

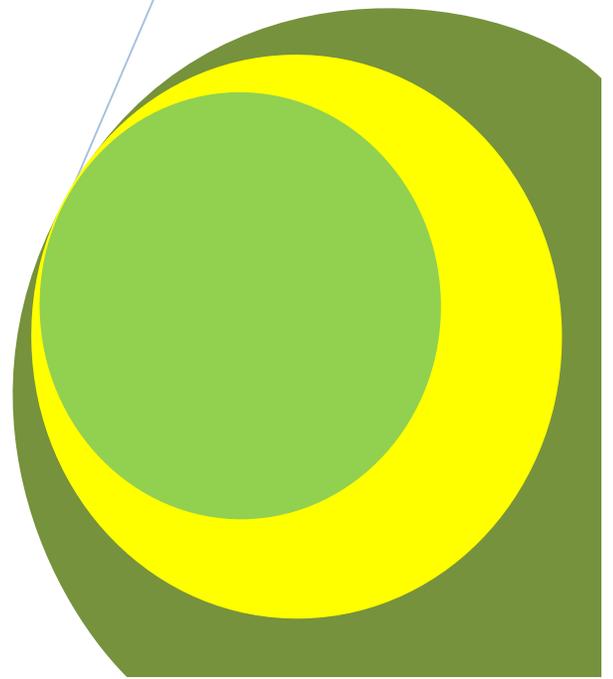
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**When metaphorical
language use fails: A case of
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during the uprising**

By

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Research Article

When metaphorical language use fails: A case of Zoosemy in the late Qaddafi's political speeches during the uprising

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ABSTRACT

Politics is marked by power play among the politicians themselves and between the politicians and their subjects. When no amicable solution is arrived at, an uprising is eminent. During such uprisings, discourse plays a key role in either restoring peace or fuelling animosity. This paper explores the zoosemy in Qaddafi's speeches with the view of attempting an explanation to what metaphors accomplish in political discourse in our troubled times. The paper, from a socio-cultural perspective, explains why metaphorical language use failed with the Libyan case. The paper argues that the effectiveness of metaphorical language depends heavily on the socio-cultural context in which it is used. Any language use that is outside the society's habitus gets suppressed and resisted. Secondly, when a metaphor becomes too common, it loses its metaphorical touch among the audience. Lastly metaphorical language use depends on power play between interlocutors. When it becomes apparent that you are manipulating the language for personal interests, however, powerfully you chose and use metaphors, you are bound to meet resistance.

Key words: Animal metaphor, Context-Limited Simulation Theory, dehumanisation, Linguistic Ideology, Power Resistance, Political Discourse.

INTRODUCTION

Politics is marked by power play among the politicians themselves and between the politicians and their subjects. When no amicable solutions are arrived at, an uprising is eminent. The uprisings in the Arab world, especially, in the Northern Africa countries have been historic. They mark a watershed event with the Arab world irrevocably changed. Essentially, the social contract governing the relationship between Arab ruling regimes and their populations is in tatters. The contract's fundamental percept demanded popular acquiescence to regime control_ the suppression of their aspirations and muzzling of their voices – in exchange for government guarantees of decent living conditions such as provision of jobs, housing, affordable food prices, education and health care. A yearning for freedom and socio-economic liberation has rocked the Arab world. The uprising in Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, Mali and other Arab nations like Syria is evidence of this awakening. The protests have seen the downfall of deeply-entrenched regimes. During this uprising, language ideology plays a key role in either restoring peace or fuelling animosity or evoking resistance. This paper explores the zoosemy in Qaddafi's speeches with the view of attempting an explanation to what metaphors accomplish in political discourse in our troubled times. The paper, from a socio-cultural perspective, explains why metaphorical language use failed with the Libyan case. In other words, how the use of metaphorical language evokes resistance to power and intimidation.

Theoretical framework

In attempting an explanation of how and why metaphorical language use fails, this paper employs Linguistic Ideology and Context-Limited Simulation Theory (CLST). In doing this, I, not only analyse the animal metaphors employed but also, trace their historical or cultural application and then attempt an explanation of cultural implication in the Libyan context. I begin with an overview of these theoretical frameworks.

Linguistic Ideology

Gee (1988:31) defines ideology as an expression of how people structure their language to express themes, values and a particular world view. Linguistic ideology therefore concerns an analysis of how ideologies reflect the speaker's or writer's world view in a systematic, cohesive and culturally bound manner and this interpretation of the world is evident in the language choices made. Linguistics try to explore how a speaker/writer chooses to see language-semantic choices made, syntactic arrangements, tone, non-verbal language etc_ accomplish varying socio-cultural functions. Language users are, therefore, expected to draw from a linguistic repertoire or co-varying linguistic variables (Gal 1978:3) which have their own appropriate uses and connotations. If a speaker/writer employs linguistic repertoire which is not socio-culturally construed or acceptable, it evokes disgust or resistance in the listener or reader. Any language use has to operate within a habitus (Bourdieu, 1991) _ a socialised subjectivity which defines a common ground between individual agency and structural ideology. The habitus guides the individual in making language choices. The habitus should manifest in embodied actions such as manners of speech production, and these actions may be enacted by the speaker at a conscious level.

The choice of linguistic words, tone etc is analogised to buying items on the market. One picks and buys what is appealing and acceptable to oneself and to the other users. Supposing one bought rotten oranges, who would eat them? Speakers/writers have a linguistic market place too from which such words are pick and use (Bourdieu, 1991). Certain language choices are more valued than others and so the right choices should be made. In political discourse, when language is used in a manner that divides the audience into extreme ends, it causes tension or a conflict frame (Ferrari, 2007:614). Ferrari contends that conflict frame is a conceptual model involving two opposing sides. In the typical conflict scenario of the fairy tale, according to Lakoff (1991), the two sides are not equal in merit. There is a hero_who may or may not coincide with the self victim and has to defeat a villain, who by definition is the enemy. The case of Libya is an example of a fairy tale which placed culture on the one hand and individual on the other hand. The disposition between the two sides renders the dualism hierarchical which often leads to a further radicalisation in what is called the Manichean frame (Lakoff, 1991:3). Despite the fact that the writer or speaker uses metaphor to create the mental and the physical world and to render ideological intelligible, metaphorical interpretation will depend on its aptness. Goatly (2007) says that the ideological implications of the features captured by a metaphor depend on the effects the highlighted features have on the discourse in which they are used and on the actions that result from this discourse.

The aptness of metaphor or the highlighting of features depends on three elements according to Andriessen (2010):

- (a) the context in which the discourse takes place,
- (b) the position of the person using the metaphor,
- (c) the overall values with which to judge the rightness of the action.

The position taken by this paper is that the rightness of the actions that result from the discourse in which the metaphor is used is highly contextualised. For example, in some cultural contexts, it is very effective to conceptualise rebels as immoral or evil but in others, such a conceptualisation will be a form of dehumanisation. Therefore, cultural context plays a key role in the conceptualisation process of metaphor.

The people using the metaphor may hold a specific position with the nation or society. This gives them a chance to contest power. Certain metaphors may support their interests and position and help to exploit other people, especially for the case of politics. This means that the effectiveness of the metaphor relies also on power relations too (Van Dijk, 1993).

Context-Limited Simulation Theory

This theory is an extension of Conceptual Metaphor Theory which has a cognitive perception of metaphor. It is argued from this perception that people's ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which they think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature (Lakoff and Turner 1989; Gibbs 1994; Lakoff and Johnson 1999; Kovecses, 2010). Andriessen (2010) says that we often think about one domain using the characteristics of another domain. Thus a metaphor ceases to be seen just as a matter of language and come to be viewed as a matter of thought as well. According to the cognitive theorists, metaphors play a key role in our conceptualisation of abstract, unfamiliar and poorly delineated areas of experience (Thornborrow, 1993; Goatly, 2007; Semino, 2008). Context-Limited Simulation Theory (CLST) acknowledges the fundamental claims about embodiment of every day metaphors, however its proponent Ritchie (2003, 2006) rejects the implications by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) that encountering metaphorical expressions necessarily activates the full conceptualisation and that we necessarily always experience the metaphor topic as the metaphor vehicle. Drawing on Barsalou's (1999) work, Ritchie suggests that along with associated words and phrases, an array of perceptual simulations may be activated by metaphorical language. she argues that when any word or phrase is encountered, the words and simulations that are not relevant in the present context, that cannot be readily connected with ideas already activated in working memory (Sperber and Willson, 1986) may not be activated in the first place and if they are

activated, are reduced in activation or suppressed altogether. Those words and simulators that are relevant in the present context will be more highly activated (Gernsbacher et al., 2001; Kinzsch, 1998) and will produce context-relevant simulations that will attach to the topic as part of the meaning in this context.

In the case of metaphorical usage, both the words and the perceptual simulators that are most closely associated with the generic definition are more or less irrelevant in the current context, and are unlikely to become and remain very highly activated. Conversely, some of the words and some of the simulators associated with nuances of experience and activated by the metaphor vehicle, are highly relevant in the current context. These definitionally less central but contextually more relevant words and simulations will be more highly activated and will become connected with the topic of the metaphor as part of its meaning in the current context. In this paper, I focus on the use of animal metaphors.

Animal metaphors

Animal metaphors are common in many languages (see Halupka-Restar and Radic (2003) about Serbian animal metaphors, Hsieh (2006) and Silaski and Durovic (2010) for other languages). The domain of animals proves to be a crucial and productive source domain. Through animal metaphors, the intelligible, complex and abstract entities in human behaviour are understood. Kovecses (2002) in an attempt to explain how the animal-related words acquire their metaphorical meaning states;

“The only way these meanings can have emerged is that humans attributed human characteristics to animals and then reapplied these characteristics to humans. That is, animals were personified first, and the human-based animal characteristics were used to understand human behaviour. But it is not only human behaviour that is metaphorically understood in terms of animal behaviour; people themselves are also often described as animals of some kind” (Kovecses, 2002:125).

The conceptual metaphor PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS organises our thoughts about human behaviour and its relevant aspects so we see and understand a human being better through the domain of animals. Fontecha and Natalan (2003:774) add that several features characterise the ANIMAL metaphor namely;

- a) Its systematicity, that is, the same type of structure made up of a mapping or correspondences between sources (animal) and the target domain (humans) is identified.
- b) The animal metaphor is based on the GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor which allows the mapping of generic information from the source domain to a specific instantiation in the target domain.
- c) It implies a vertical hierarchical organisation of beings; in line with the GREAT CHAIN OF BEING metaphor which allows us to comprehend general human character traits in terms of well-understood non-human attributes. (Lakoff and Turner, 1989:172).

In the following section, I will look at the broad metaphor the GREAT CHAIN OF BEING and the subsequent metaphors A HUMAN IS AN ANIMAL, A HUMAN IS A PLANT and A HUMAN IS A THING. To illustrate these metaphors, I will use metaphors used by the late president Qaddafi in his political speeches during the uprising.

The Great Chain of Being

This metaphor is defined by attributes and behaviour arranged in a hierarchy. According to Kieltyka and Grzegorz (2005), there are twenty possible metaphors in total; ten involving the upward mapping and the other ten involving the downward mapping. In the former, the source domain occupies a lower position on the Great Chain than the target domain while in the latter mapping the source domain occupies a higher position on the Great Chain than the target domain. Thus, Krzeszowski (1997:161) formulated the following set of metaphors;

1. <GOD IS A HUMAN BEING>; 2. <GOD IS AN ANIMAL>; 3. <GOD IS A PLANT>; 4. <GOD IS A THING>; 5. <A HUMAN BEING IS AN ANIMAL>; 6. <A HUMAN BEING IS A PLANT>; 7. <A HUMAN BEING IS A THING>; 8. <AN ANIMAL IS A PLANT>; 9. <AN ANIMAL IS A THING>; 10. <A PLANT IS A THING>; 11. <A THING IS A PLANT>; 12. <A THING IS AN ANIMAL>; 13. <A THING IS A HUMAN BEING>; 14. <A THING IS (A) GOD>; 15. <A PLANT IS AN ANIMAL>; 16. <A PLANT IS A HUMAN BEING>; 17. <A PLANT IS (A) GOD>; 18. <AN ANIMAL IS A HUMAN BEING>; 19. <AN ANIMAL IS (A) GOD>; 20. <A HUMAN BEING IS (A) GOD>.

As argued by Krzeszowski (1997), not all of these metaphors are equally productive, and some may prove to be very hard, if not impossible to materialise. Divine beings are at the top of the CHAIN, followed by human beings; humans are followed by animals (e.g. horses then rats then reptiles); these are followed by lesser living forms such as insects, bacteria. Plants are next in the rank having their own higher and lower (e.g. trees are higher than algae). Non-living objects are last in the hierarchy. They are however, ordered in terms of their physical complexity or their size.

According to Lakoff and Turner (1989:167), features which characterise forms of being include reasoning ability, instinctual behaviour, biological function and physical attributes. Within the category of human beings there is a secondary ordering according to social, financial or cultural criteria and also according to the power that those in a higher position may exert on those lower down the hierarchy. The Great Chain of Being, thus, presupposes that the natural order of the cosmos is that higher forms of existence dominate lower forms of existence. This hierarchical organization seems to have important linguistic and conceptual repercussions since when people are equated with animals, they are being degraded and, therefore, the animal-related metaphor is likely to become a vehicle to express undesirable human characteristics (Talebinejad and Dastjerdi, 2005).

The notion of control or rather lack of control seems to be the basis of the A HUMAN IS AN ANIMAL. The rationale for such a metaphoric theme is that within the binary opposition human/animal what distinguishes the former from the latter is his rational capacity, in other words, his ability to control his behaviour. According to this dichotomy, there is an animal inside each person and civilized people are expected to restrain their animal instincts, letting their rational side rule over them. The metaphors HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR and PASSIONS ARE BEASTS INSIDE US (Kövecses, 1997), conceptualize extreme behaviour and, therefore, lack of control is resorting to a common scenario: the animal kingdom.

During the Arab uprising many leaders in the Arab states went through trying moments, moments that would compel them to lose control of their human instincts. I attempt an analysis of metaphoric language used by the late Qaddafi during the uprising. For the purpose of this paper, three metaphors:

<A HUMAN BEING IS AN ANIMAL>; <A HUMAN BEING IS A PLANT>; and <A HUMAN BEING IS A THING> and other sub-metaphors namely REBELS, FOREIGNERS, MERCENARIES ARE ANIMALS, REBELS, FOREIGNERS, MERCENARIES ARE A THING, and A NATION IS A FAMILY.

A Human Being is an Animal

In this metaphor salient properties of animals are mapped onto the properties of people as a target domain. In other words, the conceptual basis for this metaphor is that there is a semantic transfer of attributes that are associated with animals.

The Rat Metaphor

The term rat is thought to be of Germanic origin, "the animal having come from the east with the race-migrants then the word was passed thence to the Romanic languages. The original uses, dating from the late eighteenth century, referred to political deserters. Like rats, people can decamp or attempt to abandon their associates in times of trouble. This conceptualisation attests to the belief that rats leave a ship about to sink or a house about to fall. In English parlance *rat* is a term of deep contempt, meaning essentially one who has betrayed a party, a close confidant, or a lover. This led to the meaning of a traitor or an informant. This conceptualisation is alluded to in his speech on the September 8, 2011 aired on Syrian TV early in the morning, the late Qaddafi referred to the protestors thus;

"These rats and armed scum are examples of their grandfathers. Each one of them is a clone and a mock-up of traitor-ship. They aren't Libyan. Ask about any of those that are backed by NATO; that destroy Libyan infrastructure and kills Libyan children; you'll find that his grandfather and his father was a traitor. They carry the genes of traitors" (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011).

In this reference, the protestors are demeaned at two levels. On one hand, as noted earlier, they are dehumanised by being referred to as rats thus A HUMAN IS AN ANIMAL metaphor but on the other hand, they don't deserve to be animals even. They are a filthy substance or dirty layer on the surface of a liquid (scum) thus A HUMAN BEING IS A THING metaphor. Scum may also refer to the lowest order of plants; the algae (Rash 2007:87) which grows on the surface of other substances like water. Qaddafi's use of these metaphors is an expression of dislike and disgust for the protestors. He associates them with traitors who, with support from foreign nations and forces like the NATO, are out to destroy the country of Libya. He claims that they have the genes of traitor-ship from the parents.

Rats are also known to be destructive and exploitative rodents. They wait for opportune times to wreck havoc or exploit the efforts of others. Qaddafi refers to insiders, foreign-backed mercenaries and foreigners as rats and that these people are out to exploit Libyan resources, especially land. He says:

"They want to destroy the country; you saw what the armed rebels did when they entered Tripoli. They looted it. They looted homes and stole the gold that belonged to the women. Each individual ran back to his tribe with the stolen loot, laid down his weapons and claimed that he is victorious." (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011)

The rat metaphor prevalent in contemporary North American media discourse has antecedents in western media treatment of the Japanese in World War II who were also systematically presented as vermin. This representation was later extended from Japanese soldiers to include Japanese citizens. This conceptualisation is partly due to the fact that in some nations in Asia such as China, rats are highly valued animals. Whereas in the North America and Europe, rats are loathed as repugnant animals, the Chinese and Hindus treasure it as a bringer of wealth. Western countries point to the rats as lowly and filthy animals that cause diseases, the opposite conceptualisation is witnessed in China and India where the year of the rat, for instance in China 2008, is celebrated whenever success is achieved.

Rats are never lonely in the basement. Cockroaches, worms, weasels, dogs, pigs join their less-lively therefore less human or lowly animals pound to scum, rotten, trash and dirt company. Such lowly animals evoke the rhetoric or conceptualisation of extermination and eradication as in the popular poster found in the US West Coast restaurant during the World War II that proclaimed "*This restaurant poisons rats and Japs*" (Dower, 1986:98). These conceptualisations have established strong roots in politics where suspected enemy of military and political leader are labelled by others as vermin. They conjure up the negative cultural associations within their symbolic category of vermin.

The ability to smell, taste and hear is shared with other animals, but humans are able to express their opinions about the things that they sense in this way, and this places them above animals on the Great Chain of Being. Rash (2007:98) observes that unpleasant tastes and smells are especially useful to politicians, who dislike so many different categories of opponents. The human preference for cleanliness over dirt maybe used to metaphorise approval or disapproval. In the Atlantic Wire in his speech on the February 22, 2011, late Qaddafi calls the protestors greasy rats:

*"They are a group that are sick taking hallucinatory drugs...they were given drugs, like in Tunisia, are just imitating... We won't lose victory from these **greasy rats** and **cats**...They should be given a lesson and stop taking drugs. They are not good for you, for your heart. Don't destroy the country. Shame on you, you gangsters...**rats on drugs**".* (Atlantic Wire February 22)

A greasy substance means it has grease on it or in it. This may imply that the 'rats' are fat or huge but most importantly it connotes the filthy appearance of the 'rats'. The metaphor scum and greasy rats create the conceptualisation of rebels/opposition as filthy living things that may be a health hazard to the nation. Scum makes a resource or something lose its value, for instance, water covered with scum will no longer be fit for consumption. Scum breeds dangerous organisms that will endanger the lives of the higher level animals, mostly human beings. The usage of the metaphor grease in reference to Africans regardless of their country of origin may have some colonial connotations. This attests to Linnaeus' classification of living things. Linnaeus' Classification of the Species Homo Sapiens in System Nature (1735) quoted in Marks (2002:57) says that Africans are covered with *grease* and ruled by *caprice* (See also Goatly, 2007:68).

The Dog Metaphor

As evidenced by the *OED*, the lexical item *dog* which corresponds to late OE. *docga* entered English lexicon in the 11th century and was used in the sense of 'a quadruped of the genus *Canis*, referred to as *Canis familiaris*'. Already in the 14th century, the word started to be used in the figurative sense 'a person; in reproach, abuse, or contempt: a worthless, despicable, surly, or cowardly fellow'. Finally, in the 19th and 20th century American and Australian slang, the word developed the sense-thread 'an informer; a traitor; especially one who betrays fellow criminals'. The word *stray* derives from AF. *estrai*, verbal noun or AF., OF. *estraier* 'stray'. Originally, in the 13th century the word was used as a legal term to denote 'a domestic animal found wandering away from the custody of its owner, and liable to be impounded and (if not redeemed) forfeited – *estray*'. Already in the 15th century it was used in the sense of 'an animal that has strayed or wandered away from its flock, home, or owner'. In the 16th century *stray* acquired the sense 'a person who wanders abroad; one who runs from home or employment'. In the 17th century *stray* was used metaphorically in the sense 'one who has gone astray in conduct, opinion, etc'. Another sense employed in the 17th century was 'a homeless, friendless person'. This conceptualisation is evident in Qaddafi's reference to protestors in his speech aired on Syrian TV on the February 8, 2011; thus;

*"Those that attempt to revoke it from you; are insiders, foreign-backed mercenaries and **stray dogs**. Those foreigners that have resided in Libya for a long time that attempt to take the land of your grandfathers away from you. Their families back then were spies for Italy, and nowadays are spies for France and Britain."* (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011)

The phrase *stray dog* here implies that the protestors had wandered away from their homes and found themselves in a wrong nation. He creates an impression that the protestors are not Libyans but foreigners who may have been funded to disrupt the peace in the country. This relates to the 1997 massacre of tourists in Egypt by militant Islamists. Terry Moster captured this incident in a cartoon depicting a mad dog in Arab headdress. It was labelled "Islamic extremism" and captioned "*With Apologies to Dogs Everywhere*". Although the cartoon clearly referred to Islamic extremism, not to Islam, it was criticised for dehumanising Muslims. In the 16th – 18th century this lexical item *stray dog* was used to denote 'a body of stragglers from an army; and figuratively, those who are astray from the faith'. Jews have been condemned as dogs, suggesting as does the use for women, people who are lowly, debased and subjected to abusive treatment. This labelling, however, has religious connotations. Sax (2000:82) observes that according to Bernt Engelmann, a sign on the hotel door of a German village in Nazi-dominated 1940s read "*Dogs and Jews not welcome*". The use of dog imagery to strip people and opponents of their humanity has been more widespread than for target Jews. For example, in the case of Soviet Union terror imposed by Joseph Stalin against those who stepped out of line, the killing was assisted by comparing the victims with animals. Soviet state prosecutor Andrei Vyshinsky declared, at the end of a show trial of men accused of espionage and conspiracy "*Our country only asks one thing that these filthy dogs... be wiped out*" (Glover, 1999:246).

The Donkey Metaphor

It is a long-eared domesticated member of the horse family, descended from the African wild ass. The older English word was *ass* which meant backside. It also pejoratively meant a woman regarded as a sexual object from 1942, e.g. colloquial (ones) *ass*. In the USA *donkey* meant a "black person" from 1856. *Ass* is a beast of burden, OE *ass*. Since ancient Greek times, in fables and parables, the animal typified clumsiness and stupidity. In 'Animal Farm,' for instance, Orwell (1946) uses the horse and sheep metaphor to represent in many ways the proletariat or working class of unskilled labourers. These are animals which depend on their backs or strength, not their brains, to do work. Thus they fall in the bottom of society and are the focal point of politician's brainwashing. They are gullible and too committed to notice that they are being misused. One of the horse characters oldest horses, Benjamin, dies working. The conceptualisations of foolishness, gullibility and beast of burden apply simultaneously. This means, donkeys are misused and exploited because of their foolishness and gullibility. The late Qaddafi implies this in his reference to the protestors as the Gulf donkeys. He says;

"These people when they realise that the Libyan people have turned up the ratchet and have refused to accept them, they revert to the dirty tricks of the villainous Arab TV channels and the gulf donkeys." (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011)

Gulf donkeys may imply that the protestors are being misused by political activists in the wider Gulf region including Arabian Gulf, the Persian Gulf and the neighbouring countries, Libya inclusive. This is particularly so in reference to the widespread uprising that swept the Arab countries. The mention of Arab TV supports this since to the late Qaddafi; it was airing news about the Arab uprising with a hidden motive, hence villainous. However, it may also have a different meaning especially if it is gulf and not Gulf. He says;

"Do not be influenced by these psychological advertisements or lies. This should make you be able to mock the weak enemy that is in front of you; a bunch of traitors and drunkards and a bunch of Islamists that have strayed from law and order, that have no objective but to destroy the country." (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011)

The latter may imply the rift between powers and in this case, it could be the political difference between Qaddafi's leadership and the Western nations such as France, Italy and Britain. The protestors are claimed to be traitors who are being misused by those opposing Qaddafi's rule.

The Weasel Metaphor

It is related to proto-Germanic word *Wisand-Bison*-with a base sense of "stinking animal" because both animals have a foul, musky smell. According to the Online Dictionary of Etymology, a weasel is any small carnivore of the genus *Mustela*, of the family *Mustelidae*, having a long, slender body and feeding chiefly on small rodents. To weasel means to deprive of its meaning. The noun "weasel" is used because the weasel sucks out the contents of eggs, leaving the shell intact. The sense of "extricate oneself (from a difficult place) like a weasel" is first recorded 1925; that of "to evade and equivocate" is from 1956. The meaning has been extended to mean a cunning, sneaky person, treacherous person. It also slang for "an informer".

Qaddafi blames the mercenaries and attributes them to a "*pack of weasel with no agreement amongst themselves*" (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011). Mercenaries are professional soldiers hired to serve in a foreign

army for money or other rewards. The use of the weasel metaphor in reference to mercenaries has two conceptualisations. One, that these are filthy, smelly, unworthy animals thus MERCENARIES ARE ANIMALS metaphor. Such worthless animals need to be exterminated. He urges Libyans thus *“The people in Tripoli are getting ready to destroy the rats and capture the mercenaries”* (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011). The same call for retaliation is captured in the Atlantic Wire. He says *“...these greasy rats and cats.... they should be given a lesson and stop taking drugs. They are not good for you, for your heart”* (Atlantic Wire February 22, 2011). The second conceptualisation is that the mercenaries are cunning, sneaky, treacherous people. In fact they are informers of the west. Qaddafi implies the mercenaries had been commissioned into NATO not to restore peace in Libya but also to gather information for their respective states. This is why he says they are in a disagreement on matters of state policies and values. To him NATO and the rebels have no common goal.

A Nation as Family and Government as Parent

These are sub-metaphors that conceptualise social relations under the GREAT CHAIN OF BEING metaphor. Within the GC, human kith and kin relationship systems with the family, parents are progenitors of future generations and tend to take on the role of protectors and rule-makers. The more important parent is usually the father (Musloff, 2004:13-19). This conceptualisation is evident in Qaddafi's speech in which reference to grandfathers, fathers, dad, grandparents and great grandparents and sons (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011) is prominent. He says thus;

“To our brave Libyan people who are resisting; the land of Libya is your property and your right from the days of your grandfathers and great grandfathers” (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011).

A nation is conceptualised as a family which owns property that should be protected from foreigners. It is also conceptualised to have a 'head of the home', who makes rules and ensures every member of his family adheres to them. Qaddafi like a strict father (Cienki, 2005) who expects loyalty and obedience from his households, feels that the defiant group: *“a bunch of traitors and drunkards and a bunch of Islamists”* (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011) have strayed from law and order and therefore deserve to be punished. He refers to the loyal Libyan youths as sons. He says;

“That will destroy the morale of the sons of the Al-Fatah revolution” (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011).

Women and children are conceptualised as weaker and defenceless family members and so an enemy who attacks them must be ruthless and the most barbaric. The rebels who attacked and looted from the women are therefore conceptualised as animals/beast hence HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR metaphor and REBELS ARE ANIMALS metaphor. Qaddafi, for instance bitterly condemns the rebels for stealing from the women during the protest. He says;

“They want to destroy the country; you saw what the armed rebels did when they entered Tripoli, they looted it. They looted homes and stole the gold that belonged to the women” (Syrian Arrai TV February 8, 2011).

When Does Metaphorical Language Use Fail?

Enemies or oppressed people can be denied their humanity and individuality through comparison with animals. However, the stripping of others' humanity goes two ways:

- a. It is done both to those who are the victims of aggression (the aggressors may think the victims as inviting what they get because of their alleged inferiority).
- b. To those who are the aggressors (seen as lacking moral status because of their aggressive power) (Herbst, 2003:3).

When the first form of stripping fails or is resisted, the second stripping comes into force. This is in form of a beam balance; when one is up the other should be down. According to Herbst (2003:4), there are two ways of dehumanising people using animals' comparison. The first one is to simply take away those marks that distinguish them as humans such as their clothes, or by treating them like animals, as by transporting them in railroads, cars like cattle. The second and the most explicit way is to identify people in terms of specific types of animals such as rats, cockroaches, donkeys, weasels and apes. These were all among the means of treating Jews in or on the way to Nazi concentration camps during the World War II.

Comparing others to animals can be useful to the name caller in more than one way. Hatred can readily be stirred up with animal reference, helping to unite people in anger to bring down the enemy. For example, after the terrorists attack of September 11, American officials and the media called terrorists 'animals', 'snakes' and 'parasites' among other animal reference. This has been the concern of many Critical Discourse Analysts for a

long time; to show how the animal metaphor contents power and move the readers or listeners. However, there are situation in which such comparisons fail and instead evoke disgust and resistance among the listeners. Littlemore (2003:273) points out that metaphors are typically, culturally loaded expressions whose meaning has to be inferred through reference to shared cultural knowledge. Since animal metaphors involve transference of meanings, these meanings may be culturally dependent. With regard to linguistic ideology, the choice of the metaphor has to be in line with the expectations of the target audience for it to be effective. If the metaphors employed are not acceptable to the audience, the audience will definitely suppress their conceptualisations. This is why at times metaphorical language use fails to be effective. In the case of Libya, many animal references are culturally figured. For instance, rats are figured as repellent, a source of instinctive revulsion, hence in politics anybody who seems against the then leadership is branded a rat. The perception of rats, however, differs from one culture to the other. In America, when the blacks staged a revolution against racism, mistreatment and other social injustices, the natives saw them as rats who after staying in their nation for so long now want to destroy and disrupt the peace. It is no wonder coinage of words such as *Democ-rats* and *Conserv-Natives* emerged. The former means a 'movement of rats' refers to the efforts made by the blacks in demand for democracy. The latter refers to the natives who strived to conserve American culture, authority and dominance against the blacks. This conceptualisation then painted the Afro-Americans as dangerous, exploitative and filthy animals that need extermination.

In the African context any labelling of the enemy or rebel as a rat, dog, weasel or donkey evokes feelings of neo-colonialism and revives the bitter experiences that most Africans underwent in the hands of colonialists in their fight for freedom and democracy. Jews would be clouded with fresh memories of the nasty Nazi experiences. Christians value the donkey and so respects it because Jesus Christ rode on a donkey when He entered Jerusalem. Since most of the animal metaphors and their dehumanisation conceptualisations have their origin in the West especially during the world wars, Africans regard their usage with contempt and caution. They revive the bitter memories of the wars and colonialism.

There are many African societies that value and keep different types of rats. To some it is a delicacy, for instance, the Makonde people of South Tanzania, the community in which I stay. Among the Teso and a few Bukusu communities of Western Kenya, rats called *Kanyuru* are a delicacy. The connotative meaning of donkey to many Africans is foolishness and not beast of burden since to many, hard work is cherished and so they fail to differentiate commitment from exploitation. If any animal reference implies foolishness, it will evoke anger and resistance. Africans have a strong attachment to land, especially ancestral land. The implied meaning in the metaphor of dog is largely vagrancy. It is common in Africa to hear such abuses as "Kurandaranda kama mbwa" (to roam around like a dog). Greed and foolishness is only to a small extent. When the late Qaddafi calls them stray dogs, it meant to the majority that they don't belong to Libya and this threatens their ownership of land and Libya as their country. This definitely would spark serious resistance from the protestors.

When most presidents in North African and Arab countries repeatedly dehumanised their very electorates, they were bitterly resisted and ousted from power. A case of Libya was even worse. The late Qaddafi was napped in a filthy culvert and killed like a rat. Culture therefore plays a role in determining the effectiveness of metaphorical language use.

Another explanation to the failure of metaphorical language can be attributed to overuse of some metaphors. Steuter & Wills (2009) says that metaphorical language is used to obscure public awareness that, first representational strategies are in play and secondly, that these strategies are more than merely rhetorical in their effects. However, it is also true that when the metaphor becomes too common, its usage loses the metaphorical touch. It turns out to plain abuse. The metaphors of the rat, dog, donkey and cockroach have become common in many societies, especially in politics and therefore, they are no longer effective and worse still as societies get enlightened the metaphors no longer carry any higher order meaning to them.

Power play also plays a key role. There had been and still is a wind of change across the Arab countries. It spread from the Gulf to the North Africa. This uprising was a signal to the long-serving leaders in these regions that enough is enough. Many youths are jobless after those who had migrated to the west lost their jobs; the living stand back home is too high, basic needs are not easy to come by among many other problems. This called for an uprising and all those who had been on power was to face the shake up. The late Qaddafi was a victim of this mob psychology and so his use of animal metaphors aggravated and fuelled animosity than soliciting mercy for his leadership. He kept complaining against the 'use of drugs' among the youth which in really sense meant the wind of change that had engulfed the nation, especially the youth. He blamed the Arab TV channels for propaganda but all was in vain. The youth knew he was merely play with language to win their sympathy and support.

CONCLUSION

It is noted from the arguments above that the rightness of the actions that result from the discourse in which the metaphor is used is highly dependent on a number of factors. First, it depends on the socio-cultural context in which the metaphor is used. Any language use that is outside the society's habitus definitely fails to simulate the

intended perceptions and hence resisted. Secondly, it also depends on how commonly used and thus how too familiar the metaphor is to the target audience. When a metaphor becomes too common it loses its metaphorical touch among the audience. Lastly, metaphorical language use depends on power play. When it becomes apparent that you are manipulating the language for personal interests, however powerfully you chose and use metaphors, you are bound to meet resistance.

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