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The Conceptual Metaphor of the Wolf in Arabic and English: A Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the metaphorical representation of the wolf in Arabic and English, focusing on its depiction in religious texts, proverbs, idiomatic expressions, and literary works. The analysis uncovers shared and culturally specific meanings of the wolf metaphor by drawing on examples from the Quran, the Bible, and various literary and cultural sources. Using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and the Great Chain of Being (GCB) framework, this study explores universal themes—such as the wolf's association with cunning, danger, and deceit—and highlights cultural divergences, including the emphasis on communal vigilance in Arabic traditions versus individuality and resilience in English narratives. This comparative analysis reveals how metaphors reflect cognitive universality while encoding distinct societal values, offering valuable insights into the interplay between language, culture, and cognition.

INTRODUCTION

Metaphors are essential to human cognition, providing a framework for understanding abstract concepts through tangible imagery. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue, metaphors are not just linguistic embellishments but fundamental tools that shape how humans perceive and structure their world. Among the many animals that serve as metaphorical symbols, the wolf (ذئب, dhi'b) is particularly significant due to its widespread and multifaceted use across cultures. In both Arabic and English, the wolf carries powerful connotations of danger, cunning, and predation, making it an ideal subject for cross-cultural analysis.

This paper examines the wolf metaphor in Arabic and English, focusing on its representation in religious texts, proverbs, idioms, and literature. The wolf's role as a metaphor extends beyond its physical traits, symbolizing human emotions, societal structures, and moral lessons. For example, in the Quran, the wolf serves as a symbol of deceit and treachery in the story of Prophet Yusuf (Joseph). Similarly, the Bible portrays the wolf as a predatory threat, particularly in warnings about false prophets. These religious contexts highlight the metaphorical power of the wolf as a moral and ideological construct.

In addition to its religious significance, the wolf metaphor appears in cultural proverbs and idiomatic expressions, offering insights into societal values. Arabic proverbs often emphasize vigilance, caution, and the importance of communal solidarity, as seen in expressions like "إذا ذكرت الذئب فأعد له العصا" ("If you mention the wolf, prepare the stick for him"). In contrast, English metaphors frequently celebrate individuality and resilience, as reflected in phrases like "a lone wolf" and "throw to the wolves". These cultural narratives provide a lens through which to understand broader differences between Arabic and

English-speaking societies.

Using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), this study explores the cognitive and cultural underpinnings of the wolf metaphor in both traditions. The paper aims to uncover shared human experiences and distinct cultural narratives encoded in language by comparing its use in religious texts, cultural proverbs, and literary works. This research contributes to the growing field of cross-cultural metaphor studies and offers valuable insights into the interplay between language, culture, and cognition.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), as outlined by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), proposes that metaphors are cognitive tools that allow humans to understand abstract concepts through more tangible experiences. The metaphor "PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS" is a recurring theme across cultures and languages, often mapping animal behaviors onto human traits to convey complex ideas in simpler, more accessible terms. Wolves, in particular, serve as a rich source domain in metaphorical expressions, representing cunning, danger, and predation. The Great Chain of Being (Lakoff & Turner, 1989) further categorizes animals hierarchically, associating specific traits with their metaphorical use in human contexts, thus reinforcing the cultural and moral significance of these metaphors.

Lakoff and Turner (1989) expanded on the Great Chain of Being, explaining how metaphorical hierarchies facilitate understanding by mapping lower-order animal traits onto human behaviors. This hierarchical framework is pivotal in analyzing animal metaphors, as it reflects cognitive structures and cultural values. Such metaphors serve as bridges between the tangible world of animals and the abstract realm of human morality and social dynamics.

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Moore (1994) explored the symbolic use of wolves in Central Greek culture, showing how wolf imagery reinforces ideas of social hierarchy and predatory behavior. His study on Greek shepherd communities highlighted the wolf's role in symbolizing both fear and resilience in rural narratives. This dual role underscores the flexibility of animal metaphors in representing diverse aspects of human experience, from existential threats to personal and community strength.

Fontecha and Catalan (2003) investigated gendered connotations in animal metaphors across English and Spanish, highlighting how cultural norms shape metaphorical meanings. Male animal terms often carried positive traits, while female counterparts conveyed negative stereotypes, reflecting broader societal attitudes. These findings underscore the cultural embeddedness of animal metaphors and their role in perpetuating or challenging gender norms.

Rashid *et al.* (2012) examined metaphors in Malay and Arabic figurative language, identifying cultural overlaps in the use of farm animals to represent morality and social behavior. They observed that shared agricultural practices influenced metaphorical constructs, creating common themes across cultures. These parallels align with earlier studies on the universal nature of metaphorical mappings while highlighting how local practices shape their specific expressions.

Muhammad and Rashid (2014) conducted a focused study on cat metaphors in Malay and English proverbs. They found that while cats symbolized independence and cunning in both cultures, subtle differences emerged due to cultural contexts. These differences reflect the interplay between universal metaphorical frameworks and the specific socio-cultural environments in which they are realized.

Waśniewska (2018) analyzed the role of animalistic metaphors in cultural connotations and found that wolves are commonly associated with deceit and aggression, reflecting universal fears across cultures. This association aligns with traditional narratives that position wolves as archetypes of danger and cunning. Such metaphors serve as cautionary tales, offering moral guidance rooted in shared human experiences.

Najjari and Mohammadi (2018) explore the recontextualization of metaphors within the domain of sports, proposing the conceptual framework of “territory” to represent emotional and cultural connotations. Their methodological approach—identifying, interpreting, and explaining metaphors—parallels the study of the wolf metaphor, which reflects broader societal constructs and cultural narratives in Arabic and English.

Gudmundsdóttir (2007) examined the wolf metaphor in medieval Icelandic literature, focusing on its association with transformation, aggression, and societal outcasts. Her research highlights how these narratives intertwine ancient Norse beliefs with later European influences, demonstrating the cultural and symbolic significance of the wolf in evolving literary contexts.

Al-Rabee' and Al-Khanji (2024) compared Arabic and English proverbs, revealing a shared metaphorical framework where wolves represent deceit and danger. Arabic proverbs such as “إذا ذكرت الذئب فأعد له العصا” (“If you mention the wolf, prepare the stick for him”) parallel English expressions like “A wolf in sheep's clothing,” emphasizing universal caution against hidden threats. These findings highlight both the universality and cultural specificity of animal metaphors in moral and social discourse.

Normuradova (2024) provided a comparative study of English and Uzbek proverbs, emphasizing the metaphorical richness of wolves and their role in representing human behaviors such as cunning and treachery. Her analysis revealed the cognitive and cultural layers embedded in these metaphors, reflecting shared values and unique cultural nuances. This study contributes to the broader understanding of how animal metaphors function as vehicles for moral and social commentary.

Saralamba (2021) investigated the universality of the HUMANS ARE ANIMALS metaphor in English and Thai. Her study revealed that while the metaphor exists across cultures, the specific animals and their attributed traits vary significantly. This variability underscores the role of cultural context in shaping the meanings and applications of universal metaphorical structures.

Almaani (2023) explored the use of animal metaphors in political discourse, focusing on speeches by King Abdullah II and President Trump. Wolves were used metaphorically to depict political actors as strategic predators, a concept that often required cultural adaptation during translation between Arabic and English. This study highlights the rhetorical power of animal metaphors in political communication and their role in shaping public perceptions. Additionally, Using English translations of Maguindanaon love songs significantly improved Grade 7 students' figurative language skills while preserving Maguindanaon cultural traditions (Mangelen *et al.*, 2023). Salakhova and Spiridonov (2023) examine the metaphor of “blindness” in literary texts, emphasizing its cognitive and cultural implications. Their lexico-semantic analysis demonstrates how metaphors convey deep cultural insights, resonating with the analysis of the wolf metaphor as a cultural and linguistic tool that reflects shared and divergent values in Arabic and English societies.

Deputatova *et al.* (2023) highlight the role of metaphors in fostering linguistic, sociocultural, and cognitive competencies in English learners. Their study emphasizes that metaphor-based teaching approaches enhance students' conceptual understanding of abstract ideas. This aligns with the analysis of culturally embedded metaphors, such as the wolf metaphor, as a means to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps between Arabic and English traditions.

According to Almasharfeh (2024), extinct and mythical animals serve as rich metaphorical source domains that reveal universal cognitive patterns and culturally specific narratives. Metaphors like the phoenix symbolize

resilience and renewal globally, while dragons embody wisdom in Chinese culture but greed in Western traditions. The study highlights how these metaphors evolve over time, such as the phoenix becoming a symbol of ecological restoration in sustainability discourse. These findings underscore the role of metaphors in reflecting cultural values, fostering cross-cultural understanding, and addressing contemporary issues like environmental advocacy.

Therefore, considering all the previously mentioned aspects, this study fills a critical gap in existing research by offering a comprehensive comparative analysis of the wolf metaphor across these three dimensions. While previous studies have explored the metaphorical significance of animals, including wolves, in individual cultural, linguistic, or literary contexts, none have systematically compared the religious, cultural, and literary representations of the wolf in Arabic and English. Prior research has illuminated the universal cognitive frameworks that underpin animal metaphors and highlighted the wolf as a symbol of cunning, danger, and deceit. However, these studies often focus on specific domains or cultures, leaving the intersection of these dimensions unexplored.

This study contributes to the field by investigating how the wolf metaphor operates in religious texts, cultural proverbs, and literary narratives across Arabic and English traditions. In religious contexts, such as the Quran and the Bible, the wolf metaphor encapsulates themes of betrayal, vigilance, and divine justice, reflecting shared moral concerns. Cultural proverbs emphasize societal attitudes toward deceit, caution, and preparedness, yet diverge in their moral priorities, with Arabic proverbs often highlighting communal ethics and English proverbs focusing on individual resilience. In literature, the wolf emerges as a versatile symbol, representing fear, predation, and psychological complexity, shaped by the narrative needs of each cultural tradition.

By integrating these dimensions, this study offers a nuanced understanding of how the wolf metaphor functions as both a universal and culturally specific construct. It reveals how religious, cultural, and literary traditions adapt the metaphor to reflect distinct moral, social, and narrative priorities. This comparative analysis not only advances metaphor theory by bridging multiple domains but also highlights the unique ways Arabic and English traditions use the wolf to address universal human experiences. In doing so, the study makes a significant contribution to the broader field of cross-cultural metaphor research.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach to examine and compare the metaphorical representation of the wolf in Arabic and English. Using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and the Great Chain of Being (GCB) framework, the methodology integrates data collection from religious texts, cultural proverbs, idiomatic expressions, and literary works. The

collected data is subjected to detailed analysis to uncover both shared and culture-specific meanings of the wolf metaphor across these traditions.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory serves as the foundation of this study, enabling the examination of how abstract concepts are understood through concrete imagery. The wolf, as a source domain, is analyzed for its physical traits such as cunning, predation, and danger, which are mapped onto target domains representing abstract human characteristics like deceit, vigilance, individualism, and morality. This theory facilitates the identification of metaphorical mappings, including “WOLF AS PREDATOR,” emphasizing predation and danger; “WOLF AS A SYMBOL OF DECEIT,” highlighting treachery and hypocrisy; and “WOLF AS AN INDEPENDENT ENTITY,” symbolizing self-reliance and individuality. The Great Chain of Being framework complements CMT by categorizing metaphors hierarchically, linking humans and animals through shared traits. Wolves symbolically occupy a middle ground between divine beings (associated with moral perfection) and lower entities (associated with primal predation). This hierarchical framework supports the analysis of wolf metaphors in Arabic and English, particularly in moral and religious contexts, where wolves are depicted both as literal predators and figurative deceivers.

Data collection relies on a range of sources encompassing religious texts, cultural proverbs, idiomatic expressions, and literary works from Arabic and English traditions. Religious texts, such as the Quran (e.g., Surah Yusuf: 12:17–18) and the Bible (e.g., Matthew 7:15; John 10:12), provide examples of wolves as symbols of deceit and threats to morality and community. Proverbs and idiomatic expressions were sourced from established compilations, including *Majma Al-Amthal* (Al-Maidani, 1955) for Arabic proverbs and *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs* (Wilson, 1970) for English ones. Literary works were selected based on their cultural and metaphorical significance. Examples include *Little Red Riding Hood* (Perrault, 1697) and *The Call of the Wild* (London, 1903) for English literature, and Arabic poetry and stories from pre-modern and modern periods, accessed through anthologies like *Arabian Nights* and works by prominent classical poets.

The data selection process prioritized examples that explicitly reference the wolf metaphor, ensuring their relevance to the research questions. Historical and contemporary contexts were balanced to capture the evolution of metaphorical usage. Texts were chosen based on their accessibility in original or translated forms to ensure accurate interpretation and meaningful comparison.

Data analysis employs Conceptual Metaphor Theory to identify metaphorical mappings across Arabic and English. The wolf serves as a source domain, with its physical traits (e.g., predation, cunning) mapped onto target domains representing human behaviors (e.g., deceit, vigilance, independence). The analysis identifies

literal and figurative uses of the wolf and determines the conceptual mappings, such as “WOLF AS DECEIVER” and “WOLF AS A THREAT.” Comparative analysis highlights both shared and divergent metaphorical representations in Arabic and English.

The Great Chain of Being framework is applied to analyze hierarchical relationships in wolf metaphors. In religious texts, wolves are often positioned lower in the hierarchy, symbolizing deceit and treachery against moral human behavior. In cultural and literary contexts, the wolf’s primal instincts underscore survival themes in Arabic (e.g., “من لم يكن ذنبًا أكلته الذئب”) and individualism in English (e.g., “A lone wolf”). Comparative analysis identifies common themes such as cunning, danger, and deceit, while also highlighting cultural divergences. Arabic metaphors emphasize vigilance, morality, and communal unity (e.g., “الذئب لا يهرول عبثًا”), whereas English metaphors often celebrate individuality and self-reliance. This methodology ensures a comprehensive and systematic exploration of the wolf metaphor, illuminating its shared cognitive foundations and culturally specific variations across Arabic and English traditions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Religious Dimensions

The Quran: The Wolf as a Symbol of Deceit

In the Quran, the wolf metaphor is prominently featured in Surah Yusuf (12:17–18). Yusuf’s brothers falsely accuse a wolf of devouring him to conceal their betrayal: *طَقَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا إِنَّنا دَهَبْنَا نَسْتَبِقُ وَتَرَكْنَا يُوسُفَ عِنْدَ مَتَاعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ الذُّئْبُ* (“They said, ‘We went off racing one another, leaving Joseph behind with our things, and a wolf ate him.’”)

Here, the wolf symbolizes external danger as a scapegoat for internal deceit. This usage aligns with the broader Quranic theme of moral accountability, as Yusuf’s eventual vindication exposes the brothers’ dishonesty. The wolf is not portrayed as an actual threat but rather as a fabricated menace, reflecting societal fears of betrayal and the manipulation of perceived dangers.

The Bible: The Wolf as a Symbol of Hypocrisy

The Bible frequently uses the wolf metaphor to represent hypocrisy and hidden danger. In Matthew 7:15, Jesus warns:

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

This metaphor underscores the wolf’s predatory nature, cloaked in an appearance of innocence. Similarly, in John 10:12, the wolf threatens the safety of the flock, symbolizing external forces that endanger the community. These Biblical references emphasize vigilance against deceit and the need for moral integrity, paralleling the Quranic use of the wolf as a symbol of treachery.

Cultural Proverbs and Idioms

Arabic Proverbs and Idioms

Arabic proverbs and idioms use the wolf to convey moral

lessons, societal values, and cautionary warnings:

“إذا ذكرت الذئب فأعد له العصا”

(“If you mention the wolf, prepare the stick for him.”)

This proverb emphasizes the importance of vigilance and preparedness. The wolf symbolizes imminent danger, and the stick serves as a metaphor for proactive defense. It reflects the cultural priority of addressing threats decisively.

“أكلت يوم أكل الثور الأبيض”

(“I was eaten the day the white bull was eaten.”)

This saying originates from a fable where a wolf isolates and devours bulls one by one. The metaphor warns against disunity and the dangers of neglecting communal solidarity. It illustrates how external threats exploit internal divisions.

“الذئب ما يهرول عبثًا”

(“The wolf doesn’t run in vain.”)

This idiom reflects the calculated nature of actions, urging caution in interpreting motives. It parallels English idioms like “Cry wolf”, where intent is scrutinized.

“صار الذئب حارس الغنم”

(“The wolf has become the shepherd of the sheep.”)

This metaphor critiques misplaced trust, highlighting the folly of assigning responsibilities to inherently untrustworthy individuals. It resonates with Biblical warnings about wolves infiltrating the flock.

English Proverbs and Idioms

English idioms often portray the wolf as a symbol of independence, predation, and deceit:

“A lone wolf”

This idiom celebrates self-reliance and individualism, traits that are often admired in Western cultures. The wolf’s solitary nature is reframed as a positive attribute, contrasting with the communal caution emphasized in Arabic proverbs.

“Throw to the wolves”

This metaphor captures the experience of abandonment or betrayal, portraying the wolf as a predatory force. It aligns with Arabic metaphors like “الذئب يأكل من الغنم الفاصية” (“The wolf eats the sheep that strays from the flock”), which emphasize the vulnerability of isolation.

“Cry wolf”

Derived from Aesop’s fable The Boy Who Cried Wolf, this idiom critiques dishonesty and highlights the consequences of false alarms. The wolf symbolizes an actual threat that goes ignored due to a loss of credibility.

“A wolf in sheep’s clothing”

This expression mirrors the Arabic proverb “الذئب في ثوب الحمل” and Biblical warnings about hypocrites. It conveys the dangers of hidden malice and the importance of discerning true intentions.

Literary Representations

Arabic Literature

The wolf metaphor in Arabic literature often underscores themes of treachery, danger, and survival:

In classical Arabic poetry, the wolf is a recurring symbol of predation and vigilance. For instance, the line “من لم يكن ذئبًا أكلته الذئاب” (“Who is not a wolf will be eaten by wolves”) highlights the necessity of cunning for survival in a harsh world.

Modern Arabic literature occasionally reimagines the wolf as a symbol of societal injustice or oppressive authority, reflecting contemporary political critiques.

English Literature

English literature uses the wolf metaphor to explore themes of independence, primal instincts, and morality:

“Little Red Riding Hood” (Perrault, 1697): The wolf represents deception and predatory intent, warning against naivety and hidden dangers.

“The Call of the Wild” (London, 1903): The wolf embodies resilience and the call of primal instincts, celebrating survival and freedom in the face of adversity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The wolf metaphor, as revealed in this study, operates as a profound cultural and cognitive construct, embodying universal human concerns and distinct cultural narratives. By analyzing its use in Arabic and English through religious texts, proverbs, idioms, and literature, this research uncovers both shared themes and culturally specific nuances. These findings illustrate how the wolf metaphor transcends linguistic boundaries, reflecting human values, fears, and moral lessons across societies.

In both Arabic and English traditions, the wolf metaphor consistently symbolizes cunning, danger, and predation. These traits are deeply tied to the animal’s physical characteristics, such as its predatory nature and solitary instincts, which humans project onto social and moral domains. For instance, in both the Quran and the Bible, the wolf metaphor serves as a warning against deceit and hidden malice. In Surah Yusuf of the Quran, the brothers of Yusuf fabricate a story about a wolf devouring him, symbolizing the externalization of blame and the treachery of falsehoods. Similarly, in Matthew 7:15, the Bible likens false prophets to “wolves in sheep’s clothing,” emphasizing hypocrisy and the concealed threat of malice. These religious uses highlight a universal moral concern: the need for vigilance against deceit and the recognition of external dangers that can undermine communal harmony.

While both traditions use the wolf metaphor to convey moral lessons, Arabic and English differ in their cultural emphasis and metaphorical nuances. Arabic proverbs and idioms often frame the wolf metaphor within a communal and moral context, reflecting collectivist values that prioritize vigilance and unity. For example, the Arabic proverb “إذا ذكرت الذئب فأعد له العصا” (“If you mention the wolf, prepare the stick for him”) emphasizes

the importance of proactive defense and readiness when dealing with threats. This metaphor underscores the cultural priority of addressing challenges collectively and with foresight. Another Arabic proverb, “أكلت يوم أكل الثور، الأبييض” (“I was eaten the day the white bull was eaten”), extends the metaphor to warn against disunity, illustrating how external threats exploit internal divisions. These proverbs reveal how Arabic culture uses the wolf as a metaphorical tool to highlight the dangers of isolation, betrayal, and the failure to maintain communal solidarity. In contrast, English idioms often portray the wolf as a symbol of individualism, self-reliance, and predatory behavior, aligning with Western cultural values that celebrate independence. The idiom “a lone wolf” reframes the wolf’s solitary nature as a positive attribute, symbolizing independence and resilience. Similarly, “throw to the wolves” conveys the experience of betrayal or abandonment, portraying the wolf as an external threat that individuals must face alone. These idioms reflect a cultural narrative that values personal strength and adaptability in the face of adversity, contrasting with the collectivist caution emphasized in Arabic metaphors. Literary representations further highlight these cultural distinctions. In Arabic literature, the wolf often embodies treachery and predation, as seen in proverbs like “من لم يكن ذئبًا أكلته الذئاب” (“Who is not a wolf will be eaten by wolves”), which underscores the necessity of cunning for survival in a harsh world. This metaphor reflects a pragmatic view of human behavior, acknowledging the moral ambiguities of survival and the dangers of naivety. In English literature, the wolf frequently symbolizes primal instincts and moral challenges. For instance, in Little Red Riding Hood, the wolf represents deception and predatory intent, serving as a cautionary tale about the perils of naivety and the need for vigilance. Conversely, in Jack London’s The Call of the Wild, the wolf embodies resilience and the call of primal instincts, celebrating the tension between civilization and wildness. These literary uses illustrate how English culture often romanticizes the wolf’s independence and survival instincts, contrasting with the more cautionary and communal framing in Arabic literature.

The theoretical frameworks employed in this study, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and the Great Chain of Being (GCB), provide a deeper understanding of the cognitive and cultural dimensions of the wolf metaphor. CMT reveals how the wolf, as a source domain, is mapped onto abstract human behaviors, such as deceit, vigilance, and independence. For example, the metaphor “WOLF AS DECEIVER” is evident in both Arabic and English traditions, reflecting a shared cognitive association between the wolf’s cunning nature and human deceit. Similarly, “WOLF AS PREDATOR” encapsulates the wolf’s role as a symbol of external danger in proverbs like “The wolf eats the sheep that strays from the flock” in Arabic and “throw to the wolves” in English. These mappings demonstrate how human cognition draws on the wolf’s physical and behavioral traits to conceptualize

abstract fears and moral concerns.

The GCB framework further contextualizes the hierarchical relationships in wolf metaphors, particularly in religious and moral contexts. In the Quran and the Bible, the wolf is positioned as a morally inferior entity that symbolizes threats to human and divine order. This hierarchical framing aligns with broader cultural values: Arabic metaphors often use the wolf to highlight the need for communal vigilance and moral accountability, while English metaphors reflect individual resilience and adaptability. The wolf's dual role as a literal predator and a figurative deceiver underscores its versatility as a metaphorical construct, bridging the human and animal realms in both traditions.

Despite these cultural divergences, the wolf metaphor reveals universal human concerns about survival, morality, and societal cohesion. Both Arabic and English traditions use the wolf to symbolize external threats, whether they manifest as deceitful individuals, moral corruption, or predatory dangers. These shared themes highlight the cognitive universality of metaphor, as human societies project their fears and values onto the natural world. At the same time, the cultural nuances of the wolf metaphor reflect distinct societal narratives: Arabic metaphors emphasize collective vigilance and moral lessons, while English metaphors celebrate individualism and the tension between civilization and primal instincts.

The findings of this study also have broader cultural implications, particularly in understanding how metaphors encode societal values and worldviews. In Arabic-speaking societies, the wolf metaphor serves as a cautionary tool, reinforcing the importance of unity and moral integrity in the face of external threats. In English-speaking cultures, the wolf metaphor reflects a more individualistic perspective, celebrating resilience and self-reliance. These differences underscore the interplay between language, culture, and cognition, offering valuable insights into how societies use metaphor to navigate and articulate their collective experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

This study explores the wolf metaphor as a linguistic and cultural construct in Arabic and English, reflecting universal themes and distinct societal values. In religious texts like the Quran and Bible, the wolf symbolizes deceit and moral vigilance, highlighting threats to harmony and integrity. While Arabic metaphors emphasize communal values and disunity dangers, English metaphors celebrate individualism, resilience, and survival instincts.

Using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and the Great Chain of Being (GCB), the analysis shows how the wolf metaphor maps to human traits like cunning and vigilance. Arabic traditions focus on collective solidarity, while English narratives romanticize independence and adaptability. This comparative analysis highlights metaphors as both universal cognitive tools and culture-specific expressions, offering insights into the interplay between language, culture, and thought. Future research

could expand to other animal metaphors, deepening our understanding of metaphor as both universal and culturally specific.

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