.

As stated by Al-Azzam, et al. (2008), it is axiomatic that some names have been made interminable in history because of denoting persons who set examples in particular fields whether socially approved or disapproved. The coinage and the frequency of such names helped in making them familiar among all social classes, regardless of the educational, religious or social variations. The effect that a certain name may create on people differs regionally and culturally due to the size of pressure that the person referred to by the name has produced on the people witnessing blessing or oppression, prosperity or poverty, development or retardation, and peace or uproar. When colloquially lexicalized, such names like Pharaoh, Nimrod, Abel, and Antara, to mention a few, their social function is relayed, though sometimes without drawing the attention of the audience to the persons after whom names are conceptualized. The lexicalized names *mitfar'in* (v. *tifar'an*), *mitnamrid* (v. *titnamrad*), *mistahbil* (v. *tistahbil*), and *mit'antir* (v. *tit'anter*) have political, religious, social and dictatorial implications. These names were analyzed from social, cultural, linguistic, and translational perspectives in order to highlight the Arabic culture-specific implications associated with them, in addition to the translation unbridgeable gaps.

Eponyms, words formed from proper names, are a common means by which new words are added to the vocabulary stock of a language. In English, for example, the advertising industry has provided many words such as Kodak, Orlon and nylon in addition to other specific brand names such as Kleenex, Xerox and Vaseline etc. The new lexicalized names are used as the generic name for these different types of products. In Arabic, proper names borrowed from the standard variety and colloquially lexicalized is a salient phenomenon (cf. Al-Azzam, et al, *ibid*). Like borrowed nouns, proper names are taken as stems, and are lexicalized to enter the vernacular system as adjectives and then as verbs through the application of the morphological processing rule, as Al-Quran (2006) stated it. Of course, the lexicalized name within the standard variety enters its dictionary, whereas in the colloquial code, it is accommodated and institutionalized in the daily use of the language. Therefore, lexicalized proper names acquire a sustained presence when socially accepted and frequently used in contexts that are similar to the historical or cultural background associated with them. In this process of borrowing and lexicalizing names from standard Arabic into a colloquial variety, what is in reality borrowed is the historical or the culturally alluded-to event encompassing the referents of these names.

Moreover, names according to Al-Azzam et al. (*ibid*), can occupy a central role in discursive events that utilize intertextuality as a communicative strategy to present an argument convincingly. For example, the Arab Umayyad Caliph, Mu'awiya Ibn Abi Sufyan, was known as a very diplomatic leader whose policy was to keep on the good relations even with those plotting against him. Within this context, he was reported to have once said that 'if only a hair ties me with others, I will not let it be cut' to indicate enough flexibility to win the satisfaction of the side that is thought as volatile, and self-uncontrollable. Thus, in a social interaction discussing the wisdom value of this policy, and describing a person as having this trait, he/she is referred to as one who 'keeps on the hair of Mu'awiya'. This intertextual relation centered on a proper name is established to carry out the function of highlighting the necessity of being patient, wise, tolerant, and compromising to keep relations with others intact and tight, as the caliph Mu'awiya was and used to do.

### **Statement and Purpose**

As stated elsewhere above, naming is a process of labeling persons or places whereby some meanings or concepts are emptied into linguistic forms generally allowed by the phonological, morphological as well as the semantic rules of a given language system. This process whose purpose is to identify and modify the referent heavily utilizes the phenomena of borrowing and metaphors in that the characteristics of a physical object and/or certain abstract concepts representing values, virtues, etc. are loaned. Of course, different cultures may reflect varied views of the world of experiences; yet, similar ways of perceiving both the physical as well as the cultural world can still be found cross-culturally and linguistically. The purpose of the present paper is to investigate the multifarious social and cultural allusions loaded in a sample of Arabic names. As will be shown in the discussion below, the social, psychological and cultural motives behind opting for certain names will be analyzed. Translationally, moreover, the strategies relevant to translators when dealing with proper names, in addition to the problems posed by them, will be accounted for since the pragmatic and extra-linguistic knowledge involving proper names is a formidable issue. This is so because translators and interpreters who deal with more than one culture have to know more than what native speakers do, especially when dealing with foreign or unfamiliar names.

### **The Grammatical Characteristics of Proper Names**

Nouns are basically classified as common or proper. Common nouns refer to a class of entities such as *fruit* and *mammal*, while proper nouns have a unique referent like *Ahmad* and *Cairo*. Grammatically, proper nouns behave very much in the same way in the sentence as common nouns. There are, however, well-known co-occurrence restrictions that distinguish them from common nouns. For example, proper nouns/names do not accept demonstrative pronouns as determiners. One would not normally say ‘*this Ahmad just typed the report*. However, supposing that there are several *Ahmads* out of whom you wish to single out a particular one, you are already using Ahmad as a common noun meaning ‘any person called Ahmad.’ Second, proper names do not accept restrictive adjectives or restrictive relative clauses. In the sentence ‘the young Khalid used to deal with others in a different way’, the speaker is implicitly comparing one of several manifestations in time of the person called Khalid with the rest, therefore, one is using the word as a common noun in the grammatical sense. The same holds true to sentences like ‘*you are not the Layla I know*’ as a way of giving explanations about the character of the noun in question. The aforementioned features derive directly from the fact that proper names refer to unique referents.

Unlike proper nouns, which are single words, a proper name is either a single word or more than one word (Quirk, et al, 1985:288). They generally lack number contrast, article contrast and modification. Yet, the following examples provided by Hanaoka (2006: 31) show that on certain occasions, they could take on a number and article contrast.

“(1) Christopher had derided the idea of safe havens, telling French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, “Wouldn't we be creating *six Dienbienphus*? (*Newsweek*, May 31, 1993). The plural form of the proper name *Dienbienphu* here means situations like *Dienbienphu*. The metaphorical use of a name as in this instance presupposes that the listener can call up relevant associations.

(2) *An America* responsible for removing Saddam would be *an America* expected to bear some responsibility for the post-Saddam shape of Iraq; a task whose dimension (and popularity with the American public) would make Haiti look like a picnic (*Newsweek*, October 17, 1994). The use of a determiner with restrictive modification occurs when a particular aspect of the referent of the name is described.”

As for how names can sometimes be modified, Hanaoka (ibid) mentions the following examples:

“(3) As chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the administration of *Bush "41,"* General Powell was an avatar of restraint, cooling off policymakers who believed that armed intervention could be cheap or easy. Moderates have been counting on Powell to rein in

*Bush "43's"* hard-chargers, too (*Newsweek*, March 6, 2002). Here, the reader needs to use his or her world knowledge to figure out what the modifying numbers *41* and *43* stand for.

(4) Suppose Ross Perot won 75 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. And suppose *some latter-day Jefferson Davis*, intent upon splitting up the country, won another 75 seats (*Newsweek*, November 8, 1993).” Here, the reader is expected to recall the relevant property of *Jefferson Davis*.

Moreover, the fact that proper names can be used as adjectives is part of the background knowledge associated with the concerned names. For example, in English we talk of ‘a Freudian and Chomskyan approach’ and in Arabic of ‘u’hdah u’mariah’ and ‘mathhab hanbali’. The former refers to the peace treaty known as ‘the Treaty of Umar’ signed by Sophronius, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Elyya Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and Umar Ibn Al-Khattab, the second Muslim caliph, himself in 637 after a long-lasting siege of Jerusalem. The Arabic adjective ‘*umariah*’ derived from the proper name ‘Umar’ is heavily loaded with allusions derived from the good traits of the caliph Umar who was known for being just, faithful and leading a simple, austere lifestyle, in addition to his well known achievement of codifying the Islamic law. The latter, ‘*hanbali*’ is an adjective derived from the proper name ‘*Hanbal*’ referring to Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (780-855- CE), an important Muslim scholar and theologian who is considered the founder of the Hanbali school of fiqh, or Islamic jurisprudence and the leading authority on the Orthodox doctrine of Islam (cf. Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia). Thus, any normal person can be described as ‘hanbali’ to imply or suggest the orthodox doctrinal influence.

A name can generate a new form functioning as a different part of speech such as an adjective whereby such an improvised form can be long-lived and is often used for specific occasions and contexts, and consequently finds its way into a dictionary. Another interesting example, which goes under blends, is the adjective form derived from proper names resulting from a play on words ‘*Amnesian*’, being half American and half Polynesian, as put by Hanaoka (ibid).

### ***Schematic Knowledge of Proper Names***

As is the case in almost all languages, most names are culture specific, and thus constituting a world of knowledge associated with the names. When used in inter-textual relations, as stated above, proper names and the cultural allusions they carry become part of the top-down processing of a piece of discourse, which is reader driven as referred to by Omaggio (1986) and Barnett (1989), cited by Hanaoka (ibid: 34). The content schemata include this knowledge of proper names and their set of connections or network of associations. Hence, the recipient of an oral or written discourse is expected to actively interact with his/her already existing knowledge to comprehend the discourse embracing the concerned names that are thematically employed. This, of course, entails that the recipient select the adequate schemata for making sense out of it, and bridge the gap related to different cultural schemata if the text is of an alien source.

Since the relevant knowledge recipients bring to bear on the task of comprehending a discourse is indispensable, the lack of schemata for proper names may cause more problems in understanding the implication. According to Hanaoka (ibid: 35), who draws upon Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model of language use, mentions two aspects of knowledge that need to be considered. The first is topical knowledge or factual one about the referent of a name if it is the topic of an utterance or a longer piece of discourse. The second type of knowledge is sociolinguistic, which includes according to Bachman (1990), cited by (Hanaoka: ibid) knowledge of cultural references, implications in addition to the figurative use of language. This component of schematic knowledge is needed by the recipient to make sense of allusions to culture-specific names.

Brumfit (1984: 29) describes the development of a broad schematic knowledge on names of varied cultural allusions as having an unlimited range of associations and meanings that are likely to develop for lexical items. This is explained in the light of the ability human beings possess to establish associative links between concepts so that they become conventionalized and frequently used by a speech community. However, although Hirsch (1987: 27) views the world of knowledge existing in the minds of literate speakers as extensive, the associations established between concepts remain limited within this body of knowledge or schema.

### ***Translating Proper Names***

The choice of an adequate translation strategy is significantly affected by the communicative setting. The situational features involved in the translation act, as stated by Särkkä (2007, available at <http://wotan.liu.edu/doi/data/Articles/juljuljbcy:2007:v:11:i:1:p:14700.html>), include the function or reason of the translation, the targeted audience, how distant the source and target cultures are, in addition to the closeness or lack of it of the languages involved. In translating proper or personal names, not only are the syntactic features important but also their respective referents are very decisive factors. He further suggests a number of ways to deal with proper names in translation. The first is to transport a proper name wholesale from the source text, or, second, it can be partly taken from the source language and partly translated. A third strategy is to replace it with more or less different names in the target language. A fourth option is to dispense with it altogether.

Moreover, Hanaoka (ibid: 39) suggests some strategies relevant to translators when dealing with proper names since the pragmatic and extra-linguistic knowledge involving proper names is a tough issue for them. Translators and interpreters who deal with more than one culture have to know more than native speakers do, especially when dealing with foreign or unfamiliar names. The two strategies suggested here are those of decoding and encoding. While the former refers to both recognizing a proper name and gaining knowledge about the referent, the latter pertains to transferring messages into a target language.

In this respect, Hanaoka refers to the general principles of effectiveness and efficiency proposed by Hatim (2001) to be considered when dealing with proper names. Within the relevance principle, the question is whether it is rewarding for the recipient to know that a particular name is loaded with connotations. Within this context, Hanaoka (pp. 39-40) mentions three key principles in translating names, which include the cultural specificity of the name, topical knowledge and figurative knowledge, and the relationship to macro/micro-structure. The first addresses how much cultural knowledge the target audience may already have about the name. The second factor concerns addition or explication of extra-textual or factual information as well as explication of the figurative meaning. Finally, a name should be viewed essential or an important lexical item if its referent is the topic of a discourse, i.e. when it is part of the macro-structure of the discourse. However, if a name occurs lower in the text structure, then it can be considered as less essential and therefore may be more prone to simplification strategies.

### ***Discussion***

Naming persons in Jordan has different motives and cultural backgrounds, which make some names gain more popularity and fame than others do. In the following, an analysis and discussion of some names will be presented, and reasons behind giving persons certain names will be illuminated. As the reasons of naming are wide in scope, the examples and analysis will be confined to regional, religious, political, romantic, and other social backgrounds. The fact that the Arab region, of which Jordan is a small part, has a historic depth, divine reality, climatic variation, and deeply rooted traditions shows a clear impact on the persons' names as will be shown in the discussion below.

### ***Names Relating to Climatic Regions in Jordan***

#### **Maṭar**

Despite the fact that Jordan is relatively small in size, if compared with other Arab countries such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan, it enjoys distinct climatic and regional variations. As desert forms more than seventy percent of the Jordanian landscape size, its dwellers are in dire need of rain, not only for themselves but also for their cattle or livestock. The shortage of water resources has been a main reason of fight between tribes throughout history. This uncontrollable challenge has also pushed many tribes to change the place of living in search of water and pastures.

The severe regional condition has contributed in giving names to places of dwelling, natural phenomena, cattle, and more importantly to newly born infants. The name 'maṭar', literally 'rain' is very popular in the barren regions of Jordan such as the north-east and the south. What motivated parents to give their sons this name, among many related ones, is the rarity of rain in these regions. In the hope of having abundant rain at a certain season where insights of experienced men tell the scarcity of the blessing, desert inhabitants tend to name their newly born babies by 'maṭar'.

The name can have implications and connotations precisely confined to desert dwellers and those who may pass through similar harsh conditions. Therefore, the forcefulness and the influence that the name may create on the readers or the audience of the name differ from one part of the country to another. While the name is extremely favored by people urgently calling or asking for rain, it is unfavorable for people mainly interested in business, trade, and commerce where rain can be a reason for the business stoppage.

As a translation strategy, transliterating the name into English deprives it from a set of socio-cultural associations. The reasons behind giving one the name 'maṭar' such as the scarcity of rain in desert or semi-desert regions cannot be conveyed in the target language where it rains all year round; people in the target language do not long for rain; on the contrary, they long for sunny days to go for outdoor bathing. Moreover, heavy rain and snowy hurricane can be a barrier for industry and commerce activities. The emotive forcefulness caused by rain on the desert dwellers that look forward to it cannot be reproduced in the target language where rain can be a bad or an ill omen to them.

The psychological effect of the environment on man is significant and should be taken into account in translation since this affects him and shapes his personality. The language by which man expresses his thoughts and ideas is significantly influenced by the surroundings, and the terms produced to describe man's activities and behaviors are in harmony with his psychology (Al-Azzam 2005:116).

### **Fāliḥ**

Contrary to the desert region of the Jordan Badia where people rely heavily on livestock, people in other parts of Jordan, mainly the north-west, rely on cultivation. Agriculture has been a source of living for most people in those areas due to the abundance of rain and some running springs or rivers. Thus, many persons' names derive from agricultural nomenclatures, which give them regional and professional implications. The name 'fāliḥ', literally 'cultivator' is a case in point.

The relationship between man and the place of living has proved to be intimate and inseparable. The associated meanings that a name may imply are crucially environment-related, the inheritance of which seems as something normal and inattentive. The name 'fāliḥ' may not invoke somebody to ask about the semantics of the name, and the reasons behind sticking or branding it to someone as a name, or even a surname after a long passage of time. The name is derived from the root 'f-l-ḥ', 'to plough the land', which is the main profession of people living in the countryside of Jordan. The other related forms of the name 'fāliḥ' which can give almost the same implications are 'fallāḥ', 'falāḥ', and 'mufliḥ' among many others.

The associations of the name 'fāliḥ' are regionally related and give the name rural significations. The name associations can denote any person coming from this area of the country, even if he is holding a job that has nothing to do with agriculture or cultivation. Thus, people working in Amman, the capital, for example, or the Badia, the barren part of the country, are referred to as 'fallāḥīn', 'farmers or cultivators' if they have originally come from the Jordanian countryside. It is, therefore, the area and the profession which have dictated themselves on giving the name 'fāliḥ' to people living in the north of Jordan more than other parts of the country.

Rendering the name into English through transliteration is insufficient because the implications of the name would not be conveyed as the name is completely restricted to its source region. The translator has to illuminate the fact that the name stems from the area and the profession on which most people rely as a way of living. The literal meaning can be preserved in the translation, but the associative meanings form a real obstacle to the reader who is ignorant of the source material allusions. Newmark (1981:82) claims that ecological terms are usually retained in areas that have their own winds, lakes, inventions and customs which first add local color to any description of their countries of origin, and may have to be explained, depending on the readership and the text-type.

### ***Names Relating to Religious Backgrounds***

Some names have religious and historic perspectives and reflect deeply-rooted significations. Due to the success and achievements that a certain person has made, and the role he has played in building a real civilization, many people are named after him till the current days. The Muslim just caliph and the companion of the Prophet Mohammad, 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb', and the non-Arab Muslim leader 'Saladin', who liberated Jerusalem from the crusaders after many centuries of occupation, are two examples that illustrate the religious and leadership reasons of giving names.

### **Umar**

One of the four Muslim Orthodox caliphs, 'Umar Ibn Al- Khaṭṭāb" has set forth an unprecedented example of justice, bravery, God-fearing, responsibility, and humbleness that made him a legend, which transmitted from mouth to mouth till today. Despite the fact that the name 'Umar' existed before Islam, it is the 'Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb' which is still named after, mainly among the Sunni Muslims. During his caliphate, the Muslim land expanded, and conquests, one after another, were made outside the Arab peninsula's territories. In other words, the miscellaneous references that proper names can hold have definite implications in the culture and language in which they happen, while the same may not necessarily embrace similar allegations.

Taking the caliph as an example of the aforementioned merits, his name 'Umar' was adopted and given to persons from the date of Caliphate until now. Bearing the hope of holding some of Umar's traits, fathers tend to call their sons by the name 'Umar'. The political, religious and other personal traits of the caliph have dictated themselves on the social and cultural perspectives of the Arab and non-Arab Muslims.

The fact has also extended to be tribally branded, where 'Al-'Umarī' tribe is considered as one of the Jordanian largest families, and an existing clan in other Arab neighboring countries. A vital and relevant issue to be mentioned here is that new 'Umar' names do not necessarily refer to the caliph; they may refer to one's grandfather as fathers usually name their son's after their own parents. This renewable feature of naming sons reflects the idea of the strong tie that links the family members together as a large unit in the community, a feature that may not characterize the social structure of the modern communities.

Thus, the name 'Umar' holds several socio-cultural allusions that cannot be fully comprehended by all people alike. One might be named 'Umar' because the father hopes his newly born son to be a leader. Another may name him as such reflecting a wish that the son may become a warrior, just, humble, and dictator of Islamic regulations upon invaders of the land as shown in the 'Treaty of Umar' whereby the Muslim caliph 'Umar' entered the holy city of Jerusalem peacefully without shedding blood. This could be what has driven some Christians of Jordan to name their sons 'Umar', as a real example of tolerance and interfaith dialogue, a political and an inter-cultural issue that modern nations and societies are enthusiastically addressing.

It is phonically easy to include the name 'Umar' in the target language lexicon as many Muslims carrying the name are nationals of the western world. However, the implications that the name itself and not its bearers signify are a translation challenge. Target language readers, as many of the source language, Arabic, ones, would not comprehend from the transliterated name that 'Umar' has a political signification as a founder of justice in the Islamic world, a humble leader who used to carry food to poor families living under his caliphate umbrella, lie in the shade of the mosque on hot days, and who further used to be a shelter to which the occupiers of the land have turned to seek asylum. All these political, religious, social and intercultural associations the name 'Umar' carries are deemed to be lost in the mere transliteration of the name, for the target language recipients might be familiar with some current 'Umar' names that refer to people viewed by westerners as terrorists, callers of intolerance, oppressors and discriminators. It is the translator's task to load the transliterated name 'Umar' with these universally favored meanings that add new understandings of the name.

### **Saladin**

Another name that carries political and religious implications is *Ṣalāḥ Ad-Dīn Al-Ayyūbī*, a name that is known in English as Saladin. A simple man belonging to a poor Kurdish family, Saladin gave a real example of a leading character that kept him memorable until today. The conflict with the west, mainly the crusaders, in the eleventh century gave the man a reputation of tolerance, diplomacy, politics, and leadership that is adopted by ordinary and leading figures at our modern time. As mentioned in the theoretical part above, the psychologically and socially motivated aspiration voiced out through naming can be looked at as one of the main, if not the main, reasons behind the circulation of certain names in which parents are seeking pride.

Enjoying the above sought values, *Ṣalāḥ Ad-Dīn* as a name that has been adopted by parents to name their male babies. Looking forward to having someone like *Ṣalāḥ Ad-Dīn*, people tend to give their sons the name of the great leader, who liberated one of the most sacred cities and mosques to Muslims, Jerusalem and Al-Aqṣā Mosque. The plight through which the Muslims were passing at the time of *Ṣalāḥ Ad-Dīn*, the policy he followed in uniting the Muslims and the non-Muslims of Syria and Egypt before fighting the crusaders, and the dictation of conditions upon the invaders made from him a favored name or label by liberty seekers, social reformists and colonization resistants. It should be pointed here that the name was borrowed by the westerners as Saladin, and gained respect and popularity for the tolerance he showed after the conclusion of the battle of *Ḥiṭṭīn*, when he abstained from killing the crusaders' king as he was quoted saying 'a king does not kill a king'.

The sociolinguistic and cultural allusions that the name bears are deeply rooted among generations from the date of the battle till the present time. The fact that Saladin is a Kurdish Muslim may not be known by quite many Arabs, especially the uneducated who think that he is an Arab Muslim. Taking the idea as such has the resorting fact that all Muslims are the same, regardless of their origin, color, race, and gender. The respect and appreciation that the name has received spring from the severe conditions that the Muslims were passing through, and the pressing need of Muslims for someone like *Ṣalāḥ Ad-Dīn* to unite them, liberate their land, and restore their supremacy in the region that was easy to occupy and exploit. The crusaders' religious discrimination, the ambition of occupying the land of the Arab *mashriq* (east), and the keen desire of stopping the Islamic expansion to the west were among many crusaders' plans that Saladin prevented to take place.

Likewise, preserving all the social and cultural implications of the name can be too difficult to realize in the target language. When the name 'Saladin' is borrowed from Arabic, the implied multifaceted semantic structure of the name is not shown in the target language. Besides, the phonetic misrepresentation of the name in the target language, Saladin for Ṣalāḥ Ad-Dīn, is another meaning-loss consequence that the translation of the name can end up with in the target language. The socio-linguistic significance of the name in the source language cannot be retained in translation, where the social respect, appreciation, hope, conquest, liberation of land, enemy's pullout of the land, and Muslim unity are confined to the source text; in other words, the forcefulness and the psychological effect produced on the source language audience, cannot be recreated similarly in the target language, where the receptive language audience do not bear even to hear the name, due to the crushing defeat and stigma they got after the battle of Ḥiṭṭīn.

### ***Names Relating to Political Background***

Political systems, whether at the level of the state as a whole, or that of the individual as a member of the state, can have impacts on the individuals' thinking, behavior, and political course. Political names and empires have dictated themselves on the individuals, witnessing politicians, and parents of would-be-born sons. Political esteem, appreciation, respect, and admiration, which the individuals hold about certain empires and political leaders, have contributed in entitling people with certain names. Such names may be favorable in one area, but unfavorable in another due to individuals' stand of the politicians, and can even change over time because of the oppressions that an empire may experience over its people. The Turkish Empire and the late Egyptian leader, Jamal Abd Al-Naṣir, can be two outstanding examples.

### **Turkiyyih**

The Turkish Islamic empire ruled over the Muslim world more than four centuries; during this long period the empire clearly contributed in the spread of Islam outside its many territories. Islam spread as far as to the borders of China in the east, north to the south of Russia, and west to the borders of France. This huge size of the Islamic empire, and the successive conquests, one after another, at the hands of the Turkish leaders have given Turkey a renowned prestige and respect that made the Muslims in general, and the Arabs in particular sincerely follow the Turkish political system. The Turkish impact on the Arab mashriq 'east' is more plainly noticed than that in the Arab maghrib 'west', where Syria was noticeably influenced by language, professions, and names.

In Jordan, one of the female names that carries allusion to the Turkish Empire is 'Turkiyyih', the masculine form of which is 'Turkī'. Parents in the twentieth century tended to name their newly-born females 'Turkiyyih', after the empire which ruled according to the Islamic law, and refused to hand over any piece of land to the Jews, during the regime of sultan Abdul-Ḥamīd. The respect and reverence that the Turks embraced have driven many Jordanians to name their daughters 'Turkiyyih', violating the phonics of the word. The socio-cultural implications that the empire gained at a particular period have made it prestigious and highly respectable. These allusions were warmly welcomed by the Jordanian communities where many Jordanians volunteered to fight with the state of caliphate outside its territories.

The point to be made clear here is that the name began to lose its significance and frequency among the Jordanians, especially after the Great Arab Rebel, when the Ottoman Empire was portrayed as a political system deviating from the Islamic rules, in addition to hanging the Arab political activists who were holding opposing views to the Turkish policy. Thus, the name 'Turkiyyih' is no longer of interest to Jordanians, being looked at as an old-fashioned brand that does not suit the new or modern generation, and hence is not common nowadays among the newly born female babies.

In translation, the forgoing implications of the name cannot be fully grasped in the target language. Transliterating the name 'Turkiyyih' would bear no more than a proper name in the target language, where the audience would not think of the name as loaned in Arabic; they may perceive the word as sheer name without noticing the acquired modifications, relating to the phonetic structure. Moreover, the emotive and psychological influence that the name has incurred on the Jordanian audience would not be similarly recreated on the audience of the target language, who may have hostile views against the Islamic empire. In this vein, a worthwhile point to be raised is that since the view of Jordanians has changed toward the outstretched state, the issue would become more complicated as the translator has to play the role of a psychologist to diagnose the feelings of Jordanians over the past century in order to relay similar emotive power on the target reader.



**Jamāl**

One of the bitterest moments that the Arabs went through in the last century was the Israeli conquest of the Heights of Golan, Sinai, and the West Bank after the occupation of the Palestinian territories of 1948. The political stigma of the Arabs at that time springs from the situation of distress, hopelessness, helplessness, and defenselessness brought about by the internal conflicts and the external dominating powers that divided the Arabs into small entities. There was no clear policy to release the Arab people from the unpleasant position, and establish a new political system that could stop that ongoing deterioration. In Egypt, a new hope began to loom in the horizon when president Jamal Abdul-Nāṣir took charge of the state, and began calling for Arab nationalism and liberation of land and people.

The heroic deeds and national slogans that the leader, Jamal Abdul-Nāṣir, tried to prove true were reflected nationwide when the Arabs were in a dire need of a rescuing leader after a defeat stigma. Nationalizing the Suez Canal and building the Dam were among many national priorities that president Jamal had given attention to. Moreover, the president called for Arab unity in order to face challenges at that time, a call warmly received among the Arab nation. The case being so, the president gained real popularity and enough respect from all people, regardless of their class, level of education, political awareness, or even political position. The socio-cultural prestige that the president gained has driven many parents to name their sons Jamal. Naming after the president became very popular in the Arab world, especially in the countries that have borders with the occupied land, such as Jordan, which has the longest borderlines with the occupied territories.

The thematic function of naming a newly born baby as Jamal stems from the social admiration that the name acquired during the time of the Nāṣirī Movement. The connotations and allusions related to the leader became part of a shared background knowledge enabling the recipient to fully understand the oral or written discourse within this context. The psychological and social motivations pushed many parents to name their sons Jamal, a name that they were very proud of. Jamal, to them, stands for liberation, Arab nationalism, unity, victory and the state dream amidst the terrible consequences of the land and people loss.

Translating the name Jamal into English, through any translation procedure, brings about many translation hurdles. The semantic denotation of the name, beauty, cannot be conveyed in the target language without provision of expounding details. The political situation of the Arabs at the time of Jamal was also difficult to retain, as readers of the receptive language may be unaware of the Arab awful division consequences; the translator does not translate for a certain readership, and therefore should expect audience miscomprehension and misconception of the source name discourse. More importantly and more uncontrollably, the psychological feeling of pride that the Arabs had at the time of Jamal, the president, and the following generations cannot be retained in the target language where people may have a hostile or a contrasting view. Bridging the gap between the two distant social visions, images, and cultural backgrounds, can only be contracted and tendered if the translator provides the target language version with social and cultural supporting details.

***Names Relating to Romance***

Romance in Arabic literature is associated with some persons' names where lovers sacrificed their lives for the sake of each other, as is the case with Romeo and Juliet in the English literature. The names of those persons have been transmitted over history where their new brands adopted other, but related allusions. Love, self-sacrifice and torment, adornment of the partner, tolerance, agony, patience, stress and constant worry were among the features that markedly and remarkably distinguished some lovers throughout history and current days. Qais, who has gained clear love implications in the Arabic classical literature, and Muhannad, the star of the Turkish serial 'nūr' who has gained enough admiration by a large scale majority of Jordanians, are two illustrative examples of names loaded with romantic connotations.

**Qais**

In Arabic literature, the name Qais is associated with sincerity, love, and sacrifice for the sake of the beloved. Qais wandered in all directions in the open-ended desert in search of his love, Lailā, after she left her dwelling place with her tribe to nowhere; crying loudly in the desert, having no companions except desert wolves and his horse, wandering directionlessly, and carrying the image of his lost love, Qais is said to have found Lailā, buried lonely in the vast forlorn region. He cried and yelled over her grave until his death, an incident that eternalized him in the Arabic literature as an example of love faithfulness and loyalty.

This real love event has kept the name alive, and made it a symbol of love suffering and affliction throughout history. Thus, it has acquired socio-cultural values over ages, a fact that urged many people, especially the ones of romance, to name their sons after 'Qais'. As the name is romantically oriented, many parents who embrace features of romance tend to name their sons after 'Qais'. In social situations, wherein an event of love suffering is mentioned, an allusion is made to the classical event of Qais's love. The modern couple is sometimes compared with the classical one, especially when parents do not approve or accept the marriage; this disapproval is linked with social traditions whereby relatives of the female may oppose the marriage contract due to jealousy or the desire to marry her. In this case, the two lovers face more love agony and pain, where death or suicide can sometimes be a final resort to put an end to the anguish scenario.

Translating the name 'Qais' in the target languages can pose a problem. Socio-culturally, the deeply rooted traditional understanding, which the name has acquired, will not be conveyed. The name has won social comprehension at all levels, a translation challenge that cannot be remedied without providing the target language reader with sufficient details that can elucidate the name's socio-cultural implications. Love risks and hardships, produced on the audience of the source language and culture cannot be recreated to the same extent on the audience of the receptive language and culture. To ease comprehension may necessitate the translator to skew the source text by making reference to the target culture similar vents. Reference to the love agony of Romeo and Juliet may help in bridging the socio-cultural gap, and approximate between the social and cultural viewpoints.

### **Muhannad**

Unlike 'Qais', the Arabic classical example of love who has gained a historic popularity, Muhannad represents the modern romance of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Videod in socially, morally, economically, and romantically (some may call it) situations, the Turkish serial 'Nūr' has inflamed many Arab lovers and non-lovers alike with the romance that Muhannad, the main star of the film has shown. Although the Jordanian community is known as conservative, the film has proved this truth as untrue, where many young men tried to imitate the star, not only in behavior, way of speech, dress and hair style, but also in love gestures and implications. The same behavior was also noticed on the young ladies who began to imitate Nūr, the dearly loved partner of Muhannad.

The romance of the film was largely dictated on the Jordanians, who tried to find unbelievable justifications for watching the film more than once during the same day, on more than a canal screen. The influence has extended to have a social impact on the community as a whole, where even some fathers, pushed by wives, tended to name their sons as Muhannad. To justify their interest in the events of the film, women skewed to give a straightforward answer by mentioning that the story of the film is what urges them to watch the whole scenario of the film. What has incited a large sector of the Jordanians, especially the females, to give enough interest or attention to the film, is the jealousy of the Jordanian males who do not accept females to watch similar movies. However, the situation is not as such any more, as the openness that has taken place in Jordan over the last few years has uncovered the unseen, and legitimized the illegitimate.

The post-Nūr-Muhannad names cannot be said to be after someone other than this very Muhannad. While the meaning of Muhannad in Arabic is 'sword', the symbol of chivalry, fortitude, stamina, and manhood, the person's name Mohannad in the film is a symbol of love, romance, easiness, woman obedience, tolerance, and women thankfulness and appreciation. The impressions that the two names acquired differ from one community to another and from one social group to another even in the same community. While a large number of the community aimed at keeping the name of Muhannad alive in the future, through giving the name to their sons, conservative people may have stopped giving the name to their newly-born male babies due to the social allusions the name began to embrace.

In rendering the name Muhannad into the target culture, many semantic, historic, cultural, and social implications are lost. The fact the name means 'sword' will not be relayed, a considerable semantic loss occurs, an element that cannot be ignored or marginalized as is always the case with translation of proper names. Moreover, the contrasting views of the source language, viz., the favorable view of the name by young females, and the opposing one adopted by conservatives, who see in the character a means of moral deterioration, and a source of ethics contamination, cannot be conveyed in the target language with a similar influence on the audience. Another important factor is the Syrian duplicated accent of Muhannad, an accent attracting the attention of Jordanians, as a lovable one. This language-related aspect of the character cannot be preserved in translation, as the audio-visual component is strongly related to the source discourse.

## Conclusion

The study is an attempt to investigate the role of historical, cultural, religious, and romantic connotations in preserving some names in the Jordanian community. In other words, it further seeks to show that naming as a linguistic process can involve a wide array of cultural, historical, psychological, social, romantic and political factors, which make the name a label richly loaded with varied implications stirred up only in the minds of the source language users. The analysis and discussion of the selected examples have aimed at shedding light on some dated and current reasons behind naming, a fact that cannot be socially ignored or marginalized. Moreover, it has been found that people differ in the tendency of naming their children, where conservative families tend to name their sons after grandparents, while the young fathers tend to have a contrary view of naming children after borrowed characters or even socially unfavorable persons. Translationally, it has hopefully been made clear that translating Jordanian proper names may encounter social, cultural, historical, and other extra-linguistic problems, which can be too difficult to overcome, due to the absence of such associations in the target language culture.

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