

Technicalities of Translating Drama: One-Act Play Across Borderlines

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Abstract

Arabic Drama receive less attention in translation studies and this research tends to investigate an apt method to transfer a Saudi play to the English speaking World. Written in the Eastern region overlooking the Gulf, [Vision] wavers between the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and the Khaliji Arabic (KA). The Dramatic structure in [Vision], exhibits an alternating pattern between MSA and KA reflecting a deeper alternation between the outer reality and the inner grief experienced by female war survivors. The different roles played by alternating translation units is explained by the concept of binary oppositions. Diverse translation strategies and techniques are employed to rewrite the emotional implications and the rational questions verbalized in monologue and dialogue. Woman's plight of solitude and deprivation generates sense of awakening and incites self-determination. This paper contends to promote cultural dialogue and to contribute to literary translation critique where Arabic language and local drama are involved.

Keywords : Khaliji, alternation, binary oppositions, mawwal, acculturation

ملخص

تساوى الذهن أسلحة عديدة عند مناقشة معوقات وصول النصوص المسرحية المحلية إلى القاريء في الغرب بالرغم من تزايد الجهود المسرحية فكرا وأداء للتواصل مع الآخر. قد تكون بعض تلك المثبتات هو ندرة النصوص المسرحية المترجمة أو قلة المختصين في الدراسات المسرحية أو الترجمة كذلك. هذه الأسباب جموعاً كانت باعثاً على اختيار موضوع هذه الدراسة وهو البحث في سمات المقاربة المناسبة لترجمة واحد من النصوص المسرحية في المملكة العربية السعودية التي كتبت بعد الحرب على العراق. تأتي هذه الدراسة باللغة الإنجليزية لتباحث في كيفية وتقنيات نقل مغزى نص يعرض لحال المرأة في حال الحرب. يتميز البناء الدرامي في مسرحية رؤية (2004) بتناوب يتكرر بين ثنائيات متضادة بين الفصحى والعامية الخليجية وبين السرد الوصفي المباشر والتصوير الشعري في قوالب ثنائية تراثية. ولنقل المعنى والمبنى فإن الباحثة تقترح تقنيات متنوعة لعل أهمها هو تشريح النص اعتماداً على الثنائيات البنوية ثم استخدام الطرائق المباشرة والتأويلية لترجمة كلام من التعبير العقلياني والوجوداني للمرأة في حال الفقد والتشظي مروراً بأزمة الصراع الداخلي وانتهاء بتحقيقها لمسألة التنامي الذاتي في مواجهة قدر العزلة والوحدة.

1. Introduction :

In this paper I opt to translate into English a tragedy, (2004) ⁽¹⁾ رؤية written by the Saudi playwright Moussa Abu Abdullah (b 1972) in the Eastern region in Saudi Arabia. It is the region that witnessed in the neighboring countries the traces of the Gulf war (1990) and the Launch of War on Iraq (2003). Aiming to communicate with the world, the translation of [Vision] seeks to promote cultural dialogue through drama and theatre.

The one-act play focuses on the state of women in their predicament of loss and fragmentation in wartime, their strife and finally resilience after war. [Vision] delineates in both Modern Standard Arabic and Khaliji spoken Arabic modes of expression of women who are immersed in grief but yet aspire for self-assertiveness. Their allegorical songs recount the Classical elegiac poetry of Arab women in their adulation of the lost beloved. It is the memory of the lost son and husband cherished in the first three songs. Those Khaliji songs embrace the cultural milieu integrated within the dramatic plot. Diverse linguistic and dramatic techniques in prose and verse along with audio and visual effects are employed. In the translation process, the translator may ponder on those choices listed by van den Broeck of “viewing drama as literature or as an integral part of a theatrical production.” ⁽²⁾ To communicate with the world through closet drama and stage performance, I refer to those methods utilized in Arabic-English literary translations where varieties of Arabic are incorporated rhetorically.

2 . Prose and Verse in Drama Translation :

In her translations of English and Arabic literature, Fatma Moussa Mahmoud seeks to introduce “the public of one of them to the other, drawing parallels, contrasts, working out common grounds.” ⁽³⁾ In her translation of the “switching between verse and prose” in Shakespeare’s King Lear, Fatma Mahmoud chooses to let “characters deliver their lines in either formal classical (fushā) Arabic or colloquial. By doing so, she allows “full scope of the richness, density and drama of language.” ⁽⁴⁾ In other words, the translator’s task aims to seek a method to retain the cultural perspective. In Shakespearean scenes where cultural reference does not exist in Arabic, Fatma Mahmoud turns to look “for an equivalent” giving attention to “how many ‘foreign’ elements she would keep in the text.” ⁽⁵⁾ The search for an equivalence in translating Arabic folk colloquial songs constitutes a further challenge when the translator endeavors to “retain the cultural ambiance of the source text” aiming at “accentuating the emotions and experiences shared by both cultures.” ⁽⁶⁾ To mediate between the two cultures in the field of theatre, “the translation of drama is never complete until it’s been produced.” According to Fatma Mahmoud, “the stage is the thing.” ⁽⁷⁾ Thus, it may be advisable in this translation to select means to communicate cultural codes signified by formal and spoken Arabic, to target recipient; reader and audience.

Regarding Saudi closet drama, none of the local play texts are included in Modern Arabic Drama: An Anthology. ⁽⁸⁾ theatre, a brief account has been given by Andrew Hammond, in Popular Culture in the Arab World: Arts, Politics, and the Media, on the “passion religious plays of the Shi’ite community in the east.” ⁽⁹⁾ [Vision] is among those

plays written in the Eastern region to shed light on Khaliji women and their modes of expression in wartime.

3- *Cultural Approach and Arabic Varieties :*

In translating Arabic literature, the choice between the classical and the colloquial grows crucial. The latter has been argued to hold an extended version of “classical Arabic language, the foil against which it exists.”⁽¹⁰⁾ Such a “variety of Arabic” is a concern to M. M. Enani who proposes a cultural approach.⁽¹¹⁾ His approach gestures at the kinds of “archaic”, the classical (fushā), the Modern Standard Arabic, the formal, and the spoken. Enani argues that the transference of the meaning in “the spoken varieties (Egyptian, Syrian, North African)” underscores the significance of the insinuation of the cultural along with “the structural and formal aspects of these ‘languages’.”⁽¹²⁾ However, in Arabic-English translations, translators may tend to the process of “approximation, paraphrase or rewrite” the sense in the source texts.⁽¹³⁾ Solely concerned with the sense, the translator may ignore those stylistic devices which feature Arabic literature and language.

4. *Arabic Varieties as Binary Oppositions :*

The translation of [Vision] involves the analysis of plot, theme, characterization and techniques. Kinds of Arabic are among those techniques which construct the dramatic structure in the play. The linguistic interplay between the Modern Standard Arabic and the spoken Khaliji is noteworthy. Language in the play wavers between prose and verse to create the rising effect through thematic interchange. The transference of idiomatic and rhetoric language, in the two varieties of Arabic, the standard and the Khaliji, tends to Enani’s cultural approach.

Acculturation seems advisable in the conveyance of theme, plot and aesthetic devices. The Translator’s Preface, Glossary and footnote are means of acculturation to enhance the graspability of the source plot. The Translator’s Preface, may introduce cultural and social ideologies incorporated in the plot. In the Preface, the translator may forward an analysis of thematic development of the sense of awakening in local woman. Glossary, finale, attached to the target text, defines those limited foreignized words retained in the target version. Footnotes, also, provides further elucidation for specific words in particular contexts.

[Vision] observes a constant interchange between the two kinds of language, the “Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)” defined as “the modern simplified version of CA [Classical Arabic] used today” and the Khaliji Arabic, the colloquial commonly used in countries overlooking the Gulf. Discrepancies in their functions are signaled by Enani’s Cultural Approach in Translating Arabic.

the famous division of Arabic into ‘classical’ *الفصحي* and ‘colloquial’ . . . *العامية* . . . The former has been renamed Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) - and defined as the written language used in all branches of learning and the media all over the Arab world

with insignificant local variations . . . The latter has been renamed ‘local Arabic’ and described according to the place where it is spoken - Egyptian Arabic, Syrian Arabic etc. ⁽¹⁴⁾

While Enani argues that the local Arabic dialect is the language of “thought”,⁽¹⁵⁾ Al Qahtani elaborates that dialects “are spoken in “soap operas, in cartoons, and in folk literature.” In fact, Arabic dialects may be considered the native languages since “children acquire them, and not MSA, at home.”⁽¹⁶⁾ In other words, the colloquial or dialect is the source, store and venue of local tradition.⁽¹⁷⁾ However, the colloquial or vernacular has been observed by Clifford E. Landers as a medium that “often denotes a supposedly substandard” or ‘inferior speech pattern varying in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, or syntax from the societally accepted norm ”.⁽¹⁸⁾ In the Arab world, Hammond argues that colloquial Arabic is not only the spontaneous medium for man’s thought, but it is an everyday version of the Classical Arabic “with its immense, rich and diverse vocabulary and grammatical possibilities” that proceed to coin further words constantly.⁽¹⁹⁾ This linguistic aspect of Arabic colloquial extends to KA, in [Vision], in terms of pronunciation and vocabulary. In this translation study, I draw attention to the complementary alternating relationship between the formal and the colloquial, between MSA and KA in the dramatic structure.

The opening MSA stage directions describe the outward landscape and the advent of characters in a long Arabic compound sentence. The single nominal sentence is ample with the conjunctive Arabic of association *و* action verbs and pauses. Direct translation of numerous source action verbs seeks to retain them in order to form complete meaningful sentences in the TT. By doing so, pauses in the source nominal sentence will be redundant and accordingly deleted. The repetition of Arabic adjective *محطم* literally “shattered” may be conveyed through such synonyms as “broken”, “crushed” and “flattened”.

The offstage voice launches a song marking the switch from MSA meticulous depiction of location and surroundings to the audio KA summoning of the beloved. In this regard, a shift is initiated in the subject matter from the outward to the inward. This formal linguistic shift resulting in thematic rising effect helps the translator in selecting the translation method. Inspired by Landers’ question “Is it the word, the sentence, the paragraph, or none of the above?”⁽²⁰⁾ I venture to look at the ST dramatic structure as though built of MSA and KA linguistic units incorporating binary oppositions. They are “culturally widespread pairings of concepts that are seen as part of the deep structure underlying the surface features of major texts.”⁽²¹⁾ Referring to binary oppositions in the Structuralist literary theory enables the translator to convey the structural development of the plot. The structural proceeding from the outside world to the inside world and back again is a dramatic technique that features the play with “the intensity of the experience” in the life of the two women.⁽²²⁾

[Vision] observes thematic markers regarding the outward and the inward. Among syntactic, lexical, morphological, or phonological markers, the repetition entailed in the play is structural.⁽²³⁾ It is the repetition of an alternating pattern between MSA outside

happenings and KA inside adjustment in notable “vertical translation units, ‘VTU.’” Conveyance of those units seeks to retain cohesion in the linguistic “surface level” and to establish coherence in thematic “cognitive level.”⁽²⁴⁾ It may be imperative to opt for diverse translation techniques and strategies in each unit.

5) Acculturation of Arabic Mawwal :

The end of the first MSA unit signals the beginning of a subsequent mawwal heard in the background. This new structural unit commences the emotional sense in the play. Arabic Mawwal may be defined as an idiosyncratic colloquial “poetic form which can only exist within the boundaries of its own language” to denote the yearning for the lost and the unattainable.⁽²⁵⁾ The translation of lines in mawwal poses several challenges in form and structure where direct translation proves inapt. Foreignizing the word mawwal involves an acculturation technique incorporated by the use of Glossary to describe its form and function.

Solutions to the problem of translating allegorical poetry have been a subject for debate to scholars of rhetoric. Al Jāhiz, the learned Arab in philology and poetry, claims for the significance of “clear meaning in concise structure” in the translated version.⁽²⁶⁾ To retain clarity within the particular poetic form of mawwal, solution may be suggested in Edwin Gentzler’s argument. Gentzler pinpoints that translators may “capture the sense of the original in an analogous rather than identical form, one that functions in a similar fashion within the target culture.”⁽²⁷⁾ Form, in mawwal, cultivates antithesis and homonym within rhymed lines. Rhyme, in Arabic mawwal, serves no less role than marking “a completion, a rounding of the line” to accentuate the emotional yearning in “the poem as a whole.”⁽²⁸⁾ Rhyme is rather significant in the target staged translation to reinforce the rhythmical tunes.

Free semantic translation opts to communicate the paradox generated by “fire” in the nominal sentence in the first line in the poem. To conform to the target sentence structure, the verb “set” is added to transfer the tangible and the intangible “fire” embraced in the homonym. The tangible “fire” signals the outside war while the rhyming intangible “fire” alludes to the pain of loss. Antithesis, in the fourth line, endorses the contrast between the metaphoric “bliss” and the rhyming hell, “fire”.

Oh, fire of my beloved, you set fire
That burns my heart, yet blazes in fire
I perish inside day after day
Mahdi by you I had bliss without fire

An explanation of the immense grief experienced by the local woman at the death of a husband or the son may be recounted in The Translator's Preface. Devastated by be-

reavement, Arab women reflect their agony in poetry. The Preface introduces the local ideology that the death of a male family member signals to woman the loss of the sponsor and caretaker. Family is prominent in the Arab mindset and it is nominated people's first priority in their "means of self-identification." In James Zogby's polls, Arab respondents rank the family prior among those of "city, country, religion, Arab and the social status." ⁽²⁹⁾

The Translator's Preface may, also, introduce a brief analysis of the play reflecting on women's attempts to obtain rational justification for their involvement in the vicious war. They engage themselves in recollections of their former social roles. Aided by verbal discussions, both Aisha and Zainab are capable of looking at other perspectives in life. They venture a new step in their life when they take off their black mournful scarves, throw them and tread on them. Moreover, Aisha resolves to pack her woes and sorrows and throw them in a deep sea. The two women not only acknowledge loss, but also aspire for a new beginning. When the conflict created by the birth of Aisha's new baby reaches climax, the desolate Zainab turns to asides for consolation. No longer, Aisha's son Badr departs leaving the two women in solitude and acceptance of fate.

Glossary seems a proper technique to define foreignized names in the TT. Arabic Proper names are indicative, therefore their denotations are enlisted to promote the cultural practice. Mawwal and čišq are other names glossed in an attempt for acculturation. In their translation critique, both Enani and Sirkku Aaltonen endorse acculturation. Enani proposes acculturation in translating the "idiomatic modes" to transfer the effect of the discourse in Arabic in spite of the fact that "ideas will always remain foreign." ⁽³⁰⁾ In her search for "compatibility" through "Productive Reception" in theatre, Aaltonen chooses acculturation to rewrite the foreign play "through some elements as if coming from the indigenous theatre and society." ⁽³¹⁾ The transference of [Vision] travels across Arab borderlines to the Western readership, hence the use of Glossary and footnotes is advisable to retain those local signifiers however 'foreign' they may appear.

Direct translation resumes to rewrite the MSA unit which depicts the role of Mahdi ⁽³²⁾ in Zainab's life. In the outside world, Mahdi appears, in the projected flashback, to be the husband accompanying her in the wedding procession. Footnotes, in this regard, are means of acculturation to clarify the relationship between Zainab and those men, husband and son, approaching her showing care and affection. The remorseful tone is intensified in the following KA song.

ظنيت تبقى ذخر
لكبرى و شيباتي ..
وأشوف فيك المنى
تفتح إضاءة من خلف زينب يظهر فيه «محمد» يقترب من والدته وينزل بالقرب من والدته
ويضع يده على يدها ..
وأحلامها أحلامي
وأنخاك تقرا على
روحى بليلهم ..

تنظر له وهو يقوم عنها مبتعداً خارجاً من شمال المسرح
 ما ظنني تنتهي
 يا ضئولة أفادي .. (4-5)

Zainab's elegiac song retrieves the lamenting tone. The transference of these lines lays great demand on the translator's imagination and intuition. Susan Basnett in Translation Studies argues "the vitalist function of the imagination" to transfer "the individual poet's world vision" which might include «a metaphysical» or "a revolutionary ideal." ⁽³³⁾ Provided with emotive imagination, the translator seeks to communicate the ST metaphysical connection highlighted in Zainab's song. It is the local mother's wish to have metaphysical connection with her son after her death through his prayers. Scholars of translation have cherished intuition to reach a "shared culture." ⁽³⁴⁾ Allusion to Zainab's metaphysical aspiration is embedded in highly rhetorical song. Therefore intuition may aid the translator to reproduce the poetic song in an externalized literary version perceived independently in the target culture. ⁽³⁵⁾ In this regard, imagination and intuition seem appropriate tools to communicate specific ideological concerns. For example, when parents lose their son in the indigenous society, they lose their spring of assistance and blessings both in old age and after death. If intuition spurs the translator to "spell out more clearly what we mean by what we say" free semantic translation proves adequate. ⁽³⁶⁾

Enani, who tends to "intuition as occasioned by the text" in his cultural approach in translating Arabic, argues that "the factor that determines" translator's choice in relying on intuition "is individual, not contextual or situational." ⁽³⁷⁾ The translator's intuition, in this paper, contends to convey the psychological state of a mother, who sways between hope and disappointment. The Arabic metaphor *يا ضئولة أفادي* literally means "you, a bit of my heart". The "non-obvious likeness" between the son and the piece of the heart may not be liable to the mere conversion to a target simile as proposed by James Dickins. The conversion may make the metaphor "less immediate and powerful." ⁽³⁸⁾ Furthermore, the simile will forsake the rhyme which is a pervasive feature in colloquial Arabic poetry.

Instead of the 'downtoning' in metaphor translation suggested by Dickins, I tend to the ST context and the rhyme in the selection of an equivalent. ⁽³⁹⁾ The metaphor of the "piece of my heart" is converted to "my heart needs" to retain the rhyme and to cohere, at the same time, with "locks", "hopes", "bless" and "needs" as key words to deliver the vulnerable state of the woman after losing her home and family. The source alliteration in *أحلاماً أحلامي* literally "the sweetest of them are my dreams" is retrieved in the TT when translated to "finest of my fancy".

I thought you'd be my fortune
 in old age and grey locks
 to fulfill my hopes,
 and finest of my fancy
 I long foresaw you'd bless

my soul in nights fully
Never deemed you'd perish
you, my heart needs

The advent of the son's specter is signaled by MSA stage directions and is translated directly. The transference of the outward explosion combines in one unit the departure of the specter of Zainab's son and the arrival of Aisha, another devastated female survival. Aisha's advent onstage embarks the dialogue between two strange women. Their verbal exchange extends the translation unit of the outside to include their KA outspokenness.

Direct translation of the KA dialogue between Zainab and Aisha involves slight stylistic changes. Third-person singular pronoun in the ST is replaced with names of characters to avoid referential confusion. The second change undertaken is ascribed to a feature in the Arabic colloquial where the negative form is usually used in formulating questions. Therefore, the negative is directly modified into the interrogative for the sake of semantic equivalence in the translated text. To maintain Aisha's repulsive note in لا نظر عيني .. لا .. يا عمرى .. “no” may be repeated consecutively to stress her assertive disapproval. Question and exclamation marks are added in the closet target [Vision] and intonated in the staged version. Lexical replacement and addition along with stylistic modification are means of acculturation in rewriting women's everyday-life conversation. The concluding line in the dialogue unit holds a slight metaphoric replacement of “eyesight” meant by نظر عيني with “pearl of my eyes.”

Translator's intuition is considered, also, when cultural clues signify the expression of motherly love. Zainab and Aisha metaphorically refer to their sons. Lexical فؤاد which means "heart" is used differently by the two women. Zainab addresses Mohammed cordially as ياضنة أفادی translated formerly "heart needs". The context in Aisha's reference to her son indicates her acute loss. Metaphoric description of the death of the son in شمعة فؤادي ذوت literally "candle of my heart faded" may be reproduced in "light faded away." In desperation, Aisha retorts to KA poetic mode to express her attachment to the invaluable son. Her song resonates with "the charge and redolence and burdened evocativeness" pervasive in Arabic classical poetry. ⁽⁴⁰⁾ Free semantic translation of the poem helps convey metaphoric density in the allusion to the praiseworthy son. Three key images recount the loss, the conception and the upbringing of the child. Literal equivalents in "fading candle of my heart", "fruit of my abdomen" and "plant I planted" fail "metaphorical congruence" cherished formerly in Arabic-English translation. ⁽⁴¹⁾ And thus, I tend to acculturation in translating these images aiming at "easy graspability" through the selection of "well known words in preference to rare ones" in the TT. ⁽⁴²⁾ Therefore, "heart" is replaced by "light", "abdomen" is replaced by "I bore" and "plant" is replaced by "seeds I sow". Free semantic translation of the metaphoric song retains emotive sense and rhyme.

يا ثمر بطني بدر.. يا غنة التجديد..
زرع زرعته غدت فيه الأماني تفيض

Light faded away and grief overflows
With you Badr, my soul rips and goes
You, Badr the fruit I bore, the hope of tomorrow
Hope in seeds I sow long grows

Transferring Aisha's metaphoric lines conveys mother's overflowing grief and exaltation. Intuitive translator may replace "you, the song of renovation", literal translation of يا غنة التجديد with "the hope of tomorrow". The rhyming pun in تفيض poses a crucial problem in translating the poetic song. This Arabic polysemic word means both "increase", in the first and fourth lines and "dies" in the second line. To communicate meaning and rhyme in the pun, the wordplay may be compensated according to the argument that "a pun that is not translated as a pun still yields its information content."⁽⁴³⁾ Thus such words as "overflows" and "grows" may be selected to reproduce the meaning of "increase". The other synonym, "flies away", in the Arabic pun تفيض may be rewritten "goes" for the sake of rhyme congruence.

After the KA emotional song, the translation moves into another unit to expose the outward in both stage directions and women's verbal interaction. Zainab and Aisha's queries as well as answers regarding their current situation lead them into awareness of their relatedness to their surroundings. Commentary on the development in these female characters may be embraced in The Translator's Preface. Immersed in pity and pain, Aisha examines those scattered bits and pieces of her son's body. She tells Zainab that the explosive war tears her soul to pieces. Direct translation articulates women's reflections on their social obligations. Happily they commemorate minute details in their former motherhood practices. Stage directions complement women's exchanges when the switch to a flashback projects one of those unforgettable moments in a mother's life. Aisha appears to listen to her son's appeal to get a bicycle asking her to persuade the father to buy him one. The recollection of those moments brings about the scene of Aisha rocking her child to sleep chanting a folk song.

Line-for-line translation with further explanation attached in footnotes and Glossary convey cultural undertones in the song. Voicing those local manly attractive features in women's poetry is among noteworthy cultural practices.

يا أسمـر اللـون صـايـني عـلـيـك جـنـون
وـالـعـشـق يـبـغـي مـرـافـهـ ما يـرـيـد جـنـون
وـالـعـشـق لـو تـبـتـلـي بـه نـاقـقـتـي حـنـتـ
وـالـعـشـق لـو تـبـتـلـي بـه عـجـوزـ من القـبـر فـرـتـ
وـالـعـشـق لـو يـبـتـلـي بـه صـبـين يـتـلـي الـقـرـآنـ
هـيـتـ كـتـابـه وـرـاحـ يـتـصـوـخـ الـحـضـرـانـ ..
وـالـعـشـق لـو تـبـتـلـي أـبـنـيـه مـنـ الـهـوـيـ أـنـتـ

You, dark⁽⁴⁴⁾ and handsome, your love taints me with lunacy
 Love pleases pity but never lunacy
 When love hits my she-camel,⁽⁴⁵⁾ she craves
 When love hits the aged woman, she from death escapes
 When love hits a devout boy reading Qur'an
 He'll dump the Book and tend so urbane
 When love hits a maiden, her virtue she'll never save

Like modern-day Arabic texts, [Vision] reverberates [çišq], the long acknowledged theme in Arabic tradition. [Çišq] is employed variably in the song to signify love, yearning, life-giving force and absolute infatuation. Definition of [çišq] in the Glossary quotes the connotative diversity in the word in Arabic culture. However, “love” is selected in this translation to limit [çišq] to the maternal attentive love for a child. This song praises the lost son and expresses the voluminous passion that reaches the extent of insanity. In her articulation of her fanatical love, she alludes to traces of love, in a she-camel, in an old woman, in a young boy, and in a maiden, when all are inflicted by [çišq]. The repetition of “When love hits” is written in the source Arabic nominal sentence. Acculturation observes structural modification to maintain the conditional phrase which exhibits the transformation engendered by love in the she-camel and in human beings; both old and young, men and women.

A new translation unit rewrites directly women's outward attitude of solidarity in moments of danger and fear. Left away with no shelter, they get together and embark their dialogue. They disclose their rational uneasiness through posing questions about the darkness around them and the possibility of a sunshine. Zainab explains to Aisha that their situation is created by a war which merely imposes death, starvation and suffering on human beings. To Aisha's inquisition why war exists and why they are involved, Zainab answers that some people wage war against those who neither care nor want it. To what might happen to them, Zainab gives two probabilities; one is to perish in this war, the other is to live and die in another war. Direct translation may undertake minimum strategies of replacement and addition to rewrite concise target statements. The source phrase “half of what we weep” in Zainab's remark is replaced by “half of it”. And “even” is added to render the sarcastic tone in her utterance.

تقوم زينب من مكانها وتتجه لخلف المسرح المظلم وهي تتكلّم
 زينب يا ليت نضحك كثُر ما نبكي.. نص ما نبكي ..
 زينب .. (9) عائشة

Zainab leaves her place and moves to the dark side muttering.
 Zainab Wish we laugh as much as we weep . . . even, half of it.
 Aisha Zainab . . .

The sudden change in roles between Aisha and Mahdi, described in MSA stage directions, functions as a dramatic technique when the specter of the deceased husband appears to soothe her pains and strengthen her bond with the past. Disillusioned by the recurrent visits of the lost husband and son, the war survivor seems incapable to free

herself from the overwhelming past.

By investigating their situation, Aisha and Zainab endeavor to find answers for an illogical war. Their verbal engagement lead them into recollections of their past social responsibilities. Aisha acknowledges that she feels relieved of those unavoidable visits to relatives and acquaintances along with those rules set by the husband on her outings and plans. When reminded by Zainab of those happy moments, Aisha, shortly, retorts to nostalgic accounts of the child, the husband, the cuisine and the neighborhood. Zainab recalls those old good days which were ample with festive gatherings in wedding parties and memorial services. Captured by words of death again, they are willing to affirm it through mournful costume.

6. Translability of the climatic awakening :

Those paradoxical innuendoes to death in Aisha's song considers specific translation strategies. Her following song discloses the awakening in Aisha, to the different roles played by death in the human life; a joy-giver, a joy-taker, a mentor or a mediocre. Aisha's indicative name is glossed to signify her insightful song where lexical markers مأتم and فرح are repeated. Both فرح and مأتم are polysemous words. The first word in the line مأتم may be translated in «funeral», «death» or «grief». The rhyming word فرح functions differently in the four lines. Earlier in the poem الفرح is a noun literally translated in «the joy of life», «delight» or «happiness» while in the ending line فرح is a verb literally “to celebrate” or “to enjoy”. The fact that the concise rhymed lines begin with مأتم and end with فرح poses several translation problems among two languages which are “as relatively different culturally and linguistically as English and Arabic.”⁽⁴⁶⁾ (Dickins et al. 2002, 146) The translator's task, in this poem, focuses on the choice of equivalents which retain the awakening resulted by the paradoxical sense within the vertical parallel between “death” and “joy”. A note on the implicative paradoxical and parallel relationship between death and joy in Aisha's song may be explained in The Translator's Preface to aid line-for-line translation of the song. I opt to choose the word “joy” following “death” to render the paradox in the first line. It is paradoxically hopeful when the joy is created by death. Second line signals death which eradicates joy off people's life while the rest of the song alludes to its grip on human life.

مأتم يجي بعده الفرح
ومأتم أخذنـا الفـرح
لا قبلـه لا بعـده فـرح ..
مـأتم مشـينا نـودـعـه ..
ومـأتم حـضرـ فـينا وـفـرح ..

Death followed by joy
Death sipped our joy
N'er before nor after be joy
Death we paced to bid farewell
Death visits us and we fall for its ploy

Among the several implications of the ending verb فَحَّ I opt for “ploy” to convey the satirical tone that “death” joyfully mocks us. In spite of the fact that the recurrence of “death” in four lines in the poem underscores its predominance in Aisha’s life, her metaphoric use of joy succeeding death, in the beginning of the song foresees an inward transformation. Verbal acknowledgement of the nearby “death” incites Zainab’s defying outward action described in the succeeding translation unit.

Zainab takes off her black garment ⁽⁴⁷⁾ pulling it slowly and putting it on the ground. She treads on it walking all the way to the end. She stops, looks at Aisha and walks towards her. Zainab stands before Aisha and quietly draws the black cloth, drops it on the ground and walks on it. She points to Aisha inviting her to move forward.

Zainab is determined to abandon the restraining grief by simply discarding the black garb. Her assertiveness to free herself, followed by Aisha, from the sorrowful past is transferred in direct translation. Along with the outward physical stage directions, their declaration of hopes for a new start is incorporated in the same translation unit. In their new phase, the two war survivors are able to detach themselves from their past. Their dialogue begins to contain their future plans. Zainab expresses great hopes to establish a family of two mothers and a son. Each woman justifies her preference whether a baby should be a boy or a girl. Zainab, who seeks consolation for her loss, wishes that Aisha’s baby will be a boy. But Aisha explains her preference for a girl who is astoundingly different. To convey her metaphoric image of the girl, a shift to acculturation is entailed in the translation of وردة literally “flower” and بريحانة literally «basil». The proper equivalent to “beauty” and “sweet fragrance” may be included in “a rose” to signal her delightful presence in parents’ life. Whatever the baby may be, Zainab still wants a boy “if God wills.” ⁽⁴⁸⁾

Direct translation of their outspoken wishes marks the transformation in the two women and their relatedness to their past. They are able now to visualize and express those hardships. Zainab recalls those days when she wanted a daughter and her husband “Mahdi” wanted a son. Aisha’s former motherhood experience was quite different when the physical labor led her to sway between ache and love. The contradictory feelings towards her first born child are expressed literally as “pain . . . pity . . . compassion . . . love . . . care”. Capable to voice those feelings at odds, Aisha rationally acknowledges her strife and potentiality and, also, avows her possessions and intentions. Detached from the war, Aisha, first, then Zainab resume woman’s social role in the local society. Like their female ancestors, the two survivors never hesitates to recite poetry, recount stories of high morals, sing inspiring songs and exchange political views.⁽⁴⁹⁾ This social background of the Arab woman may be enclosed in The Translator’s Preface to highlight the recognition in local woman of her dignified state.

Awakening in Aisha culminates when she expresses her idiomatic vision of her existence. The following poetic unit involves free semantic translation to rewrite Aisha’s lexical collocation, repetition and pauses. Aisha moves inward to assess her actual presence and being. She repeatedly announces the possession of a living “green heart”.

With a living heart, she is liable to start anew after collecting her unfulfilled dreams, pastimes as well as pains in a box. Aisha rids herself of the restrictive belongings and throws away her unlocked box in a dark sea.

أنا عندي .. أنا عندي قلب أخضر
أجمع في——ه بقايا الروح .
وأح——ط أمالٍ وأحلامي
وألعابٍ .. أجمعه——ا بصندوقي
وحطه في سق——م لجروح ..
وصندوقي بلا مفت——اح ..
رميته في بحر ظلمه .. بحر ظلمه
سوداده موئ——ل ليلي ..
تدخل زينب م——ع عائشة
بحر ح——د الشقى عندي
ووسطه ياحببى الن——وح ..
حسبت الن——وح يكفينى
ويروى وحش——ة سلني
أتاري إن——ه يهينيني
على م——سراح مني الروح ..

I have . . . I have a beating heart ⁽⁵⁰⁾
It holds remains of my soul
I put dreams and hopes
And toys . . . I save them in my box
I hold in pain and howl
My box holds no bolt at all
I dropped it in a dark . . . dark sea
Unlike my dark nights
Zainab joins Aisha.
Sea with wicked shore nearby stands
In its middle, my beloved, there is howl
I thought that grief myself wraps
And soothe my life droughts
But amazingly grief my losses it calms
All that is absent in my soul

The translation of Aisha's newly acquired vigorous and lively perspective on life diverges into acculturation. Eagerness to live is connoted by the source collocation **قلب أخضر**, literally, “green heart”. This literal translation fails to convey the source emotive implication when “green heart” in English means “youth and inexperience.” ⁽⁵¹⁾ According to “syntactic configuration”, this collocation is classified as “Adjective/-Noun.” ⁽⁵²⁾ So, the adjective “green” may be replaced by “beating” to indicate assertion

and determination. The strategy of substitution in collocation translation suggests “meaning for meaning translation” in search of equivalence.⁽⁵³⁾ Repetition of “I have” and “dark” confirms Aisha’s resolution. It is the darkness of the sea which is repeated twice to imply her determination to abandon her old box.

In addition to acculturation, free semantic translation allows, the rhyming feature in Arabic colloquial poetry. I choose to keep the rhyme in “soul”, an equivalent of الروح in two other lines ending in لجروح literally “pain” and in النوح literally “mourning”. The choice of “howl” may be an appropriate replacement to conform to target sentence structure and rhyme in both closet and stage versions. In the first eight lines Aisha expresses her straightforward tactics to overcome grief. When Zainab joins her in the song, they begin to be metaphoric in their description of the wicked “sea” in nominal sentences. In the TT, the verb “stands” is added for structural and rhythmical congruence conforming with “wraps” and “calms” in the song.

Direct translation of the dimming light onstage draws attention to Zainab who appears carrying Aisha’s new born baby. In her attempt to soothe the crying new-born baby, Zainab assumes him to be her own, takes him in her hands and puts him to sleep. Her KA lullaby resumes the need for acculturation in free translation technique. The key word in the song, يمه, is used in the indigenous society to address mothers, female elders or young children. Such a cultural endearment in يمه, is replaced by “baby”.

نام يمه هوه ... عن لكا يب والعلوه
 هوه هوه هوه ... عن لكا يب والعلوه
 نام يمه لولو عن لكي ب والعلوه
 لولو لولو لولو ... عن لكي ب والعلوه
 نام يمه لولو كستك العافية عرض وطول
 نام يمه لولو ... عدوك ياحبيبي دوم مخدول

Sleep baby hmmmmmm the bothering dog will go
 Hmmmmmm . . . the bothering dog will go

Sleep baby hmmmmmm . . . the bothering dog will go
 Hmmmmmm . . . the bothering dog will go

Sleep baby hmmmmmm . . . you’ll be ever vital
 Hmmmmmm . . . you’ll meet no rival

The subject-matter of the source lullaby is the loving and protective affection in mothers or in elder ladies in the family. In the free semantic translation, the salient translation problem construes in selecting the proper equivalents for repetitive sounds, words and phrases. In transferring the soothing inflection of Arabic هوه هوه هوه and لولو لولو لولو I opt for ”hmmmmmm” to avoid literal translation of «ho» and «lo» which might suggest other target denotations far from those in the ST. Due to the great similarity in the end-rhyme in the first two stanzas between عوه and عوه respectively, «go» is chosen

in the ending rhyme the first four lines. Like the source lullaby, the concluding couplet end in a different sound to indicate mother's wishful thinking.

Their talk about carrying the baby may be transferred directly to shed light on woman's emotional conflict in moments of custody. Zainab claims her maternal rights to carry and nurse him but soon she realizes that only his biological mother can feed him. Back to her senses, Zainab could verbalize, in asides, her regret for her heedless behavior towards Aisha's new son. Unconsciously Zainab calls him Mohammed. Direct translation conveys the outspoken fragmentation in Zainab who later asks for Aisha's pardon. Aisha, the mother reclaims her son to her bosom calling him "Badr". His name plays a symbolic role in the life of the two women since it means "the full moon". The name of Bard is glossed among other names of characters in the play. His birth enlightens their dark and lonesome life and yet accelerates sorrow in Zainab who "*fell down in the middle of the stage and a song is heard with tunes of zither.*"⁽⁵⁴⁾

In its commentary on life injustices, a sharp contrast is drawn in the final song heard offstage. It is the contrast that prepares for the question of destiny in regard to the privileged and the unprivileged in life.

دوبينا نزرع الجوده به____ اي البخت
 والغير ليمن زرع روس الجبال ارتحت
 دوبينا نزرع السمسسم ..سمسسم ويطلع ماش
 ونجاور الخير ..نحسبيه .. ويطلع لاش
 دوبينا نزرع الطيبة ونحصد مرار وصبر
 والغير ليمن زرع زرعه ث____واب وأجر (15)

We tried to water ours with all luck and fortune
 When others planted, mountain heads bent
 When we plant sesame, sesame we got none
 We sit by the good, to lean on, but goodness we got none
 We just sow the good and we reap grief and bitterness
 Yet others got holy reward and fairness

Free translation help retain the pitiful sense and sound. The lines in the song submit a satirical vision upon life. The song demonstrates literally the role of fate and fortune in "our" life no matter what "we" do. Ironically the poetic song articulates not only the inner pity in the less fortunate people but also the futility to put forth any further effort. Acculturation in form and content culminates when source nominal sentences are restructured in the target song to render the sense and rhyme in the series of parallels between "we" and "others".

Failing to understand the current conflict among the two women, Aisha ponders why would they live in incessant wars. When the outside war ceases, another rivalry war begins among the two women upon the child. She wonders why they grow hostile towards one another. Her rational attempt is best delivered directly in a separate unit to complete

the alternation between narrative and poetry as well as direct and free translation. While occupied with finding an answer to who started the war, the new “Badr” crawls out of his bed and exits. By the time his mother discovers his absence, he proves unreachable. Zainab candidly regrets her unconscious behavior. Aisha declares that “Badr” has gone away, however, Zainab believes him to be “Mohammad” who departs their life.

The play ends when an offstage voice states a well-known Arabic proverb “Precaution Never Spares Fate” to verbalize a common ideology on the futility of altering one’s fate. These two women would never escape a destiny they so long feared; a destiny of living a desolate barren life caused by either a contrived war or an accidental departure of the beloved. In their desperation, their modes of expression are song and dialogue. Song in the one-act tragedy develops from poetic elegies into joyous acknowledgment and finally through sudden resilience. In a male-authored play woman is trapped in a fate where she possesses no tools to free herself or go beyond loss and solitude.

7. Conclusion :

This translation study proposes some technicalities in the transference of an Arabic play relying on a cultural approach which intensifies varieties of Arabic and intuition. The significance of dramatic structure in the process of translation considers binary oppositions in alternating units. Alternation in [Vision], the translated product, dwells in different levels. First, the linguistic alternation is between the MSA and the KA. Second, the alternation is between the descriptive outside and implicative inside. Third, the alternation is in translation techniques between the direct and the free semantic. While direct translation rewrites the outward signaled by stage directions and dialogue, free translation reproduces the inward articulated in songs of different types. Aiming at cultural dialogue, acculturation by means of Preface, Glossary, footnotes and restructuring the lines is incorporated to produce [Vision] to the target reader and stage.

Nevertheless, to translate such a play, the translator recognizes that it is a mere vision whether real or limited but yet true.

8. Glossary :

Zainab	the aromatic graceful tree.
Aisha	the good-living woman
Mohammed	the praised
Mahdi	the guided
Badr	the full Moon
Mawwal	a type of poetic song originated in Iraq and later spread in the Arab World. It is composed in different number of lines; four, six or seven according to the native country. In Iraq, the quatrain is popular, while Egyptians developed the hexameter mawwal. Whatever the length of the poem it is used to verbalize in the local dialect the nostalgic yearning for the lost and the unattainable. Recollections of the glorious past construe the focal image in this traditional Arabic song where

such linguistic features as جناس, homonym, and طباق, antithesis are primary. This expressive poetic musical mode revolves around theme of love, praise, or admonition. It might be sung in accompaniment with zither or pipe.

Çiṣq: is the feeling of love that defines ten types and states of yearning and longing for the absent beloved. It may inflict ultimate transformation in disposition and behavior. Arabic tradition has acknowledged çiṣq in the she-camel as well. Such an overwhelming infatuation may lead man to insanity.⁽⁵⁵⁾

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(30) Enani, 53.

(31) Sirkku Aaltonen, *Time-Sharing on Stage: Drama Translation in Theatre and Society* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Lt, 2000), 55.

(32) Mahdi is Zainab’s lost husband while Mohammed is her lost son.

(33) Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies*, 3rd ed., (London and New York: Routledge, 2002) 68.

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(38) James Dickins, “Two models for metaphor translation.” *Target* 17, no 2 (2005), 231.

(39) *Ibid*, 250.

(40) Leila Ahmed, *A Border Passage: From Cairo To America-A Woman’s Journey* (London: Penguin Books, 2000) 254.

(41) Dickins, 227.

(42) Aaltonen, 42.

(43) Lefevere, 52.

(44) Dark complexion is a cultural well-known sign for valor and vehemence in men.

(45) In the nomadic life, the she-camel is renowned to be haunted by [çışq].

(46) Dickins, and et al., *Thinking Arabic Translation: A course in Translation Method: Arabic to English* (Routledge: London, 2002), 146.

(47) Wearing her black garment for long time gestures at her attempt to perpetuate her mourning state.

(48) Local ideology stresses that whatever God wills proves the best.

(49) Ferial Masry and Susan Chenard, *Running for all the Right Reasons: A Saudi-born Woman’s Pursuit of Democracy* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 19-20.

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