

Patriotism in Selected Poems of Sherko Bekas and Ofelia Zepeda: A Discursive Psychological Approach

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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt in the field of discursive psychology (DP) and introduces readers to two poets from two very different nations with divergent social and political backgrounds, Sherko Bekas as a Kurdish poet and Ofelia Zepeda as a Native American poetess. Through employing DP, the researcher analyses four poems (Seeds and Sprouting in Ashes by Bekas) and (We are Papago and Smoke in Our Hair by Zepeda). The study aims to display how both poets use language to communicate their ideas and how the identities of these nations and their problems are expressed through specific lexica and symbols. The researcher also focuses on the psychological aspects of the poems to manifest the happy and sad emotions addressed by the selected authors and to show how they are attached to their homeland and the depth of their love towards their home. To attain the objectives, the paper tries to answer certain questions such as how the writers use language to introduce themselves and their nations, and what type of words and symbols are used to convey their ideas of resistance and resilience. The research concludes that discursive psychology is helpful in analysing the poems and accomplishing the goals because the study of the employed language proved that the poets are real patriots who devoted their life and time to serve their homeland and preserve their identity and culture.

KEY WORDS: Bekas, Zepeda, Discursive Psychology, Seeds, Rain.

1. INTRODUCTION¹

Home is the place where human beings always feel connected to whether they are near or far. People are sometimes obliged to leave their home but cannot erase the memories and sink into oblivion. Furthermore, there are many political, social and administrative reasons that create hatred in the heart of human beings and render them hopeless, but they still love their land under any circumstances, and sparks of hope can be detected in their writings, of course, not in the same amount. These psychological issues, feelings of love and connectedness as principles of patriotism, are manifested by so many writers, especially in literary texts, through using certain literary and linguistic devices.

The poets who are selected for this study, Sherko Bekas (1940-2013) and Ofelia Zepeda (1952-), distinctly communicate these feelings albeit in various forms. Bekas was born in the city of Sulaimaniyah, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. He was very famous for his patriotism and nationalism which caused him several problems with the

former Iraqi regimes that ruled the country for three decades (1960s-1980s). Due to the pressures, Bekas joined the Kurdish liberation movement in 1965 and worked in the movement's radio station (the Voice of Kurdistan), and finally fled to Italy in 1986, and then settled in Sweden. In 1987, he was awarded the "Tucholsky scholarship" of the Pen club in Stockholm and the "Freedom award of the City of Florence" (New York Kurdish Cultural Center, n.d.). He was an expatriate until the great Uprising of the Kurdish people of Iraq in 1991 and thereafter returned home.

While overseas, he was always nostalgic to his home and composed many poems lamenting the pains of his land and nation. Parallel passions can be observed in Zepeda's poems. Though she grew up in Stanfield, Arizona, in the United States, and is still living there; the smell of the trees and the soil of the Sonoran Desert is deeply rooted in her memories and permeate her poems. A great part of her literary career is devoted to enlightening the Tohono O'odham language, culture and land (Haworth 2017).

¹. Koya University Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (KUJHSS) Volume 9, Issue 1, 2026.

Received 6 July 2025; Accepted 10 August 2025

Regular research paper: Published 5 June 2026

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Though the two writers have different social and political backgrounds, they share sufferings related to land and identity. Both poets are very well-known for using language creatively to convey their messages. They choose words and phrases adequately to frame the emotions and feelings, whether sweet or bitter. Therefore, the researcher selected discursive psychology as an analytical tool to scrutinize the selected poems, "Seeds" and "Sprout in Ashes" (Kurdish titles are "Denke Töu" and "Riskan le Xölemeş da"), by Bekas and "We are Papago" and "Smoke in Our Hair" by Zepeda because this approach accurately deals with psychological issues such as feelings and emotions and how these are expressed in written discourses. As far as feelings are psychological issues, the approach helps us comprehend the psychology of both authors in the poems, and this can be done through adroit analysis of the poems, particularly the detailed examination of the literary devices and linguistic features.

2- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Discursive psychology (DP) as defined by (Wiggins, 2003, p. 4) is a "theoretical and analytical approach to discourse which treats talk and text as an object of study in itself, and psychological concepts as socially managed and consequential in interaction". According to this definition, DP deals with what is said and what is written and thus it is similar to discourse analysis (DA). Since DP and DA both study talk whether oral or written, these approaches are suitable tools to analyse poetry because poetry is a communication between the poet and the reader or the poet with him/herself, nature or any other thing or being.

Regarding the theoretical principles of discursive psychology, Potter (2012, p. 106) states that discourse is (1) oriented to action; (2) situated sequentially, institutionally and rhetorically; and (3) constructed and constructive. People use language to perform an action whether directly, indirectly or through asking questions, and thus when we speak, we do something. The things we do while using language will vary according to the context of use. While writing, authors create a context and construct communication with readers in which they may encourage people to take action against injustice, for instance, or to take caution or to think and so on. Thus, one of the ways to access the writers' aims is the analysis of the language of the texts because it carries feelings, emotions and power. When two persons engage in a conversation, a discourse is created from numerous statements which are related to the same topic or to some other discourses. The constructed discourses are constructive at the same time which means a discourse will help the speaker and the spoken to achieve the aims of the conversation through exchanging ideas about the

topic of the conversation.

Wiggins (2003, p.7) further notes that "DP is a methodology, not a method". Thus, it provides researchers and scholars with a system or some principles for data collection and data analysis which finally help them understand the discourse practically. The language of the poems is the raw material for conducting this study because the bitter and sweet memories and emotions are expressed overtly and covertly through the discourse which enables meaningful discussions and logical connections among the literary and linguistic devices. DP does not focus on individual psychological issues, but it rather deals with cases related to the society in general or certain groups. Bekas and Zepeda in their poems use the pronouns "I" and "We" many times as references to the identities of their nations.

Both writers, Sherko Bekas and Ofelia Zepeda, are well-known for their nationalism and ethnic attitudes in terms of using their native tongue and enriching their literature through bringing to light their history, identity and culture with all their merits and demerits. These aims can be achieved by applying discursive psychology as an approach within discourse analysis on the selected poems and to show how thoughts, emotions and identities are constructed through the use of language.

Discourse, whether written or spoken, is using language to communicate ideas and to share knowledge and information. This paper exactly focuses on written discourse, particularly poetic discourse through which writers communicate with audience or readers artistically to express particular emotions, feelings or thoughts by manipulating various figures of speech and poetic dictions. This humble definition clarifies that the poetic elements such as figurative language, meter, rhythm and imagery can be crucial tools to connote meaning through the deconstruction of the language of the constructed poems manipulated to describe places, narrate stories, convey ideas and also to build ideologies and identities. The study of poetic discourse through the lens of discursive psychology will have promising achievements because as Te Molder (2015, p.1) states, DP "investigates how people practically manage psychological themes and concepts such as emotion, intent, or agency within talk and text, and to what ends". Thusly, the principles of DP are employed to scrutinize the poetic discourse created by Bekas and Zepeda to display the rate of their patriotism, sacrifice and love for their homeland.

3- RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE IN BEKAS'S "SEEDS" AND "SPROUTING IN ASHES"

Sherko Bekas expressed his love for his country and nation in many poems, and the poems selected for this study are two examples of his patriotic views. Bar-Tal and Staub (1997, p. 8-9) believe that patriotism is a

psychological attachment to one's nation and country and Bar-Tal specifically clarifies that "the attachment is associated with positive evaluation and emotions and is expressed in beliefs connoting belonging, love, loyalty, pride, and care toward a group and land". This definition's core features as attachment and loyalty can be regarded as the cornerstone of the poems selected for this study. Of course, Bekas composed so many other poems of nationalism, but the focus here is on these two, which start with introducing the land "Kurdistan, the nation "Kurds" and the sufferings inflicted on them. Darkness and hopelessness permeate the poems, but toward the end, resilience and love for the country empower him to withstand the perils and remain unbreakable.

3.1 Power and Resilience in the "Seeds"

Bekas wrote "Seeds" (Denke Töu) in 1987 in Stockholm, one year after he left Kurdistan, and was published in his poem collection, Vol. 2, 2006. The poem is translated into English by Shirwan Mirza and available online at (<https://www.poemist.com/sherko-bekas/seeds>), and also in hard copy in *The Secret Diary of A Rose: A Kurdish Anthology of Poems*; Translated by Shirwan Mirza, MD; University of Vermont; Burlington. For more accuracy, I also consulted the Kurdish version of the poem in Bekas's 2006 collections, volume 2. Right from the beginning, he introduces his nation, Kurdish people, including himself to the world.

We were millions
we were old trees
newly grown plants
and seeds. (660)

He builds a conversation between himself and readers as passive listeners. He first introduces his nation and this meaning is constructed through the pronoun "we" and the metaphorical words "old trees, newly grown plants and seeds", which allude to Bekas himself and the entire Kurdish nation. Directly after this brief commencement, the poet alludes to a series of aggressive military actions taken against Kurds and Kurdistan.

they came at dawn
they uprooted us
they took us away
far away.

On the way the heads of
many old trees drooped
many new plants died in the cold
many seeds were trampled underfoot (660)

The speaker and the narrator, conceivably Bekas himself, feels very sad for the death of many people from his nation during the massacre. By the assailants "came at dawn", the writer draws the picture of a group of people who were sleeping peacefully but suddenly assaulted early in the morning which caused many deaths. The sorrow is highlighted by announcing the death of many

Kurds "old trees drooped, new plants died, seeds were trampled underfoot" which increases the suffering. He shares his griefs with the entire world through the action verbs "drooped, died and trampled" which showcase the brutality of the violence.

The atrocities have great negative effects on the Kurds, but they do not surrender. Bekas emphasizes that the Kurdish people cannot be annihilated as long as there are "seeds" which symbolize the children or the new generation of the Kurds who go back to the mountains and the rural areas to resume their struggles. Bekas's view corresponds to M. B. Whitman's statement "Keep your face always toward the sunshine and shadows will fall behind you" (BrainyQuote, n.d.) Whitman's speech implies that the winners are those who never yield to hopelessness and the truth will always succeed. This idea is emphasized by Bekas in several lines.

We had seeds
carried back by the wind
they reached the thirsty mountains again (661)

For many decades, the Kurds had mainly depended on the mountains; it is still true for now, as natural shelters for survival from marauding armies that always had plans to destroy the indigenous people. Whenever we talk about the strife of the Kurds, the mountains of Kurdistan are considered their true and loyal friends, where they reorganized themselves and revived patriotism.

Now again we are a forest
we are millions
we are seeds
plants
and old trees (661)

At the end of the poem "Seeds", Bekas conveys a resolute message to the enemies of the Kurds, telling them that they can never "finish us off".

Can you finish us off?
But I know
and you know
as long as there is a seed
for the rain and the wind
this forest will never end! (661)

These final lines display that love for Kurdistan is so great in the heart of the Kurds that they will rise more enthusiastically and more powerfully after each fall. There is action in the discourse; "as long as" shows the continuation of the struggle. Bekas used apostrophe as a literary device to end the communication between "I", Bekas or the Kurds in general, and "You", the enemies. Regarding the use of pronouns in fictional discourse, H. G. Widdowson (as cited in Black, 2006, p.5) states:

The 'I' of the lyric poet cannot be identified with the author of the text, any more than the reader (save in exceptional circumstances) identifies with the 'you' in a love poem. The same point applies to the whole

pronominal system in a text. We cannot identify the sender of the message directly with the author, just as the reader is the ultimate addressee, but not the one addressed directly in the text.

Widdowson's explanation elucidates that Bekas does not talk about a personal issue or his claim is not individual; he rather directs the message on behalf of a nation to its enemies whoever they are "you". Bekas exploits this poem, poetic discourse, to express his feelings and emotions towards the wounds inflicted upon the Kurds and his ever-lasting hope for survival and growth. His message to the enemies that their attempts to erase the Kurds is futile is crystal clear.

3.2 Challenging the Impossible in "Sprouting in Ashes"

Like in "Seeds", Bekas in "Sprouting in Ashes" (Riskan le Xölemêş da), focuses on the plights inflicted on the Kurds, but this time he directly introduces his nation and his land (Kurds and Kurdistan), and their magical power in the face of all the pains and sufferings. In "Seeds", the focus is on the Kurds as a big nation in the Middle East who have no land and who have faced oppression through ages, but they have survived. In the second poem, he sheds light on the land of the Kurds, Kurdistan, which is subjected to various destructive attacks, atrocities and hostile plots, and showcases their fortitude. The title of the poem aligns with Maya Angelou's "Still I Rise". Angelou affirms that she will never surrender to adversity, and Bekas also emphasizes that Kurds, like trees, can rise and grow in ashes, similar to the oleander flowers which bloomed in Hiroshima after the atomic bomb. The poem is very long and its translation is not available, therefore, the researcher translated some excerpts which serve the aims of the study and used them here. The poem was written in 1999 and published in his collection, Vol. 4, 2006. Bekas repeatedly addresses the entire world "I have a homeland", and each time he gives some information about what happened to this land, how it fell and how it rose after each fall more strongly and more enthusiastically to confront the crises. In his view, Kurdistan does not have only one identity; the land of the Kurds, but it rather can be identified by the numerous heart-breaking man-made disasters happened in it.

I have a homeland,

From early ages, swinging with a noose around its neck

Migration is its identity and

Oppression its meals and

Its trees are riddled, and

Widowed villages, widowed cities, widowed streets

are its regions.... (782)

In the above stanza, a discourse is established between the speaker and readers; maybe Bekas himself or any

other Kurd. He uses several words and expressions (a noose around its neck, migration, oppression, riddled, widowed) which carry the sense of hopelessness and helplessness. The mood is very dark and the constructed atmosphere evokes the feeling of pity and grief in the audience. This emotional landscape draws the attention of readers and thus they may ask themselves: what is Kurdistan? Where is it located? What happened to it? The speaker expects such questions from the addressees; therefore, he provides them with answers.

I have a homeland

having no equivalent.

Different from all the cries.

Different from all the burns... Every time, it is crushed and its remains and pains disposed to the wind of swords, tanks and aeroplanes..... (784)

His land is unique on earth because one can rarely find a place in the universe which is devastated several times and made into ashes, but resuscitates time and again. Of course, Bekas was quite aware that there are other nations and countries in the world that involved in war and thus ruined. All the atrocities, calamities and enmities (cries, burns, pains) are distinct in the context of Kurdistan since readers cannot find a period of peace and calmness in the history of this land since it is always targeted by the neighbouring countries.

Bekas mentions "tanks and aeroplanes" in both poems to declaim on the continuous battles in Kurdistan. He exploits this poetic discourse not only to communicate about the pains of the Kurds but also to orate about the history of Kurdistan which is smeared with blood and darkened with thick smokes. He provides readers with this overview to tell them what the Kurds went through and how they clung to life and revamped their land.

..... but after all

this legendary land recovers.. after all, this trunk becomes a pine again and grows,

the bones in the ashes

reunite and the chopped flesh will rise and face the world saying I am Kurdistan! (784)

Bekas makes a comparison between Kurdistan and a tree which is cut from the roots but never yields and revives when spring comes. The metaphorical use of natural elements permeates both poems. Bekas believes that the Kurds and Kurdistan are like nature which cannot be controlled. Kurdistan is a legend; even if it is deprived of all the sources of life, it will regrow in ashes. It is a big land and cannot be occupied; even if one part is destroyed and suppressed, desire for freedom will erupt like volcanos in the other parts.

I have a land, the Talisman of the world

They kill it in Qaladze but reborn in Amad (Diyarbakir)

They slaughter it in Halabja but revives in Kirkuk

They hang in Hawler but leaps in Urmia. (784)

In this stanza, Bekas refers to southern, northern and eastern Kurdistan in Iraq, Turkey and Iran. On April 24, 1974, Qaladze, a city in the Iraqi Kurdistan, was bombarded with internationally banned napalm bombs killing and injuring hundreds of innocent citizens including university lecturers and students (BasNews, 2025, para. IX), and in 1988 the town of Halabja was bombarded with chemical weapons by the Iraqi Baath regime and within minutes more than 5 000 civilians were killed by the poisonous gases and large numbers wounded and crippled (European Greens, 2007, para, I). These events and many more occurred on this land but its people never gave up, and words such as (revive, reborn, leap) convey the theme of resistance and resilience. Bekas goes deeper in giving examples to show the bravery of the Kurds and the unbreakability of their land.

It has no entity, no canopy, no home, no fortification, and

It is not a member of the United Nations, and
has no IMF-Seal,
no banner, no tanks, no planes, but
it has survived, lives and still exists! (784)

Kurdistan is not a free country and not protected by any external power, neither the United Nations nor the IMF countries. Having IMF-Seal is crucial for Kurdistan since it is a step toward establishing an independent country as the organization primarily supports independent nations and it guarantees its economic and financial stability and also encourages investment in the region (IMF 1985). Kurdistan does not have an army equipped with heavy and modern weapons, but it still exists beside all the atrocious raids. Bekas indirectly criticizes, members of the United Nations and IMF since they have not protected Kurdistan and its people against the inhumane assaults. For instance, the Anfal (Spoils) campaigns of 1987-1988, perpetrated by the former Iraqi regime, were characterized by the following gross violations of human rights:

- mass summary executions and mass disappearance of many tens of thousands of non-combatants, including large numbers of women and children, and sometimes the entire population of villages;
- the widespread use of chemical weapons, including mustard gas and the nerve agent GB, or Sarin, against the town of Halabja as well as dozens of Kurdish villages, killing many thousands of people, mainly women and children;
- the wholesale destruction of some 2,000 villages, which are described in government documents as having been "burned," "destroyed," "demolished" and "purified," as well as at least a dozen larger towns and administrative centers. (Human Rights Watch, July 1993).

Towards the end of the poem, the challenges become stronger, as Kurdistan becomes the speaker and pours out what is in its heart:

But I have a homeland..

After each Qaladze, and Halabja

It shouts time and again: Death may die

But not I! (788)

Kurdistan will never bow to any external power. Bekas defies the common beliefs that everyone will die and every place is destroyed in the Apocalypse. He alludes to John Donne's Holy Sonnet: "Death be Not Proud" in which he says "Death, thou shalt die". Donne means that if all the beings on earth died, so death will also die because if there is no one to die, death's job will end. But Bekas goes farther, he believes that Kurdistan will never die and remains resolute and unwavering. This time, not Bekas, but Kurdistan speaks "Death may die; But not I!).

4- SONORAN DESERT, THE PRIDE OF ZEPEDA, IN "WE ARE PAPAGO" AND "SMOKE IN OUR HAIR"

Ofelia Zepeda (1952-) is an American Indian poet and linguist who was born in Arizona from the Tohono O'odham, a Native American people of the Sonoran Desert. She is the Regents' Professor in the Department of Linguistics and American Indian Studies at the University of Arizona. Love and devotion for home in Zepeda's poetry is eminent and readers can catch it from the first glimpse and "her life and work are firmly rooted in himdag, the Tohono O'odham way of life that pervades the cultural, spiritual and physical realms" (Haworth 2017). Home is sacred for both poets, but the way of extolling it varies. Bekas focuses on struggle and resistance and Zepeda focuses on language and culture, but the aim is the same, expressing love and passion for land. Throughout history, the Indigenous peoples of the United States along with their languages and cultures were subjects to atrocities and annihilation, albeit systematically and somehow clandestinely. Ostler (2019) wrote "Americans had exterminated the Indians and had done so with "wonderful ease, quietly, legally, and philanthropically, without spilling blood and without violating a single one of the great principles of morality in the eyes of the world (2). This indicates that the attacks were conducted under the name of civilization and development, but the consequences are losing land, language and culture. Therefore, Zepeda in her poems pays great attention to her culture and language to prove that they survived the genocide.

Zepeda's effort to save her native language and culture, Papago or O'odham, is similar to what the African-American writers and intellectuals did in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1930s. The African-Americans realized that their art, music, literature, etc. are in danger and thus they created the movement to revive their culture and identity. Zepeda has the same feeling;

therefore, she devotes her life and career both as a poet and a linguist for preserving and revitalizing her language and culture. Though Papago language was still spoken widely in some isolated Papago villages in the 1980s, she was afraid that her native tongue is assimilated by the English language and ultimately die because the people who spoke the language started moving to the populous areas, mainly due to social and economic factors, where English is the dominant language. Consequently, she authored *A Tohono O'odham Grammar*, one of the first grammar books on the O'odham language (Zepeda, 1983, p. xiv).

Zepeda has also tried to preserve her culture and identity through writing poetry and translating songs written in Papago into English to make her culture familiar to the world. She wrote poems both in English and her native tongue. The two poems selected for this study are among the many masterpieces she composed to express love and devotion for her origin. She is very proud of being a Papago, different from those who forget their origin or feel ashamed if they talk about it. She exploits her knowledge and education to serve her nation; she is a patriot. She has a very effective weapon, a pen. She writes and she revitalizes her origin; she fights. This section sheds some lights on "We are Papago" and "Smoke in Our Hair" to illustrate how Zepeda expresses her patriotism.

4.1 Proud of Being a Papago

The first poem of Zepeda scrutinized in this paper is titled "We are Papago", and published in 1982 in *When it Rains: Papago and Pima Poetry*. The version used here is taken from a website as indicated in the cited works and thus it has no page number. In the poem, Zepeda showcases her nation's power of resistance in the face of the calamities. She uses a natural phenomenon "rain" metaphorically to highlight the strength of the Tohono O'odham in the face of injustice. Phillips and Comus (2000) explain that weather in the Sonoran Desert, home for the Papago Nation, is sunny and very hot, and not too much rain. Zepeda exploits the environment to express love and attachment to the land in her writings. The poem consists of four stanzas, 18 lines, and she uses "we" six times. She divulges the harsh reality of life in the desert, but she is still hopeful. Rain is the most urgent need, and the coming of the "clouds" raises that hope.

The sun has moved over that way a bit.

Here come the clouds.

They are so very white,

They are so very big,

As we sit here and wait for the rain. (Zepeda)

Psychologically speaking, she is happy with the appearance of the clouds and the pure enormous emotion is expressed with reference to the colour and the size of the cloud "very white, very big". Zepeda uses language

cleverly to achieve her aims. The parallel structure in lines number 3 and 4 is compatible with the emotion; it is a rhythmic dance; one can hear the joyful heartbeats of the people. They anxiously "wait for the rain"; yet, they are still calm "we sit here". The Papago people know that the possibility of rain is very low, but they do not complain; they are not bored with the desert life. The discrepancy between the outer world and the internal feeling is expressed concomitantly, but covertly in order not to manifest any discomfort. The word "sit" displays the stability of the mind; however, the word "waiting" keeps them apprehensive.

Repetition is a key feature in the poem. The line "Here come the clouds" is repeated four times. A huge hope is built on the "clouds" as they carry "rain", the rain "smells good", and the air is "refreshing and cool. Zepeda is very much excited by the coming of the clouds because the season is summer and the desert is very hot.

Here come the clouds.

They are carrying the rain.

It is the Seed Blackening Month,

As we look up in the skies and wait for the rain. (Zepeda)

Rain fall is expected in the Sonoran Desert in two seasons: Winter (December and January) and Summer (July). The "seed blackening month" obviously indicates the season as Summer because the seeds of the *Nigella sativa* plant, commonly known as black cumin or black seed, mature and turn black, in this season and the harvest is in early Fall (Salih et al.). Hale (as cited in Zepeda, 2019, p. 78) refers to Zepeda's own statement who said "the best rains are the summer rains...also known as monsoons". These rains come in mid-July and last into August. This is the time of renewal for the O'odham. In several of her poems, Zepeda mentions clouds as a source for happiness, opposite to its common use as sorrow and sadness.

Clouds are generally used in literature as an influential symbol of sorrow and dejection. Ferber (2007, p. 44) notes:

A cloud can be anything that prevents vision. Since in Greek terms life is seeing the light, as well as being seen in the light, death comes as a cloud: "the black cloud of death concealed him" (Homer, *Iliad* 16.350); Statius imitates the phase in *Thebaid* 9.851. So Spenser writes, "on those guilefull dazed eyes of his / The cloude of death did sit" (FQ 1.3.39), and Shakespeare, "Dark cloudy death o'ershades his beams of life".

Zepeda tries to change this notion; she feels happy with the emergence of the clouds as they carry rain. Though the clouds fade "the clouds have lied to us", she does not lose hope. The sense of exuberance and sadness are attached to the coming and going of the clouds. Though waiting is boring, these people feel very happy because they are expecting rain which revives the land, as

she states "We feel happy as we wait for the rain". Sherko Bekas also realizes the magical power of rain and in "Seeds" he metaphorically refers to the Kurds as seeds who are regenerated by the "rain". Both poets utilize "rain" as a source for survival though it is a symbol for suffering for some other writers. Ferber (2007, p. 165) also explains that rain has many symbolic aspects and the most obvious ones are "rain as suffering or bad luck and rain as fertilizing force from above"

The hope of the indigenous people, Tohono O'odham, will fade with the departure of the clouds, but they remain there because they are the Papago; they will not surrender to the disappointment; they are stronger than the drought and the hopelessness.

But the clouds have just gone by.

It is not going to rain,

The clouds have lied to us.

We are the Papago and we sit here and wait for the rain. (Zepeda)

The Papago people have a long history in the area; they are deeply rooted in the desert and they endure the hardships of the desert life. The last line of the poem "we sit here and wait for the rain" displays a remarkable resilience. They were deceived by the clouds, but they cannot be uprooted. They embrace their land and wait for the rain more strongly and more passionately.

4.2 Memory and Resilience in "Smoke in Our Hair"

Ofelia Zepeda wrote "Smoke in Our Hair" as part of her 2008 collection *Where Clouds Are Formed*, but this version is retrieved from a website as indicated in the cited works and thus it has no page number. In the poem, Zepeda starts with reference to her memory which is invoked by the smell of "burning wood". According to Williams (2000) Native Americans used fire in their daily activities and burning wood and grass was necessary for agricultural, social and economic purposes. The smoke and its scent have become an identity for Zepeda.

Similar to Bekas, Zepeda also uses the first plural pronoun "we" to refer to her entire people, Papago. The O'odham people were living in the rural areas and had a strong connection with nature. Thus, the poem contains many references to nature such as trees "Mesquite, cedar, piñon, juniper" and to the activities that they were doing while in the fields.

We walk around the rest of the day

with the aroma resting on our shoulders.

The sweet smell holds the strongest memory.

We stand around the fire.

The sound of the crackle of wood and spark is ephemeral. (Zepeda)

She directly mentions that the native Americans were burning wood to prepare their breakfast, and then they went hunting and cultivating their lands. The word "aroma" proves that Zepeda was proud of her origin

because, smell of burning wood maybe disgusting for some people, but for her it is typical; it is pervading the air, everyone feels it. The remaining of the smell is symbolic which indicates that their culture survives exactly like their 'memories' and 'skin color'.

Smoke, like memories, permeates our hair,
our clothing, our layers of skin. (Zepeda)

Zepeda talks to readers worldwide; she narrates the story of the America's aboriginal people. Heritage (as cited in Potter, 2012, p. 107) accentuates that "talk is context dependent in that it picks up from, and responds to, the immediate conversational context". Since the context is Sonoran Desert of south-central Arizona, all the vocabularies used in the poem, like a mirror, reflect the simple life of the people in that beautiful landscape. The smoke was not only a main part of their lives, but it also shaped their identity. It is used symbolically to represent the physical features of the indigenous people who have long, thick, straight and dark hair with tanned skin.

Love for her home is deeply rooted in the poem, like the smoke in her memory.

The smoke travels deep

to the seat of memory. (Zepeda)

The emotion is not subjective, but rather collective because she speaks on behalf of her nation "we"; every Papago venerates the land and its culture. She is aware of the effects of globalization and the immigration of her people to the other parts of the United States and the world too. She realizes that the political, social and economic changes uprooted the native people, but their deep affection and intimacy would never fade. The British colonizers and later the United States government systematically planned to uproot the indigenous people as mentioned by Ostler (2019), "With the passage of the 1830 Indian Removal Act, the United States was officially committed to relocating an estimated 123,000 Indian people living in east of the Mississippi-75,000 in the South and 48, 000 in the North" (247).

Zepeda challenges the removal plan and the assimilation agenda performed against her nation by retaining the smell of the smoke wherever they go. They remain Papago and this fact will never change.

no matter how far we walk,

we carry this scent with us.

New York City, France, Germany –

we catch the scent of burning wood;

we are brought home. (Zepeda)

No matter where they go, the smell will go with them and they cannot be separated, exactly like their identity. Their patriotism is so profound that even a single element of their nature and culture, the smoke, is sufficient to highlight the strong spiritual connection between the land and the Papago people, a name foregrounded in the previous poem.

CONCLUSIONS

Both Sherko Bekas and Ofelia Zepeda adamantly defend their home, and they use elements of nature to array the spiritual relationship between the Kurds and their land, Kurdistan, and the Papago and the Sonoran Desert. The selected poems are full of bittersweet memories from their land and the most crucial device used to portray the images is language. These poets communicate with readers and employ first person pronouns "I and we" to speak their heart. They are the spokespersons of their nation.

Bekas and Zepeda are very proud of their identity since they belong to two nations who have suffered a lot, but never been disheartened by the cataclysms. The melancholy as well as the bliss are expressed through key words and terms which convey these contradictory emotions, and therefore, discursive psychology proved to be a suitable approach for this study. The authors manipulate visual and auditory images to paint ideas of resistance and resilience.

Another common feature between the two poets is the use of symbols, especially trees and rain. Bekas regards Kurds as seeds who are rejuvenated by the rain and will become new and young trees after each calamity. In the same mode, Zepeda refers to types of trees native to Mexico and south-western US such as "mesquite, cedar, piñon, juniper" which are strong and can resist harsh weather and at the same time they are medically useful with wonderful aroma and flavour. The trees are used metaphorically; they represent the Papago who can survive the difficulties and preserve their roots even if they do not have many chances as the fall of rain in the desert.

All in all, Sherko Bekas and Ofelia Zepeda artistically used the domain of literature and the power of words very successfully to communicate with the world about their nations. They introduce the Kurds and the Papago as two powerful nations who raise stronger after each fall, who create hope out of disappointment and grow on the rocks of the mountains and in the burning sand of the deserts.

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