Socio-cultural Representation in Literary Translation A critical discourse analysis

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Abstract

This article examines the socio-cultural Arab traits in Naguib Mahfouz's Zuqāq al-Midaq and their representation in English (Midaq Alley) translated by Trevor Le Gassick (1975) and German (Die Midaq-Gasse) translated by Doris Kilias (1985), and the impact on the representation of Arab culture. It investigates the translators' roles in the appearance and promotion and of this controversial novel. It also sheds light on the way the translators adopted in using this work to transfer various views on different aspects and, hence, reflecting different representations of cultural aspects from that of the source-text ones. Providing some examples along with their translations of these translational shifts and the possible justifications behind them, the analysis proves that a close reading of these renditions cannot disregard the visibility of both translators.

Keywords: socio-cultural representation, culture specificity, literary translation

1. Introduction

Language is an essential part of social behaviour and used within a social context by human beings to communicate their needs, ideas and emotions to each other. As a medium of comm- unication, it covers a wider range of social and cultural concepts like marriage, divorce, relationships between people, customs and beliefs. Since the social and cultural domains of Arab, English and German cultures are not the same, translation is never a constraint-free process. This critical analysis shows the impact of the rendition of a literary text on the representation of Arab culture. The translations of Naguib Mahfouz *Zuqāq al-Midaq* into English and German and their implications for the formation of the source-culture images. *Zuqāq al-Midaq* is a pertinent example, because Mahfouz's novel is inspired from his own personal experience of Egyptian everyday life through his contact with local people at cafés, living their everyday life with its happiness and sadness. El-Enany confirms that:

> Most of the novels of his early realistic period are set in Jamaliyya, notably *Midaq Alley* and *The Cairo Trilogy*, while in later works such as *Children of Gebelaawi, Fountain and Tomb*, *The Epic of Harafish* and many others, though not mentioned by name and not recreated with the same meticulous detail as before, Jamaliyya continues to haunt his work in various mantles of disguise and lends to it many of its typical characters and physical assets … *Midaq Alley*, and The Trilogy are accurate documentations of the features of the area during the period of their events. (1993, pp. 1–2)

In this article a priority is given to the translation of Arab cultural traits into English and German and the key roles played by translators therein. In seeking to discuss the socio-cultural specificity and how it is reflected in both target versions, the distinctive specifics in Arab culture and English and German cultures will be stressed. However, the commonalities among the cultures concerned will not be excluded. Investigating the representation of cultural difference helps us to understand the concept of 'the construction of identities' (to use Lawrence Venuti's term) for foreign cultures in translation

(1998, p. 67). Translations help us construct a certain view of the culture that produced texts as well as they give us access to these texts that would otherwise remain inaccessible. Focusing on differences in the study of Arabic literary works translated into English and German is vital because it can demonstrate how the otherness of the source culture is depicted in target languages. The current analysis can also provide vision into the discourse of Arab culture in some Western communities, since no rendition can evade being influenced by the local dominant view of the foreign culture being translated.

2. Naguib Mahfouz's Zuqāq al-Midaq and Arab Culture

Naguib Mahfouz was born on December 11, 1911 in the district of Al-Jamaliyya in Old Cairo and lived with his father, mother, four brothers and two sisters. When he was twelve, his family moved to Al-Abasiyya, a new Cairo suburb. Although Mahfouz had left his earlier district, it remained in his memory to the extent that many of his novels e.g., the settings of *Midaq Alley* and the *Trilogy* were in Al-Jamaliyya, the district where he was born. Mahfouz's life in Al-Jamalliyya provided him with the needed background, framework and mood for the events of his large cast of fictional characters. Naguib Mahfouz as a novelist, is the most renowned Arab writer in the West. In 1988 he obtained the Nobel Prize for Literature. Mahfouz was a prolific writer, as well as he had a vital role in the improvement of the Arabic literary canon. When he started writing his novel in the 1940s, at that time, it was a relatively new genre, both in Egypt and in other Arabic speaking countries. Furthermore, he was one of the pioneers of the genre, but as a writer, he combined quality with quantity. His skillfulness can be noticed in the precise details, in describing the physical emergences of his characters, aspects of human behaviour, as well as people's mentalities. Having into consideration his success in handling human, personal, and social needs, it is logical that he is widely read. Having a look at the scope of his writing, one can tell that his knowledge and experiences are not limited to books and the world of

the written word. They rather get inside people's real daily lives and issues.

Mahfouz showed that one can translate the aspects of normal life: alienation, cruelty, human suffering, injustices, loneliness, and the other aspects associated with the human conditions in finding a equilibrium between the blasphemous and the pious, or the criminal. He presented the characters in his works who lived among their fellow Egyptians, Islamic radicals, western colonists, and dictatorial governments. Mahfouz obtained his international fame is largely through his works that have been translated into English. *Midaq Alley*, at first published in 1947, was his first novel appeared in English in 1966 (translated by Trevor Le Gassick) and *The Cairo Trilogy* (*Palace Walk, Palace of Desire* and *Sugar Street* translated by William Maynard Hutchins, Loren M. & Olive E. Kenny). An interest was shown in translating more of his works into English only after his obtaining the Nobel Prize for Literature. In fact, it was Jaqueline Kennedy Onassis, who won the rights to his work for the first translation into English of *Bayn al-qasrayn* (*Palace Walk*).

In his book, *Naguib Mahfouz: the Pursuit of Meaning* (1993), El-Enany gives a biographical outline of Mahfouz's works according on historical, religious and social alterations in Egypt during the period between 1930 and 1990. In his article *Egyptian Elegy*, he writes that:

> There is no better record for a student of Egyptian politics and society in the 20th century than the 35 novels and 15 odd collections of short stories that is Mahfouz's legacy of love for his country and humanity. From the 1930s to the 1990s and beyond, he has been a keen and indefatigable observer of his nation, and the ravishes of time it has lived through: it is all there one era after another in one time after another, throbbing with life and immediacy. (2006, p. 9)

In his works, Mahfouz addresses political, religious, and social responsibility. His readers feel that they live with both the modern

ideas and colonists at the same time. He tries to clarify the idea of moderate Islam, stressing the impact it has on the lives of the people in an attempt to correct some misconceptions about it in the West:

> Islam has been treated unjustly. For the real Islam is that which produced people like Taha Husayn, al-Aqqad, and Tawfiq Hakim, with their daring positions and opinions. The mufti of al-Azar has responded to the fatwa of my death. This is the Islamic point of view. However, fundamentalists do not want to listen, and in the West they ignore what the mufti has said, and they use what has been said by the fundamentalists to abuse Islam. (Beard & Hayder, 1993, p. 63)

Mahfouz shows an understanding of Islam and the statements of muftis, who are responsible for supervising and censoring books before their publication. Therefore, one of the drawbacks for understanding Islam results from judging it on the basis of the behaviour of an individual. Thus, no religion should be judged from the point of view of others. Although he was influenced by some western writers, he defied the idea of western influence:

> Mahfouz, as we have seen, is careful to fight off any suggestion of influence in the sense of imitation, especially in connection with western writers and schools. He is, nevertheless, happy to articulate his admiration for European culture and his belief in the inevitability of the triumph of its values. (El-Enany, 1993, p. 21)

Mahfouz, in his works, uncovers historical aspects of the Muslim world with the West. He also identifies an Egyptian culture that is based on Islam and affected by the West through different factors: colonialism, political systems, and scientific reforms. He calls for competition and cooperation between cultures, rather than conflict. Such a rivalry should lead to dialogue, not to enmity. As he says:

there is no hatred involved in cultural rivalry, nor should it ever reach the point of confrontation. Were it to reach that point, it would be a sign that we are witnessing not a cultural conflict, but a political battle—a very different issue. Cultures should engage only in dialog. Either one culture will emerge as the most appropriate, or various cultures will coexist. There is always room for a plurality of cultures in art, ideas and literature. (Mahfouz, 2001, p. 139)

The plurality of ideas and the diversity of cultures should be taken into account, and when everybody takes this concept for granted, coexistence between nations will prevail.

3. Naguib Mahfouz's Zuqāq al-Midaq

Zuqāq al-Midaq was published in 1947. The novel is about a small, poor neighbourhood in Cairo in the 1940s. It includes diverse main characters: Hussain Kirsha, a café owner, Salim Alwan, an owner of barbershop, Umm Hamida, a matchmaker. This novel highlights both the poverty and death of the Alley. The resident's endeavours, to escape the Alley for a better life, end unfulfilled, but the story reflects a great part of life in Cairo during the 1940s. Umm Hamida's daughter, the main character, wants to run away from the ailing Alley to a luxurious place. She gets engaged to few men, but ends up as prostitute for Faraj Ibrahim, a wealthy pimp, so she is rejected by the society. (Afridi, 2008, pp. 33-34)

According to Said, the Arab world has attracted the attention of critics, politicians, and scholars who have started studying it to have a better understanding about the history of this area of the world. Its prevailing political ideologies, socio-cultural surroundings, and religions are all among the field of their interest, extending also to Arabic literature. (1994, p. 372). The reception of the Nobel Prize for literature and a radical's endeavour to kill him in 2001 were among the few main actions that attracted the western readers' attention to the Arabic literature. It is presumed that literature is a rich source to reflect people's cultures, beliefs, lives, and political in addition to their religious orientations and attitudes.

4. Translating socio-cultural representations in Zuqāq al-Midaq

Naguib Mahfouz gained an international reputation only after his works were translated into the English language. He came to be known to the non-Arabic readership through his translated works. Since social issues are many in number, the current section will be limited to marriage, polygamy, honour, disgrace and homosexuality and to what extent they are depicted differently in both source and target languages. Generally speaking, western societies are liberal in their attitudes towards love and sex. For instance, having an intimate relationship without marriage is an ordinary feature of western social life. Terms such as boyfriend and girlfriend are common in everyday life. In contrast, in Arab societies, social relations, attitudes, perceptions and even types of speech are deeply rooted in the Islamic religion. The Arabic social culture is traditional and conservative, especially in dealing with issues like love, sex and marriage. Therefore, in Arabic, there are no equivalents of these English concepts related to this domain. Arabic equivalents of 'boyfriend' and 'girlfriend' may only denote plain friendship and ignore other aspects such as romantic or sexual relationships (cf. Aziz, 1982, p. 28). Furthermore, in most Arab societies, it is unacceptable for couples to live together out of wedlock. For example, (خلوة) *Khalwah* (privacy) (*Khalwah* means a man and woman be alone in a place where with no fear of intrusion by others, so t a chance exists for intercourse. *Khalwah* is prohibited in Islam between an adult male and an adult female who are outside the degree of *mahram* relation). It is an Arabic term that has no lexical equivalent in English and German, hence difficult, even awkward, to render in English.

Thus, some words are considered taboo and should not be used in 'polite company' (Fromkin and Rodman, 1993, p. 303). In both Arabic and western cultures, words relating to sex and natural body functions make up a large part of the set of taboo terms. However, they are much stronger in the former than in the latter. It is expected that some translators will face difficulty and embarrassment in translating such words and concepts related to sex and love because of their connotations in the Arabic culture, since they are not explicitly expressed. To illustrate this point, the word 'gay' is a taboo

notion in the Arabic culture, whereas in English it is not pejorative, hence the impossibility of rendering it neutrally into Arabic. As a result, translators avoid translating this word (cf. Baker, 1992, p. 24). In Arabic, homosexuality is never expressed explicitly as we will see later in this article.

In this study, the importance of translation in evaluating this literary work text is to be considered. The point that needs to be dealt with is: Can various renditions of a literary work be an evidence of its quality? Below, it will be argued that the role of translation in relevance to representation of Arab culture and its reception in the English and German-speaking world, in the case of *Zuqāq al-Midaq*, is far from being simple as one may think. Deciding whether Gassick's and Kilias's translations are more 'faithful' to the source text and more representative of the local literary production or not, can be determined through the textual analysis below which proposes some answers to this thorny issue of 'fidelity' to the source text. However, the key focus of this study is rather different. The translators' roles in the translational representation of Arab culture will be explored. In order to achieve this aim, some specific examples of their translations of selected excerpts together with the source text will be discussed. The focus will be on aspects like: their renditions of the general cultural characteristic of the source text, and their translations of Mahfouz's social criticism.

4.1. Marriage and polygamy

Marriage in Arabic culture reflects how the religious and social factors are linked to each other. Therefore, religious rituals and social traditions penetrate the whole process of getting married. In the novel under study, there are many terms associated with marriage and many of them pose certain problematic issues in translation. The challenging difficulty of translating such terms are due to the overlapping of social and religious factors in the Arab world, especially the Islamic one. Cultural values, social traditions and customs, and, most importantly, religious rules make the procedures associated with marriage and divorce extremely complex. Without a total understanding of these issues, the translator will not be able to

render them in full. At the time Mahfouz wrote *Midaq Alley*, marriage was in the hands of the parents, and young people had to submit to their wishes. An arranged marriage is still common in contemporary Egypt in rural areas and among the lower classes and urban communities. In this vein, Rugh contends that:

> [It] acts as a contemporary mechanism in communities where social controls are strong against males and females intermingling… arranged marriage is one of the several options available … for families of all classes and styles of life.(1985, p. 142)

Whatever degree of education or career an Arabic woman might attain, her reputation and status in her society do not depend on these things, but on her marital status. A single woman can find it very difficult to function in the community and will probably suffer because people may presume her status as a defect in her personality. Therefore, most women, when choosing between the two options, choose marriage. Hence, the difficulties related to this domain have emerged from the complex procedures of marriage and divorce in the Arab world in general and the Islamic world in particular. Many factors play an important role in the institution of marriage in the Arab and Muslim world. Rendering terms related to marriage or divorce into English and German would not be free from challenges. Without enough knowledge of such notions in the Arabic context, translators face great difficulties in rendering them in the appropriate way so that they are comprehensible in the target language. At the same time, it is complicated for an English reader to entirely comprehend and accept texts addressing such issues from the Arabic perspective.

Independence of the Arab woman is not a question of her either living on her own or being free from her parents' authority. An unmarried woman may not move out of her parent's home with dignity. If she chooses to move out, she violates the rules of religion and moral principles. Even the economic independence of an Arab woman does not give her the sought security. Such independence is

crystal clear in *Midaq Alley* when Mrs. Afify tried to console herself with financial activities, but money cannot replace a husband. In spite of frequent complaints about marriage: "no more bitterness of marriage for me!" (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 16), an Arab woman cannot live without marriage; nothing can bring a peaceful life, only marriage, the writer says:

ظننت يوما أنها نسيت الزواج، فإذا بالزواج أملها المنشود لا يغني عنه شيء من مال أو قهوة أو سجائر أو أوراق مالية جديدة. وجعلت تتساءل في جزع: كيف ضاع ذلك العمر هباء؟ كيف قطعت عشرة أعوام حتى شارفت الخمسين وحيدة(Mahfouz, 1985, p. 23)

Once thought she had forgotten marriage and, all of a sudden, marriage as her ambition and hope and no amount of money, coffee, cigarettes or new banknotes could dissuade her from the idea. Mrs. Afify had begun wondering despondently how she had wasted her life in vain and how she had spent ten years, until she was now approaching fifty, quite alone (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 17)

Alles, was sie vorher übers Heiraten gedacht hatte, ihre ganze Abneigung, schien in Vergessnheit geraten zu sein angesichts der nun heiß ersehnten Hoffnung, der gegenüber sich aller Trost durch Kaffee, Zigaretten und Geld als nichtig erwies. Hatte sie nicht ihr ganzes Leben vergeudet? Was hatte sie in den letzten Jahren eigentlich dafür getan, um jetzt mit funfzig nicht allein und einsam zu sein? (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 33)

Both translations of Gassick and Kilias are functionally and communicatively successful, but the difference between Arabic culture and Anglo-American and German cultures results in a loss with reference to the source culture's attitude towards marriage. It is clear from the text that, for a woman, nothing can replace marriage

and the tranquility of marriage, but the target reader may view this differently, depending on his/her culture. From a religious point of view, marriage is desirable and is viewed by Muslims as one-half of religion. In the following excerpt, marriage is looked at from a religious point of view:

> كيف يعيبك ماهو شرع وحق! أنت ست عاقلة شريفة، والكل يشهد بذلك، فالزواج نصف الدين يا حبيبتي، وربنا شرعه حكمة، و أمر به النبي عليه الصلاة والسلام (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 24)

> Why should it be wrong to do something both lawful and right? You are a respectable woman, as everyone knows. Why, my dear, marriage is one-half of the religion. Our Lord in His wisdom made it lawful, and it was prescribed by the Prophet. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 18)

> Wie sollte etwas, was Recht und Gesetz ist, Schande bringen? Sie sind eine kluge und ehrenwerte Frau, wie jedermann weiß. Heißt es nicht, dass die Ehe eine Hälfte der Religion ist? (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 34-35)

Once again, the linguistic equivalent of the source text is achieved in translation; however, the loss is clear as a result of the different social norms of both source and target cultures. Hence, the source and the target readers have a different attitude towards the phrase 'marriage is one half of the religion'. Mrs. Afify wants to marry, but she does not have good prospects because she is old and cannot be anymore pregnant. El Saadawi make clear that in traditional Egyptian society

> [t] he value of a woman deteriorates with age … The life of a woman is, therefore, less than that of a normal human being, since it only extends over thirty years. Once she no longer has any menstrual periods, her life is

considered over, and she is said to have reached Sin El Ya-as (the age of despair or of no hope). (1989, p. 78)

What is the motivation of a woman to get married after spending a decade being rigid that marriage brings only misery? How could it be possible for Umm Hamida to secure her a husband? Despite her persistence that she is younger, and she is of 'Sin El Ya-as' age meaning the menopause period. It seems that in the course of years, Mrs. Saniyya Afify has been isolated from society. Though she is rich, she has lack for a social status because she is single. In this regard, Wédad Zenie-Ziegler in reference to Egyptian women states that:

> Only marriage assures the individual of a place in society. An unmarried woman has no social status, with the exception of a few rare women with prestigious careers … although even they frequently encounter obstacles that with an influential husband, they would probably have been spared. (1988, p. 115)

Hence, Mrs. Afify through marriage both fulfills a social responsibility as well as in marriage in the eyes of society, is religious duty. Through her character, it can be concluded that wealth and the political changes in favour of women are not sufficient to defeat social traditions and customs. El Saadawi puts it in a more eloquent way:

> Time and time again, life has proved that whereas political and economic change can take place rapidly, social and cultural progress tends to lag behind because it is linked to the deep inner emotive and psychic processes of the human mind and heart. (1989, p. ix)

Abbas tried to talk with Hamida before leaving the Alley, but she tried to escape, saying "had it not been for her belief in marriage as her natural destiny, she would not have hesitated to reject him

cruelly" (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 71). Hamida does not love Abbas nor does she hate him, but the idea of marriage as the natural destiny of a girl stops her rejecting him. The idea is clearly expressed in the text, but it may not be easily acceptable by the target reader. The procedures of getting married in Arab culture are different from that of the target reader. In the novel, Abbas Hilu met Hamida and received her consent, and then he took Umm Kamil to Umm Hamida for the betrothal. A comparative analysis of Gassick and Kalias's translations of *Zuqāq al-Midaq* reveals a diametrical opposition in their transposition of the cultural traits of the Arabic text into English and German respectively. Kalias tends to emphasize the source-text cultural foreignness, whereas Gassick assimilates it to the target culture. They sometimes adopt different methods, if not opposed. Another example to be examined is:

هذا عباس الحلو إبن زقاقنا، وابنك، وابني يطلب إليك يد حميدة
فأبتسمت المرأة وقالت:
أهلا بالحلو الذي هو حلو، ستكون أبنتي عنده وكأنها لم تفارقني...
وتحدث عم كامل عن الحلو و أخلاقه، وعن الست أم حميدة و أخلاقها...
وقرأوا الفاتحة و شربوا الشربات ... (113-112 .pp ,1985 ,Mahfouz)

-"This is Abbas Hilu, born and bred in our alley and a son of yours and mine; he wants Hamida's hand in marriage."
- Her mother smiled and said: "Welcome to him indeed, the sweet boy. My daughter shall be his, and it will be as though she had never left me."
Uncle Kamil went on talking about Abbas and his fine qualities, about Um Hamida and her fine qualities…
They read the opening verse of the Qur'an, as was the custom at all engagementparties. Then refreshments were passed around. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, pp. 91-92)

> Das ist Abbas al-Hilu, ein Sohn unserer Gasse, also auch Ihr und mein Sohn. Er bittet um die Hand von Hamida.
> Sie lächelte, "Ein herzliches Willkommen für al-Hilu, der, wie schon sein Name sagt, reizend ist. Bei ihm wird meine Tochter so gut aufgehoben sein, als hätte sie mich nie verlasssn."
> Onkel Kamil fing ein wenig zu plaudern an, er sprach von Abbas und seinm guten Charakter und auch von Umm Hamidas zauberhafter Wesensart…
> Man trank noch etwas, sprach die Fatiha, die ersten Verse aus dem Koran, wie das bei Verlobungen üblich ist. (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, pp. 160-161)

Gassick and Kilias's Translations of the above excerpt show how the linguistic message is achieved in the target text, but the social practice presented in the source text may not be fully assimilated by the target reader. The custom mentioned in the original, by reciting the First *Sura* [*Al-Fatihah*] of the Qur'an, is a sign for the initial marriage accord. When both sides consent to the marriage, they speak publicly this Sura. Gassick paraphrases this verse as "the opening verse of the Qur'an", whereas Kilias uses transliteration 'die Fatiha' for the source-text lexical term 'Fatiha' providing it with a clarification "die ersten Verse aus dem Koran, wie das bei Verlobungen üblich ist" to show the cultural specificity of the source text. She often recreates the semantic elements of Mahfouz's novel, thus maintaining its cultural difference in the German text. However, the implication of reading it may not be familiar to the English or German readers, hence, the social practice present in the source text is lost. A marriage proposal in Arabic, for example, should not be stated explicitly. To get engaged to a girl is to 'want her hand' and in the above excerpt, the translator was successful when he added the phrase 'in marriage' to show what the nature of this request was. Gassick was also successful with the addition "as was the custom at all engagement parties".

A discussion of marriage in *Zuqāq al-Midaq* leads us to the question of polygamy. Polygamy is one of the factors that distinguish the Arab Muslim culture from the Anglo-American and German cultures. Though polygamy is not very common among Muslims, it does exist and has an influence on the thoughts and perceptions of some Islamic society (Aziz, 1982, p. 27). It is difficult to find an appropriate equivalent of the Arabic word ‘تعدد الزوجات’ [multiple marriages]. The English word ‘polygamy’ may not be connotationally suitable in some contexts because it is forbidden in Anglo-American and German culture to have two wives, and that is why the target readers may have a negative attitude towards polygamy, which is not the case in the Arab culture.

An understanding of Salim Allwan's discussion with Umm Hamida about taking her daughter as his second wife requires some knowledge of the law of polygamy. Below is another example illustrates the specificity of the source text, in which Salim Allwan had every right according to Islamic law to marry a second and he explains why he wants to have a second wife:

لقد أنهت زوجتي كأمرأة، ولست من الرجال اللذين ينزلقون في الفسق في مثل هذه السن، ولا داعي مطلقا للرضا بالعذاب والغم. لقد يسر الله لنا فلماذا نعسر على أنفسنا (.Mahfouz, 1985, p (143

My wife has ceased her life as a woman and I am not the sort to enter into adultery at my age. Nevertheless, why should I be punished? Allah made things easy, why should we make them difficult? (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 116)

Trotzig sagte er sich, dass seine Gattin ihr Leben als Weib abgeschlossen hatte, und er konnte es in seinem Alter nicht mehr wagen, in ein Bordell zu gehen. Warum sollte er sich aber mit so einem Leben voller Gram und Pein zufriedengeben? Allah möchte uns das Leben

erleichtern, warum sollten wir es uns dann schwer machen? (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 202)

The above target texts render the communicative task of the source text, but the differences in social attitudes between the source and the target readers may produce a different reaction. Hence, the target texts have different effects than the source text had on its original readers. Even after the religious-based justification of taking a second wife, there is still the implicit loss of 'أنهت زوجتي كأمرأة' "my wife has ceased her life as a woman" "seine Gattin ihr Leben als Weib abgeschlossen hatte" [his wife had completed her life as a wife] which illustrates the conservative nature of the Arab culture. The target texts are linguistically communicative; nonetheless, the social and religious attitudes may not be easily visualised by the target readers. According to Islamic law, Muslims are allowed to have maximum four wives, but under certain circumstances and conditions to be fulfilled, including the consent of the first wife, and fair treatment. Some religious scholars have interpreted justice towards wives as the gratification of their material needs and not an equal share of affection and love in their husband's hearts (El Saadawi, 1989, p. 140), whereas others state that the act of marrying a second wife is in itself a preference for the new wife after the first one (ibid., p. 196). A third group leaves the matter of equality completely to the man's conscience. Most families in the Islamic world, the practice of polygamy is usually dictated by economic and social factors. In this regard, Rugh contends that:

> [T]he observation of lower class urban families where a man takes a second wife indicates that their practice is often corrupted to other than its intended sense of providing human and equal treatment, under special circumstances. Many men marry again as a simple way of getting rid of one wife while taking another, thereby avoiding certain kinds of legal or economic complications that come as a result of divorce. (1985, p. 187)

There are some justifications for marrying a second wife; one is mentioned in the novel. This is if a man cannot control himself, fearing he will commit adultery as a result of his wife's illness or inability to satisfy his sexual needs. As far as polygamy is concerned, the target reader's reaction is usually different from that of the source reader. To make the concept of polygamy fully comprehensible in the target texts, a footnote explaining this matter may be necessary to reveal this ambiguity and to show why some Muslims resort to taking a second wife. Venuti has a key opinion concerning what he calls "the violence of translation", stating that such violence exists in its very purpose. The reformation of the source text according to beliefs, representations and values that already reside it in the target-text language, always defined in hierarchies of supremacy and weirdness, and in turn it determine the circulation, production, and reception of texts. (1995, p. 18)

Marriage in the Islamic world is a religious-nature contract, therefore religion and its religious dealings always exist in the proceedings of marriage process. In fact, marriage is seen as ' نصف الدين' [*nisfidin*] (half of the religion). In this vein, Hajiya Bilkisu Yusuf confirms:

> Marriage (nikah) in Islam is ... a religious responsibility to be undertaken by those who are ready to live according to rules guiding the institution ... The Quran and hadith ... refer to marriage as half of one's faith. Marriage is traced to the creation of Adam (Peace be upon him) and the creation of Hauwa (Eve) as his companion. (2005, p. 3)

When a Muslim plans to get married, it is often said that 'he wants to complete his religion'. Another significant and compulsory condition in Islamic marriage is the payment of *Mahr*, which is money or other form of property or possessions given to the bride or her family by the groom before the wedding. Mahmood defined *Mahr* thus:

> Dower, under Mohammedan law, is a sum of money or other property promised by the husband to be paid or delivered to the wife in consideration of the marriage, and even where no dower is expressly fixed or mentioned at the marriage ceremony, the law confers the right of dower upon the wife as a necessary effect of marriage. (qtd in Pearl, 1987, pp. 60-61)

English language has a number of terms which appear to be equivalent to 'مهر' [*Mahr*]; like 'dower', 'dowry', and 'bride price', but all of them may not sufficiently convey the same connotation meant by the original. Let us consider this example:

> فخرج الشيخ درويش من ذهوله و صمته وقال: كالصداق له مقدم و مؤخر،
> إلا أنت يا ست الستات فلا صداق لك، لأن حبك روحي من السماء
> (Mahfouz, 1982, p. 163)

> Just like a dowry; he will give both before and after; so it is with all of them, except you, O Madam of Madams. You bring no dowry, for my spirit drew you down from the heavens themselves. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1972, p. 132)

> Scheich Darwisch erwachte aus seinem Schweigen. "Wie bei der Brautgabe, auch da gibt es vorher und nachher etwas. Nur bei dir nicht, gnädige Herrin, denn die Liebe zu dir ist rein und ein Himmelsgeschenk." (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 230)

A Mahr has no correspondence in an American and European civil marriage contracts. *Mahr* is is supposed to be handed directly to the bride, rather than to her parents, as it is with a 'bride price'. The nature and amount of 'مهر' [*Mahr*] are not supposed to be named by the bride, however what is paid is entirely hers. The association of *Mahr* is not easily comprehended by the target readers since *Mahr* is

a religious binding sum to be given to the bride. In the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, *Mahr* is explained thus:

> The marriage contract usually stipulated the *mahr*, an amount of money or property that must be given by the prospective husband in order legally to validate the marriage. The *mahr* may be given all at once or may be divided into two parts, one to be paid before consummation and the other stipulated for future payment in the event of divorce or death. Ideally and by law the *mahr* is intended as a gift to the bride from her husband for a purpose of her choice, whether to furnish her marital home or to establish her financial independence. (Esposito 1995, Vol. 1, p. 21, emphasis added)

Besides the previously mentioned dissimilarities, what makes the Islamic *Mahr* culture-specific, is the truth that it is a religious obligation. Whereas, the English 'dowry' and German 'Brautgabe' are general terms belong to cultural and social traditions. Furthermore, in Islam, there are two types of *Mahr*: 'المقدم' 'the advanced Mahr' and 'المؤخر' 'the delayed Mahr'. These, according to Sonbol, "are supposed to mean advanced dowry paid at the time of the marriage and a delayed dowry to be paid at the time of divorce or the husband's death" (2003, p. 164). These two types of *Mahr* have no equivalents in English or German and their associations are difficult for non-Arabic readers to understand.

4.2. Honour and disgrace
Honour, virginity and disgrace are other issues referred to in the novel. All are interrelated in the Arab society. In such a society, the honour of the male members of a family depends mainly on how their female relatives are looked upon. Their women should prove to be virgin on their wedding night, and their relations after marriage must be restricted to their husbands only. In this regard, El Saadawi explains that:

[a woman] remains 'a woman' whether poor or rich, ignorant or cultured. Throughout, she is fundamentally the same since her honour does not go further than an intact hymen and a chaste sexual life. In most cases, her downfall and loss of her honour are brought about by poverty. This is perhaps a step forward since, before Naguib Mahfouz, male authors always brought about the perdition of their heroines through their baser instincts, their passions (in the sense of sexual desire), their female weakness, or the fact that they lacked a brain or mind … Nevertheless, his conception of honour remains the same and its kingdom stays concentrated in the limited area of the external genital organs. (1989, p. 164)

Honour in the Arab culture is part of their daily life, which cannot be ignored. Women have to take care of their honour in the eyes of the people in their society, which is basically different from that of the Anglo-American and German cultures. The honour of the whole Arab family or entire tribe can be thoughtfully ruined if one of its female members' chastity is violated or when her reputation is stained. Accordingly, the violation of honour demands harsh reaction.To save the family as well as the clan of this dishonour, a girl is to be killed, and her blood will wash the family honour that was violated by her dishonour. Traditionally, blood was and still is the only solution in which:

[t]he roots of their particular view of male honour go deep into the structure and dynamics of the Arab kin group. The ties of blood, of patrilineal descent, can never be severed, and they never weaken throughout a person's life. This means that a woman, even though she marries into a different kin group, never ceases to be a member of her own paternal families … Whatever credit or discredit a woman earns reflects back on her

own paternal families … her father and brothers become dishonoured also. Family honour can be restored only by punishing the guilty woman; in conservative circles, this used to mean putting her to death. (Patai, 1973, pp. 119-120)

From the beginning of the novel, Abbas tried to meet Hamida outside the Alley, but she tried to escape from him, saying, "you want to disgrace me before everyone?" (Mahfouz trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 37). Therefore, meeting a girl outside the house and without the consent of her family is traditionally and religiously unacceptable. The male characters in the Arab world consider themselves part of this shame, even if they are not close relatives. However, dating a girl outside the house either with her family or alone is acceptable and seen differently in the Anglo-American and German cultures and is not viewed as a disgrace.

While talking about the disappearance of Hamida, Abbas wanted to get rid of such a shame. "He wanted revenge, even if it only meant spitting at her. Revenge controlled him so that he longed to knife her treacherous heart" (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 205). The social attitude of the source and the target readers towards honour may lead to different reactions. The following examples reflect the social status and the cultural mentality of the Arabs regarding this behavior, where not only the family feels this shame, but also the community as a whole. For example:

وكان اختفاء حميدة حدثا فضيعا في حياته، ومع أنه لم يعد إلى ذكرها – منذ مرضه – فتخلفت عن تيار شعوره، إلا أن خبر إختفائها أثار أهتمامه وجزعه، فتتبع بقلق بحث الباحثين عنها، ولما تناهى إليه ما تهامس به اللاغطون من أنها فرت مع رجل مجهول، أنزعج إنزعاجا شديدا، وثار غضبه ذلك اليوم فلم يجروء أحد على الدنو منه، فرجع مع المغيب إلى بيته منهد الأعصاب، و أصابه صداع شديد أرقه حتى مطلع الفجر. وحنق على الفتاة الهاربة حنقا كبيرا، وتآكل قلبه حقدا و غضبا، وتمنى ان يراها يومئذ منشنقة، مندلقة اللسان، جاحضة العينين ... (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 263)

Hamida's disappearance had been a shattering blow to Salim Alwan … she had not really been in the mainstream of his thoughts until she disappeared. This news, however, had roused his anxiety, and he had followed with great concern all efforts to trace her. When the gossip reached him about her having run off with an unknown man, he was extremely upset. That very day he was in such a temper that no one dared to go near to him. In the evening, he came home with shredded nerves and a pounding headache that kept him awake until dawn. His heart burst with resentment and revenge towards the fickle girl. He pictured her dangling from a scaffold, her tongue hanging out and her eyes bulging. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, pp. 209-210)

Auch für Salim Alwan war Hamidas Verschwinden ein ziemlicher Schock gewesen. Voller Unruhe hatter er die Suche nach ihr verfolgt! Als ihm dann aber das Gerücht zugetragen wurde, sie sei mit einem fremden Mann geflohen, war er völlig durcheinander. Es war ein schlimmer Tag für ihn, niemand durfte ihm zu nahe kommen. Er war am späten Nachmittag nach Hause gegangen und fühlte sich furchtbar elend. Kopfschmerzen hatten ihn geplagt und ihm den Nachtschlaf geraubt. Dass sie einfach mite einnehmen anderen Mann auf und davon gegangen war, versetzte ihn in blindwütiger Hass. (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 360)

In spite of the fact that both the English and German versions sound linguistically successful, the text has a different impact on both the source and the target readers. In the Anglo-American and German cultures, no one is responsible for what has been done by someone else. Towards the end of the novel, Abbas and Hussain were discussing Hamida's actions, Abbas tried to inspire Hussain to help him beat up Faraj Ibrahim, who had seduced Hamida. He realized

that he could convince Hussain by talking about Faraj's immoral behaviour, and tried to stir Hussain's injury by alluding to his honour:

ولكن ألا ترى أن هذا الرجل قد أعتدى على كرامتنا مما يستوجب تأدييه؟
ولم يغب عنه قوله ((كرامتنا)) وإدرك أنه يشير إلى الإخوة ألتي تربطه بحميدة...
ألا يغضبك أن يعتدي رجل على بنت من زقاقنا هذا الإعتداء المنكر؟
...اسلم لك بأن حميدة مجرمة حقا، ولكن عمل الرجل في ذاته لاغبار عليه، ولكن أليس هو بالنسبة إلينا إعتداء مشينا يستوجب الإنتقام (,Mahfouz
(1985, p. 305

"But don't you think this fellow has insulted our honour; therefore, he must be punished?"
The use of the word 'honour' did not escape Hussain's notice, and he realized that Abbas referred to the near-brotherhood ties that bound them so closely . …
"Doesn't it infuriate you that a man should do this to a girl from our alley? I agree with you that Hamida is to blame, so one can't really criticize the man. But still, isn't it an insult to us that we should avenge?"
(Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 239)

"aber siehst du denn nicht", fragte er hin listig, "dass dieser Kerl sich gegen unsere Ehre vergangen hat und deshalb bestraft werden muss?"
Es war klar, worauf er mit den Worten "unsere Ehre" abzielte, war doch Husain eine Art Bruder von Hamida…
"Sollte es dich nicht viel wütender machen, dass ein Mann ein Mädchen aus unserer Gasse so gemein behandelt? … Ich gebe zu, dass Hamida sich wirklich schändlich betragen hat. Was der Mann an und für sich getan hat, ist nicht einmal so sehr zu verurteilen. "Trotzdem bleibt, dass er unsere Ehre beschmutzt hat

und dass das gerächt wereden muss!" (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 414)

In such a conversation, Abbas refers to such a deed as a kind of insult befallen the people of the Alley. Although Hussain agrees to punish that man, he expresses his absolute disgust with Hamida by saying:

لماذا لم تقتلها؟! لو كنت مكانك ورمت المصادفات إلى يدي بالمرأة التي خانتني لخنقتها بلا تردد، ثم ذبحت عشيقها. واختفيت عن الأنظار هذا هو ماكان يجب أن تفعله يا رطل. (Mhafouz, 1985, p. 305)

Why didn't you murder her? If I were in your position, I wouldn't have hesitated a minute. I'd have throttled her on the spot and then butchered her lover and disappeared … That's what you should have done, you fool! (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 239)

Warum hast du sie denn nicht getötet? Wenn ich an deiner Stelle gewesen und durch Zufall der Frau wiederbegegnet wäre, die mich verrate hat, hätte ich sie aud der Stelle erwürgt! Dann hätte ich mir ihren Liebhaber vorgeknöpft und den erledigt. Und dann wäre ich natürlich abgehauen! Das hättest du machen müssen, du Blödling! (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 415)

Hussain's remarks seem mainly harsh, particularly because Hamida is regarded to be his half-sister (both of them were breastfed by the same mother). But Hussain's main unease is that Hamida has disgraced the Alley's inhabitants with her indecent behavior, and she should pay the eventual price for her misbehavior. In the Arab culture, men are morally and socially responsible for the acts of their female relatives. In other words, if a woman a sexual relationship with someone other than her husband, she eventually dishonour her family, and is seen as an adulterous and should be killed by the men of her family. In the Anglo-American and German cultures, there is

nothing pejorative about sleeping with a girl-friend without marriage, but in the Arab culture, it is both socially unacceptable and religiously forbidden. Hence, the different stance towards this issue between the source culture and the target one result in a loss of the source text's effect on the target reader.

4.3. Homosexuality

Homosexuality is tackled with utmost strictness in many religions. In Islam, Homosexuality is looked at as a practice which worse than committing adultery. However, the Islamic religion is very lenient, as it necessitates the presence of witnesses in order to issue the relevant punishment. For the Islamic ideology, such practice threatens the existence of mankind. So, it is likened to a contagious disease in the community, and it can lead to the extinction of the human race. That is, it goes against the laws of nature where a man and a woman are attracted towards each other, and they satisfy their desires with one another. The presence of the translators can be easily noticed in their tackling with such a controversial issue in Mahfouz's work. The issue of homosexuality is first mentioned in the novel when Umm Hamida reports to Mrs. Afify the recent news of the Alley, referring to it as:

أما علمت بفضيحة المعلم كرشة الجديدة؟ هي كسابقتها، وقد وصل الخبر
إلى زوجته فتعاركت معه ومزقت جبته (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 20)

Had she heard Kirsha's new scandal? It was like the previous ones and the news got back to his wife who had a fight with him and tore his cloak. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 15)

Ob sie schon von dem neuen Skandal um Meister Kirscha gehört habe? Es wäre wieder etwas schlimmes wie schon vorher. Als seine Frau davon erfuhr, gab es einen üblen Streit , und zerriss ihm die Djubba. (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 28)

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As has been mentioned above, the stance towards both sexuality and its practice is seen differently in the cultures concerned. Arab culture tends to be more conservative, being quite implicit when referring to such a domain. However, the English and German translations achieve the communicative purpose of the source text, but the social association of the 'new scandal' may not be fully understood by the target-text readerships. In the Arab culture, it is forbidden, even talking about it cannot be openly expressed, and that is why Umm Hamida referred to it as a scandal. In another place in the novel, it was referred to as 'الداء الوبيل' translated into an "unwholesome weakness" (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 38) whereas it was deleted in the German version. The English version does not reflect the negative connotations that are associated with the Arabic phrase 'الداء الوبيل' [disastrous illness]. To use 'unwholesome weakness' as the equivalent of 'disastrous illness' may not render in full the Arabic absolute rejection of the act. Gassick and Kilias's translations match their tendency to show the exotic and aspects of the source-text culture. In Arab culture, with its Islamic background, homosexuality is a crime and a person committing this crime is sentenced to death.

As has been mentioned before, talking about homosexuality in Arab culture is not explicitly stated, rather implicitly suggested. Although there is a word for such practice in Arabic, all the characters in the novel refer to this act, using other expressions such as 'الداء الوبيل' 'filthy disease', (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 62), and 'الإثم' 'misconduct' (ibid., p. 63), and in German "unheilvolle Krankheit" (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 112). In the English version and German one, 'misconduct' and 'Sünde' are not equivalents of the Arabic (إثم) which means 'sin'. In another context, it was referred to as 'النقيصة المنكرة' "one abominable shortcoming" (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 65), "Hang zur Standhaftigkeit" (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 117). It is clear from the source text how disgusting this habit is in the Arab culture. In contrast, it is not given such importance among the Anglo-American and German readers. Hence, the target texts have different impacts on their readers. As has been mentioned earlier, talking about this act is not explicitly stated in the Arabic language. Mrs. Kirsha tries to persuade

her husband to stop this act, stating metaphorically 'والحشيش اللآخر' "And the other hashish" (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 66), "das andere Haschisch" (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 119). In the target texts, the linguistic equivalent is achieved, but the cultural implication of the source text is lost.

Redwan Hussainy refers to such an act as 'أمر الشيطان' 'a filth created by Satan' (ahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 83), 'das ist des Teufels Sache' (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 149). He asserts that Kirsha will ultimately "lose everything by wallowing in filth" (ibid.). Here Hussainy is astonished by his insolent stubbornness:

ألا يخجلك هذا الحرص على هذا الفعل الشائن؟! (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 104)

Doesn't your lust for this filthy conduct make you ashamed? (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 84).

Beschämt Sie denn die Gier auf solch frevelhaft Dinge gar nicht? (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 152)

Once again, Redwan Hussainy is referring metaphorically to the act of practicing of homosexuality as a 'filthy conduct' and how Kirsha must be ashamed of it. One can observe that Arab culture is more conservative, and this leads the Arabs to talk about such an issue metaphorically, and this has a different attitude and effect on the Anglo-American and German cultures. In another example, it is clear how literal translation fails to convey the speaker's attitude when rendered into the target texts:

يا مرة في ثياب رجل ...
من أنت يا ستي؟
أنا ضرتك ... (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 106)

You woman in the clothes of man!...
Who are you… —I am your fellow-wife (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 86).

Du Weibsbild in Männerkleidern! …

Wer sind Sie den?
Wer bin ich? Kennst du mich nicht? Ich bin deine Nebenfrau!
(Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 152)

The above excerpt shows the speaker's reaction towards her husband's lover. She is sarcastic of the boy, comparing him to a woman. Since Arab culture implies a male-dominated society, comparing someone to a woman is a reference to his inferiority. Both Gassick and Kilias maintain in their renditions the simile set in the source text. Thus, as another insult to the woman adds that he is her 'fellow-wife' as translated by Gassic, and 'Nebenfrau' as translated by Kilias means 'concubine'. Although both Gassick and Kilias achieved the linguistic equivalence of the source text, the translations do not, however, reproduce the actual sense of the utterance, leading to a loss in the attitude of the speaker. The English 'fellow-wife' is used between the two or three, or even the four wives of the same husband when they refer to each other. Whereas 'ضرة' [husband's wife] is solely restricted to the Arab culture which results in a loss in reference to a full understanding of the social implications among target-text readership.

When Shiekh Darwish described homosexuality as 'an old evil', he utters it in English as "homosexuality and it is spelt H-O-M-O-S-E-X-U-A-L-I-T-Y" (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 89), "Im Englischen nennt man es homosexuality. Ich buchstabiere: h-o-m-o-s-e-x-u-a-l-i-t-y" (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 157). As highlighted above, like every other sexual matter in the Arab world, it is not talked about openly, though it is practised by some. It is forbidden according to Islamic Law, therefore throughout the entire book, while referring to this act, all the characters refer to it metaphorically by using expressions of negative associations. Now we come to know why the writer never used an Arabic term, taking into account the culture and perception of his readers, but when such a term is rendered into the target texts, the cultural implication of the source text is lost. Thus, the target texts may not convey the conservative nature of the source text, but rather neutralize such a concept.

4.4. Religion

One feature of Arabic writing is its extensive use of religious references. While composing their works, most writers may not be able to free themselves from being influenced by Islam, and in order to achieve a lofty style they imitate the Qur'anic style along with incorporating expressions of religious associations. Therefore, this style and other religious references are a great problem for both the translator and the future target reader. The translation of a literary text is generally acknowledged to be a challenging task and the main problems emerge from literature itself. Literary works habitually involve some intricate textual and contextual aspects which may not be easy to tackle in translation, and every writer has lexical and stylistic peculiarities that differ from another writer. Thus, every literary writer makes use of such devices as figurative language, for example, in order to highlight his work and draw a literary construction. Hence, rewriting a literary work into another language is an extremely challenging task as the translator does not only render works into a target language, but also participates in the artistic task of the original author. He has the role not only to convey meaning, but also to please the target reader while reading the translation. As far as Arabic, English and German works are concerned, the literary devices used tend to be different, therefore the challenges for their translators spring not from the literary devices themselves, but from the way they are used in the three languages. Metaphors, allusions and proverbs are among the stylistic devices used in these languages, but the way they are employed is different, for example:

مولودة في ليلة القدر و الحسين! (Mahouz, 1986, p. 149)
My, my, you were certainly born under a lucky star!
(Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 121)

Du bist wirklich ein Glückspilz! (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 211)

As one can notice from this example, the writer was under the spell of his culture. He used 'أنت مولودة في ليلة القدر' meaning 'you were

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certainly born in Laylat al-Qadr [the Night of Revelation]. Laylat al-Qadr [the Night of Revelation] is a particular night with a religious dimension. Such a metaphorical expression is referred to one lucky night in the holy month of *Ramadan*. If a person is born in such a night it denotes that s/he is lucky. But when rendered into English and German, the reception of this term is different because of the absence of the religious association.

The target readers should have some background knowledge to understand the concept of *Hajj* so that they might comprehend the speech of Redwan Hussainy to his people of the Alley before his *Hajj* to Mecca:

كان السيد قد إستخار الله في أداء فريضة الحج فأخاره (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 293)

> Hussainy had hoped God would choose him to make the Holy pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina this year, and so He had. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 230)

> Herr Radwan al-Husaini war die Zierde der Gasse, hatte doch Allah ihn auserwählt, dem Gebot der Pilgerfahrt nach Mekka nachzukommen (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 297)

Hence, in such cases, introductory notes, additions and/or footnotes within the text are some of the methods, which might be helpful in demystifying this term. The writer continued to explain what *Hajj* is and how many times every Muslim has to perform it, at least once in the lifetime:

الحج فريضة على من إستطاع إليه سبيلا، يؤديها عن نفسه وعمن تقعد
به الأعذار من الصادقين. (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 298)

> The pilgrimage is a duty for all who can make it. One should perform it for oneself and for all those who cannot go. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 232)

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> "Die Pilgerfahrt", wehrte er bescheiden die vielen
> Lobsprüche auf seine Frommigkeit ab, ist für den eine
> Pflicht, der die Möglichkeit dazu hat. Er tut es sicher für
> sich selbst, aber auch für alle die, die sich das nicht
> lesisten können (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 206)

The translations basically are acceptable, but there is still a loss of the source-text religious practice and its association. In the Arabic text, the writer refers to 'صلاة الاستخارة' [*salat al-istikharah*] (Guidance seeking Salat) is rendered into the English "had hoped God would choose him", and was omitted in German. In the both target texts, there is no reference to this prayer. The *Salat al-istikharah* is a unique prayer a Muslim performs to seek God's aid, leadership and guidance to make a choice or to decide between two options. This type of *Salat* should be performed in a faith full of trust that God can assist, and that He is the only one who can direct the person to the right pathway. A Muslim may not pray *al-istikharah* to seek God's assistance for achieving an evil act. For a rightful Muslim believer, after performing this *Salat*, the person feels strongly towards one option rather than the other; this is often the right one, and the one that God directs him/her to take (cf. Saleh, 2004, p. 93). Furthermore, here, both Gassick and Kilias renders the word 'الحج' [*Hajj*] using 'pilgrimage' and 'Pilgerfahrt' respectively as equivalents in the target texts. It would have been better if they had transliterated the term along with a guideline in the form of endnotes because neither 'pilgrimage' nor 'Pilgerfahrt' are equivalents to *Hajj*. Retention would have been a good solution for the Islam-specific terms, along with either footnotes or a glossary at the end to make them comprehensible to the target readership.

Another long speech by Hussainy about the importance of holy places like Mecca, wishing to spend the rest of his life there:

> هنالك الداء و الشفاء، أخي ... أموت شوقا إلى استطلاع أفق مكة و
> إستجلاء سماواتها، و الإنصات إلى همس الزمان بأركانها، و السير في
> مناكبها ... وإرواء الغلة من زمزمها، وإستقبال الطريق الذي مهده الرسول

بهجرته فتبعتها الأقوام منذ ثلاثمائة وألف عام ولا يزالون، وثلوج الفؤاد بزيارة القبر النبوي و الصلاة في الروضة الشريفة. (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 294)

There [in Mecca] are the remedy and the cure. Oh my brother, I long for Mecca and its bright heavens. I long to hear the whispering of time at the very corner … I long to drink from the well of Zamzam and take the road of the Messenger on his Flight, followed by the multitudes of thirteen hundred years ago and those of today, too. I long to feel my heart grow chill when I visit the grave of the Prophet and pray in the Holy Garden. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 231)

Nur dort gibt es Heilung und Genesung. Ach, lieber Bruder, wie sehr sehnt sich mein Herz nach, Mekka, die geliebte Stadt, zu erlicken und dort die Augen andächtig zum gewölbten Himmelszelt emporzurichten. Wie gerne würde ich schon dort sein und das Wispern der Zeit in allen Winkeln vernehmen, alle Viertel durchstreifen und mich an den geheiligten Plätzen ins gebet vertiefen. Wie glücklich wäre ich, wenn ich schon heute den Durst mit dem Wasser des heiligen Brunnens Zamzam löschen und den Spuren des Propheten folgen könnte, die er auf seiner Wanderung nach Medina vor nun schon dreizehnhundert Jahren hinterlassen hat und die doch immer noch unser aller Herzen höher schlagen lassen. Erquicken möchte sich mein Herz beim Besuch des Grabes des Propheten und beim Gebet im Heiligen Garten, denn es ist voller Liebe. (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, pp. 398-399).

Although Gassick and Kilias deliver the communicative message of the source text, a loss of religious and historical associations is still clear in the target texts by referring to these places as the remedy and the cure of psychological sickness which may not be accepted by the

target reader. The historical association of the well of 'Zamzam'[1] is familiar to the Arabs because of its historical importance among the Muslim communities. Thus, the source and the target readers will have different attitudes with reference to the Islamic rituals and the importance of the well of Zamzam. Therefore, a literal rendering is not sufficient to produce the same effect as that of the original.

Another interesting religious-specific term is 'الإحرام' [ihram]. Let us examine its renditions of the following excerpt:

يا سيدي رضوان، أذكرني إذا أحرمت، وذكر أهل البيت بأن محبهم تلف
وشفهُ الغرام، وأنه أضاع ما يملك من مال وعتاد على حب لا تنقع له غلة،
و إشك إليهم خاصة ما يلقى من ست الستات ... (Mahfouz, 1985, p. 300)

Oh, Redwan Hussainy, remember me when you are in the ritual dress and tell the People of the House that their lover's passion has drained and drunk him dry. Tell them he has spent all his wealth and possessions in pursuit of a futile love. Complain to them of the treatment he has suffered from the Lady of Ladies. (Mahfouz. trans. Gassick, 1975, p. 235)

Oh, Herr Radwan, gedenken Sie meiner, wenn Sie die Weihe als Pilger erhalten haben, und sagen Sie der Heiligen Familie, dass einer, der sie liebt, völlig zerstört war. Nun aber hat die leidenschaftliche Verehrung ihn wieder genesen lassen. Geld und Gut hat er fahren lassen, um dieser Liebe willen, die wie nicht enden wollender Durst in ihm brennt Erzählen Sie vor allem, was er alles der Heiligen Frau zuliebe auf sich genommen hat. (Machfus. trans. Kilias, 2015, p. 408)

It is the well from which Allah quenched Isma'el's thirst (Ibraaheem's son) when he was an infant[1]

Gassick and Kilias came across a specific term related to Islamic rituals. The term (إحرام) 'ihram'[2] has no lexical equivalent in the two target languages; therefore they resorted to paraphrasing the term into English as "when you are in the ritual dress", and into German "wenn Sie die Weihe als Pilger erhalten haben". By paraphrasing, the translators transferred the meaning of the source text, but unfortunately lost its religious association. Hence, religious expressions reflect various aspects of human experience as an extremely important part of the source culture, but when translated into English and German, the religious associations as well as religious-based practices present in the original text are lost. Thus, such losses show how challenging a religious and cultural intertexual references is in translation.

Moreover, other problems are caused by cultural references, style, along with atypical cultural and social cultural experiences which all give literature its single identity. In literature, writers employ words to express their feelings, draw their vision of life. They can use words to convey their ideas or try to solve a kind of social problem. Therefore, their works are usually associated with historical experience, social and cultural concepts. The contextual meaning of the source language along with its specific cultural surroundings as associated by certain cultural-specific connotations, are difficult to attain in full in the target language. Thus, a definite literary work which is created for a certain region with its immediate historical context along with its cultural and historical background cannot be fully reproduced in translation. As far as Arabic, English and German are concerned, all of them use literary devices, according to cultural, social and even literary considerations that are ultimately different from each other. Therefore, what is familiar in Arabic may appear meaningless in English and German and vice versa.

Iḥram is a holy state which a Muslim must hold in order to perform the *Hajj* or the **Umrah**. The [2] Muslim stops at a designated station to perform certain ritual cleansing ceremonies (https://www.britannica.com).

5. Conclusion:

The analysis of Gassick and Kilias's translations of Naguib Mahfouz's *Zuqāq al-Midaq* highlights not only key discrepancies but also some similarities in their rendition strategies. Concerning their transference of the cultural characteristics of the source text, the current analysis illustrates that the strategies adopted by them to render the meanings of the Arabic text are extremely different in some situations and similar in some others. Gassik stresses the source-text cultural specificity, whereas Kilias assimilates such specificity to the target-language culture. However, the 'domesticating' and 'foreignizing' modes highlighted in their translations cannot be adequately judged without taking into consideration the contradictions in their target versions as illustrated with some examples above. What this study shows, in addition to other things, is that both translators adopt translational strategies that fit their artistic ends, reveal their target-culture stances on the wide range of the issues addressed in *Zuqāq al-Midaq* and match their views of the Arab culture as reflected elsewhere. Additionally, the shortcomings of their renditions, in some situations, as well as their indecipherable transliterations mystify the source-text culture. Their 'foreignization' of cultural specifics create an exotic and negative image of the source culture than the one presented by Naguib Mahfouz in the source text. This may create a distorted image of the Arab culture. This comparative analysis of the English and German translations of Naguib Mahfouz's *Zuqāq al-Midaq* is not meant to consolidate the much-debated idea that the concept of 'faithful translation' to an essentially authoritative original text is unreal. Rather, it to highlight the significant and sensitive role the translators play in conveying knowledge about cultures and/or altering the stereotypes we have about them.

To conclude, translation is both a linguistic communicative process and also a cultural and social performance which reflects the language and the individuals involved in this process of transference/translation, i.e., authors, translators and readers as a cultural phenomenon. After discussing these challenges, which may form obstacles in the cross-cultural translation and transcreation of a

literary text, one may conclude that a translator should take into account these differences while rendering texts from one language into another. So, if a translator is not aware of all these challenging difficulties when translating literary works, s/he will finish up translating only texts that in conformity with the target-culture ideologies or manipulate the original text in an attempt to harmonize and assimilate it with the ideology of the recipient culture. Indeed, this distortion could happen if translators aimed at confining their renditions of literary works to the norms and values of the target culture. By so doing the translation moves the source text away from its milieu from which it derives its significance. Therefore, one has to take into account the historical context of the work before translating it. In fact, some of the considerable messages of any work lie behind its literal meaning. So, it is crucially significant for the readers to comprehend both the cultural and historical contexts behind the product in order to understand the writer's point of view and message. The translator should know that translation plays a great role in forming representations of the other's cultures. Thus, s/he should not misrepresent the source-text culture since it is the only venue the target readers have to construct their knowledge and views of other cultures, particularly those of more differences than similarities as in the case of the Anglo-American, German and Arab cultures. It is hoped that it raises the readers' awareness of the presence of these translators as mediators and the impacts of their cultural and religious, ideological backgrounds, and personal choices in the literary work they render.

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