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Cross-Cultural Translation through Nawal El Saadawi's Works

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Cross-Cultural Translation through Nawal

El Saadawi's Works

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Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to shed light on issues related to cross cultural translation through the books of Nawal El Saadawi, the famous rebellious Egyptian writer. The main aim of the thesis is to answer the question "does writing and translating about culture, including its dark side, help in reforming the society or does it foster the stereotypes target audience might have in mind about the source culture?". In other words, should writers expose their societies in front of the "Other", or should they hide the truth and pretend to be the perfect society?

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To my parents, who made me what I am.

Introduction

Overview

Literature is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating forms of human expression; written words having excellence of form or essence or both, expressing timeless ideas of universal interest. Literature is a profound representation of the culture of origin. If the ideas expressed in literature are indeed timeless and universal, there arises a significant question of how to transfer meaning across the ages and across the earth. In this thesis, I will endeavor to respond to the latter of these questions, considering the cross-cultural journey of literature by means of translation. Perhaps the most important link between literature and translation is the "intercultural exchange" that occurs, since literature is a representation of a certain culture and translation is an attempt to transfer this culture to a different culture. The potential marriage of literature and translation; the mixture of science and art, theory and practice, beg a deeper inquiry into this matter, as well as an effort to try to find ways to bring them closer together.

In order to delve into cross-cultural translation, we need to clarify its definition, importance, related problematic issues and the role of the translator in dealing with it. The books of Nawal El Saadawi, the popular Egyptian author, provide an excellent case of practical examples to help clarify the theory while illuminating the various arguments and opinions about the issue of cross-cultural translation and about writing in general. Although El Saadawi writes in Arabic, her books are more widely read and disseminated in the West, creating a worldwide debate around her.

The fundamental question in this research is whether the translation of Nawal El Saadawi helps shed light on Arab society for people of the West, or does it foster stereotypes about Arabs? Other pertinent questions arise while examining the matter. The thesis aims at reaching an answer for this question and for many other relevant questions. In the final analysis, however, the answer depends on the perspective of the examiner; it is purely a matter of personal opinion backed up by one's educational, cultural, religious and social background

Thesis Structure

This thesis is divided into five chapters, including theoretical as well as practical considerations, beginning with general issues surrounding cross-cultural translation and finally reaching more concentrated and detailed aspects and analysis.

The first chapter presents a general translation theory, considering the definition of translation, along with different translation techniques with a look at the term "equivalence" and its connection to translation. I intended for this chapter to be general in order to lead the reader to a more specific topic which is cross-cultural translation and how it is reflected in Saadawi's translations.

The second chapter clarifies various translation theories using practical examples to arrive at the central issue of cross-cultural translation, paying special attention to the role of the translator in the matter. Here the spotlight is on Arabic to English translation as a real world example of cross-cultural translation, highlighting a number of problems facing translators. It introduces translation strategies and techniques that the translator can choose from while dealing with cultural problems during the translation process. I also attempt to answer in the second chapter a controversial question raised among translators and some other concerned people: "is translation or

a theoretical practical act?" i.e. is producing a successful translated text based on applying theories by translators or is it based on the skills of the experienced translators who do not necessarily hold a degree in translation but only depend on their experience? My aim here is to try to relate this issue to my study case and translation analysis.

The third chapter presents a biographical sketch of Nawal El Saadawi from birth to the present day emphasizing her achievements as well as the challenges she has faced in her lifetime.

The fourth chapter takes a more profound look at the subject of the thesis by examining the case of Nawal El Saadawi and why she was chosen to be my case study, and then considers two of her most popular novels, *Women at Point Zero* and *Fall of the Imam*, as examples. Here, we consider some of the general problematic issues facing translators of Arab literature, including translating names of places, types of food and special Islamic and cultural occasions that are mentioned in most of the Arab books, not only in Nawal's. It also takes a look at the significant cultural problems facing the translators of El Saadawi's works specifically.

The fifth and last chapter comprises the analysis and comments as it discusses how translators have dealt with the translation problems of Nawal's books arriving at certain conclusions regarding the validity of those translations along with my own suggestions where the translation was found ineffective therefore unsuccessfully done. This chapter is rather a practical one based on my own point of view and my comments and suggestions supported by theory.

Objectives of the Thesis

Throughout the thesis, I will endeavor to answer key questions facing Western readers of Nawal El Saadawi or other Arab authors, as well as professionals involved in the field of translation. The questions that arise could be as follows:

- Who chooses the topics authors write about? The author himself/herself, the source language readers or the target language readers?

- Does Nawal El Saadawi address Arab readers or Western readers in her books? In other words, does she write to be translated?

- Is it advantageous or disadvantageous to one culture to have its literature translated into other cultures?

- Must the translator be loyal to the source text or to the target text? Is it acceptable to make changes to the source text during the translation process?

- Are Arabs allowed to expose the negative sides of their societies: culture, traditions, customs, etc. to "other" cultures and societies?

- Does translation serve as an attempt to change stereotypes, or foster them? Do those stereotypes affect the topics writers write about?

- How should culturally and religiously sensitive books be translated for a foreign audience?

The answers to these questions are based on the personal opinions of writers, translators and audience regarding cross-cultural translation, on ways of looking at such matters; i.e. educational, social, religious and cultural background of the audience and on translation strategies adapted by the translator depending on the objective of the translation, nature of the text, target audience and time of translation. Indeed, the answers provided by the conclusion of my thesis are not etched in stone; rather they are my own educated opinions and suggestions concerning the issues at

hand. I will support my suggestions with input from my experience as a graduate student of the MA program in Translation and Interpreting at the American University of Sharjah, through my experience as a translator and finally within my attitude towards Nawal's literature from a female perspective. In other words, my reaction to El Saadawi's literature and its translation is somehow affected by the fact that I am a woman who belongs to the source society and culture and reads and responds to Nawal's writings from a liberal educated woman's point of view. Therefore, some readers and scholars might disagree with the opinions I will adapt. In the final analysis, there is no right or wrong answer, rather every reader is free to choose what to read; likewise, every author is free to choose the topics he/she writes about, and every translator is free to choose what and how to translate as long as he/she fulfills the translation requirements which could be the commitment to the employer (whether it is a free or employed translator), and objective of the translation (to let the target audience know about the source culture, for example and transfers the author's intended meaning and makes the translated text understandable to the target audience without making fundamental changes in the source text). All depends on what he/she is translating, to whom (the target audience), when (the time or age the translation takes place in) and why he/she is translating (purpose of translating).

Chapter 1

Translation: Definition and Strategies

1.1   Definition of Translation

In order to analyze the link between literature and translation including studying the cross-cultural translation as the connection between them, we have to define "translation" as a first step. The definition of "translation" will guide us through how to apply it to transfer different cultures to different parts of the world.

Many people who are not really aware of the principles of translation consider it to be some form of paraphrasing. By this reasoning, if a person is bilingual, then he/she, would inevitably be capable of translating any written or spoken material from and into either of the two languages. In fact, among translators, this method of word for word transfer is called literal translation, and can only be used in a limited number of texts without risking interference from the translator such as translating technical texts like manuals.

Translation, however, extends far beyond mere paraphrasing, although it does use paraphrasing to some extent. More than just the transfer of words only, translation includes the transfer of ideas, culture, atmosphere, hidden meaning, etc. It is the most powerful tool that permits the exchange of unlimited knowledge between different cultures. Translation began with the beginning of culture in the world; with the beginning of memory. Before any kind of media was established, translation was the first and only method to transfer science, literature, religion and more between the

furthest point in the east and the furthest point in the west. Beyond mere paraphrasing, however, what exactly is translation?

In one of his lectures in the American University of Sharjah, Faiq (2003) has presented a number of definitions of translation given by a number of scholars:

Foster, L (1958) defines translation as:

> The transference of the content of a text from one language into another bearing in mind that we cannot dissociate the content from the form.

For Foster, content is of vital importance, as translators must focus on the meaning rather than on the form.

Robin, C (1958) looks at translation as:

> The process by which a spoken or written utterance takes place in one language which is intended and presumed to convey the same meaning as a previously existing utterance in another language.

This definition unites the spoken and written utterances as parts of language.

Catford, I (1965) defines translation as:

> The process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another or the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent material in another.

In his first definition, he makes no mention of transferring the content of the source text during the process of translation; rather he simply presents translation as a matter of transferring words only. In his second definition, Catford mentions the word "equivalent" which implies that the source text and the target text both have the same form and informative value.

Nida, E and Taber, C. (1969) explain translation as:

> Consisting in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and second in terms of style.

Producing a "natural equivalent" means that the translation should not feel foreign to the target reader, therefore what is considered the natural equivalent of any given text changes according to the culture and environment of the target readers.

Brislin (1976) offers a simple definition of translation:

> The transfer of thoughts and ideas from a source language into a target language.

Moreover than being a matter of mere words; translation involves ideas and thoughts which make it a complex profession that can not be performed by any bilingual. Although ideas are essential in the process of translation, other aspects are also transferred.

Suzan Bassnett (1991) provides a broader explanation:

> What is generally understood as translation involves the rendering of a source text into the target language so as to ensure that the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and the structure of the source language will be preserved as closely as possible but not that the target language structure will be seriously distorted.

The translator is responsible for preserving the identity of each language. He/she can modify the source text without causing it to lose its spirit, thereby preventing the impact of the source text from being delivered to the target reader.

Vermeer (1986) defines translation as:

> Information offered in a language (z) and culture (Z) which imitates information in language (a) and culture (A) so as to fulfill the desired function. That means that a translation is not the transcoding of words and sentences from one language into another, but a complex action in which the translator provides information about a text under functional, cultural and linguistic conditions and in a new situation, whereby formal characteristics are limited as far as possible.

The key words in the process of translation according to Vermeer are "culture", "function" and "language" as they pertain to the meaning of the source text. For him, grammar is less important. What is important is to deliver the same function that the source text provides to the source readers by keeping culture in mind as Cary E. (1999) says that translation should respect the source and target languages, the source and target readers, the relationships between the source and target audience, their psychological and emotional background and the circumstances regarding time and place.

Finally, Newmark (1988) looks at translation as:

> A craft consisting in an attempt to replace a written message and/or a statement in one language by the same message in another language.

By using the word "craft," Newmark ensures that translation is an art that not every bilingual person is capable of performing perfectly.

If we look up the word "translation" in a dictionary we find definitions similar to "To give the sense or equivalent of in another language; change into another language″(F&W, 1422) or "carry over into one's own or another language". These shallow definitions present translation as a mechanical task requiring limited talent, education and experience. Thrasher, (1998) quotes Francis Steels as he defines translation:

> The liberty taken by many so-called translators is seen in their violation of the limits of true translation in distinction from paraphrase. Any technical definition of `translation' must emphasize the meticulous accuracy with which such limits must be observed, especially by scholars who profess to believe in scriptural revelation. A translation should convey as much of the original text in as few words as possible, yet preserve the original atmosphere and emphasis. The translator should strive for the nearest approximation in words, concepts, and cadence. He should scrupulously avoid adding words or ideas not demanded by the text. His job is not to expand or to explain, but to translate and preserve the spirit and force of the original... Not just ideas, but words are important; so also is the emphasis indicated by word order in the sentence.

1.2 Classifications of Translation

Riazi. (2003) classifies translation into three types: translation at the word level; translation at the sentence level; and conceptual translation. Word-to-word translation can be used in a limited number of cases involving proper names such as United Nations, Ministry of Education, etc. Obviously this method is not used to translate

longer texts because the target text would be difficult to understand. Riazi states that the only difference between the word to word translation and the sentence level translation is the application of grammar as the translator links translated words using grammatical phrases.

Riazi mentions other methods suggested by other scholars. For example, he mentions Newmark's (1988) opinion saying that there are two more methods of translation which are the communicative and semantic approaches. Communicative approach aims at delivering the same effect of the source readers to the target readers. This quality of the kind of translation is easily measured through comparing the impact on the target readers to the impact on the source readers. The semantic approach aims at delivering the same contextual meaning of the source text. If we come to compare between the two types of translation, we can notice that the semantic translation is precise but might not communicate well with the readers, whereas the communicative translation communicates well but might not be that precise. The sign that says "أطفال يلعبون" can be translated semantically into "children playing" and communicatively into "Drive slowly" or "Mind the playing children".

Munday. (2001) offers a table that shows the differences between Newmark's semantic and communicative translation based on different parameters.

Parameter	Semantic translation	Communicative translation
Transmitter/addressee focus	Focus on the thought processes of the transmitter as an individual; should only help TT reader with connotations if they are a crucial part of message	Subjective, TT reader focused, oriented towards a specific language and culture
Culture	Remains within the SL culture	Transfers foreign elements into the TL culture

Time and origin	Not fixed in any time or local space; translation needs to be done anew with every generation	Ephemeral and rooted in its own contemporary context
Relation to ST	Always "inferior" to ST; "loss" of meaning	May be "better" than the ST; "gain" of force and clarity even if loss of semantic contents
Use of form of SL	If ST language norms deviate, then this must be replicated in TT; "loyalty" to ST author	Respect for the norm of the SL, but overriding "loyalty" to TL norms
Form of TL	More complex, awkward detailed, concentrated; tendency to overtranslate	Smoother, simpler, clearer, more direct, more conventional; tendency to undertranslate
Appropriateness	For serious literature, autobiography, 'personal effusion', any important political (or other) statement	For the vast majority of texts, e.g. non-literary writing, technical and informative texts, publicity, standardized types, popular fiction
Criterion for evaluation	Accuracy of reproduction of the significance of ST	Accuracy of communication of ST message in TT

The process of translation, for Newmark (1988) consists of three steps: the interpretation and analysis of the source text; the translation procedure, i.e. choosing equivalents for the source words and sentences; and the reformulation of the text according to the author's intention, the reader's expectation, the appropriate norms of the target language, etc.

The last step Newmark proposes can be problematic. While the translator must reformulate the text as a final step, he/she can not take the liberty to speculate on the reader's expectations. Otherwise, most books would not have been translated because the culture, traditions, religion, norms and life style mentioned in the source text

would not necessarily suit the culture-based expectations of the target readers. The text should be translated regardless of reader expectations, with the minimum interference from the translator in changing the target culture. The target norms can be respected by the translator only by choosing words that do not offend the reader without changing the meaning of the original text in question i.e. through change in the linguistic aspect not in the content.

In an article published by the SIL International, the author refers to the diagram designed by Larson. (1991) showing the process of translation and what should be done in order to create a satisfactory translation. The diagram illustrates the process of translation consisting of two parts. First the translator has to understand the meaning of the source text and then convey that same meaning in the target language. She says that translation consists of studying the lexicon, grammatical structure, communication situation, and cultural context of the source language text, analyzing it in order to determine its meaning, and then reconstructing this same meaning using the lexicon and grammatical structure which are appropriate in the receptor language and its cultural context. The key word in translation is "meaning." The translator who is familiar with the source culture and language, where his/her first language is the source text for example, might find the first step (discovering the source meaning) easier than the second step (re-expressing the meaning) because he/she has to figure out a way to deliver that meaning to the target readers with cultural and linguistic differences.

OVERVIEW OF THE TRANSLATION TASK

SOURCE LANGUAGE

Text to be translated

RECEPTOR LANGUAGE

Translation

Discover the meaning

Re-express the meaning

MEANING
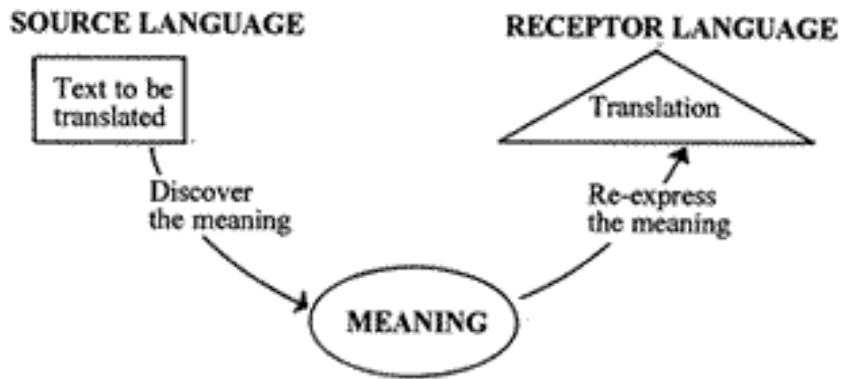
1.3   Translation Techniques

Different scholars and theorists have different views regarding the classification, approach or techniques of translation. These differences lead to a variety of ways of handling the task of translation depending on the text itself, the experience of the translator, the background of the target audience, etc. i.e. what the translator is translating, why, to whom and when he/she is translating.

Fawcett, P. (1997) has cited in his book "Translation and Language" three different models presented by different scholars; a Russian model, a Canadian model and an American model.

1.3.1 The Russian Model

Retsker. (1974) based his approach on the relationship between the source language and the target language, which he classifies as the equivalence, variant and contextual correspondence and all other types of translational transformation. He divides translation into translation as analogy and translation as adequacy. Translation as analogy is used in cases of one-to-many correspondences between languages. Dictionaries and the variant translations of a single word are a good example. For

instance, "run" is translated in the dictionary as "يجري", "ينقل", "يقع", "يستمر في", "يدير" and "يهرب". So the translator has to choose the translation that suits the context. Translation as adequacy, on the other hand, is used when there is not one-to-one equivalence. In this case, the translator has to choose one of the following four techniques: concretization, logical derivation, antonymic translation and compensation.

Concretization or "differentiation" is to change the word according to the context and desired effect. For example, when translating the sentence "the father ate his meal and went to bed", the translator can translate it into "تناول الوالد عشاءه وخلد للنوم" i.e. making the word "meal" more precise.

 Logical derivation is where the source language expresses an action focusing on a certain element while the translator expresses the same action focusing on another element. For example, the English text might say "he cut his throat with a sharp knife" while the Arabic translation can say "نحره بنصل حاد" i.e. the English text used the whole to explain the action and the Arabic text used the part to explain the same action.

Antonymic translation is to translate using the opposite. It is used to translate words or expressions with their opposite meaning in order to achieve a more natural word or expression in the target language. For example, in Arabic we use the expression " أثلجت صدري" which means literally "you froze my heart" to express happiness, but when we translate it we mostly use the opposite saying "you warmed my heart", based on the different cultures of the source language and the target language.

 Compensation is used for untranslatable words, phrases or expressions, such as in case of wordplay, to avoid translation loss. An example for that is the use of "you" in English that is used to address all people regardless of the formality of speech. In

Arabic there are many levels of addressing people especially in Egyptian dialect. In the Egyptian dialect there is the use of "انت", "حضرتك" and "جنابك" which to address people according to their position and in classical standard Arabic expressions like "حضرتكم"، "سيادتكم" are equally used The translator can use "sir", for instance, to avoid the loss of the meaning.

1.3.2 The Canadian Model

Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) base their technical theory on two elements. The first is the use of langue/parole, signifier/signified, the structuring of the language at the level of grammar, lexis and the textual and situational level. The second element makes use of the notion that each language has its own spirit which systematically compels it to express itself in one way or another.

Vinay and Darbelnet suggest different methods of translation starting with:

Borrowing which is to borrow a word from another language and use it in translation. It can be used when the target language lacks a certain word, a term or expression so the translator can borrow from another language. This raises the question of national identity, power and colonization, where smaller nations may see their linguistic heritage threatened by borrowing excessive quantities of words from larger, more influential nations. For example, Arabic has many modern terms taken from English such as "television" and "video".

Calque is a literal translation at the phrase level. For example translating the phrase "self-service shop" into "محل للخدمة الذاتية" which is ambiguous and should be replaced with "اخدم نفسك بنفسك". Another example is to translate "children at play" as " أطفال يلعبون" or كلب حراسة (watchdog) and فأرة (mouse) in computer field.

Transposition deals with the grammatical changes in translation such as translating "بعد ظهور القمر" which has no verb into "after the moon appeared,.." which is in the past tense.

Modulation is "the variation in the message obtained by changing point of view", as Vinay and Darbelnet describe it. It can be used to translate between an abstract and a concrete term, between a part and a whole or it may reverse a point of view. "Give a pint of blood" which is translated into "تبرعت بالدم" is an example of that modulation. **Equivalence** is the translation of idioms when two languages refer to the same situation in totally different ways. For example, in English, "the leopard can not change its spots" refers to the fact that no one can change who he/she really is. In Arabic, we say "الطبع غلب التطبع" using assonance which is difficult to achieve in English in this case. The final method is adaptation which can take place at a lexical level, syntactic level or at the message level. For example, in Egyptian Arabic when they speak about a stupid person they say he is "صعيدي", while in English they might refer to him as an Irishman, which is more suitable for their culture.

1.3.3 The American Model

There is also an American model describing the different strategies of translation presented by Malone (1988). The techniques he suggested are matching, zigzagging, recrescence and repackaging. **Matching** (substitution and equation) is the same as literal translation. **Zigzagging**, consisting of divergence and convergence, is the second method suggested by Malone. **Divergence** is a matter of language knowledge. For example, when a writer reports what someone says in Arabic, he/she repeats "قال" in every sentence; in English, on the other hand, the verb varies: "he declared", "he said", "he announced", etc. **Convergence** is when varied source language terms

collapse into one term in the target language. For example, in Arabic there is a distinction between the male and female when they speak but in English the translation is genderless. In Arabic, the source text might say "أنا مريضة" while in English the translation would be "I am sick" without giving an indication about the gender of the speaker. **Recrescene** (amplification and reduction), Malone's third strategy, is an alternative to Vinay and Darbelnet's adaptation. It means giving explanation rather than making cultural adaptations in order to bring the target reader closer to the source language and culture. Reduction is the omission of what the translator considers to be of little importance to the target reader. Finally **repackaging** is divided into diffusion and condensation, or expressing the same information in longer or shorter form, respectively. Finally, Malone uses **reordering**, where word sequence becomes important for comprehension as in the breaking up the complex structure or because the source and target languages have different syntactic and stylistic structures.

1.4   Equivalence in Translation

In "Introducing Translation Studies", Munday. (2001) states an approach presented by Jakobson. R. (1959) which is based on semiotics and the fact that "there is no signatum without signum" (Jakobson, 1959). Jakobson's approach suggests three kinds of translation: **intralingual**, **interlingual** and **intersemiotic**. Intralingual translation is within one language, i.e. to reword or paraphrase; interlingual translation occurs between two languages; and intersemiotic translation is between sign systems. Interlingual translation involves the substitution of a message in the source language with an entire message in the target language, not only with separate units. Jakobson says that cross-linguistic differences between different languages are easy to find:

differences at the level of gender, at the level of aspect and at the level of semantic fields. An example of gender level difference is the word "house," which is neuter in English but masculine in Arabic. Aspect level difference occurs when the verb varies according to whether the action has been completed or not. An example of semantic level difference is the English word "cousin" which is clarified in Arabic into "ابن العم" or "ابن الخال". Sometimes, Jakobson says, the translator might face a problematic situation when he/she does not find the right equivalent in the target language. In this case, he suggests solutions such as loanwords, neologisms, semantic shifts, or circumlocutions. According to Jakobson, translation is never impossible; the translator can always come up with suitable solutions depending on the nature of the problem.

Munday also presents Nida's approach. He says that Nida (1962), who was the first to translate the Bible, developed his theory in the process of translating. He maintains that there are two kinds of equivalence, formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. Formal equivalence is based on the form and content of the source message while dynamic equivalence is based on the equivalent effect. The formal equivalent provides the closest correspondence to the source language word or phrase and is oriented towards the source text structure. Glossaries and footnotes are examples of formal equivalence. Problems of target reader comprehension may arise where the use of the formal equivalent distorts the grammatical and stylistic patterns of the target language. Dynamic equivalence, on the other hand, focuses on translating the source text so that the target text would have the same impact or effect on the target audience as the source text has on the source audience. In this kind of translation, the meaning of the translated text has greater importance than the form.

Nida prefers this method as he focuses on the semantic quality of the text and aims at reaching the perfect "naturalness" of expression.

There are three types of meaning for Nida: linguistic meaning, referential meaning and emotive or connotative meaning. He suggests a number of techniques to help the translator determine the meaning of different linguistic items. The first technique is the hierarchal structuring which differentiates between words according to their level. For instance, the super ordinate animal and its hyponyms goat, dog, cow, etc, represents hierarchal structuring. The second technique is the componential analysis which aims at identifying and discriminating specific features in a number of related words. This applies to the relationship of words like "mother", "grandmother" and "cousin" in terms of gender, generation and linear relationship. Nida's last technique is semantic structure analysis, represented by words like "spirit," which can mean "demon", "angel" or "god." In this case, the translator must know how to translate such words according to the context and knowing that they don't always have a religious meaning.

According to Leonardi, overt and covert translation is another theory presented by House (1977), who is interested in the semantic and pragmatic equivalence of the text and focuses on the functional resemblance between the source text and the target text. She says that the translator should choose his/her translation method based on the situation surrounding the text in question. According to House, what makes a high quality translation is its ability to create the equivalent situation for the target reader. House suggested two kinds of translation, **overt** and **covert**. In overt translation, the target reader is not directly addressed so there is no need to create an exact equivalent of the source text whereas in covert translation, the reader is directly addressed, so it becomes necessary to produce a target text that is functionally identical to the source

text. For example, House says that overt translation can be applied to academic articles where the information can be delivered easily to the target reader because the information mentioned in the article does not address the source reader only. Political speeches are good example for covert translation as the speech contains specific information addressed to a certain group. Functional equivalent can not be reached easily so the translator will apply covert translation here.

Leonardi also mentions in her article that Baker, M. (1992) suggests a more detailed approach in translation where she divided the notion of equivalence into four levels beginning with the word level and ending with the pragmatic level. Word level equivalent considers the words of a text as single units, keeping in mind such factors as the gender of the word, tense, formality and number. While word level equivalent might seem straightforward and simple, it can be problematic for the translator when the target language lacks the equivalent word, such as the translation of the words "إنتفاضة", "جهاد" and "الزكاة" from Arabic to English.

The second level is the grammatical level where there is grammatical diversity between the source language and the target language. Number, gender and tense are good examples of that equivalence level. For example, the translator might face difficulties translating "هل ذهبتم الى الحديقة؟" since the English "you" does not differentiate between the singular and the plural so he/she might translate it as "did you guys go to the park?" or "did you and your brothers go to the park?"

Textual equivalence, the third level in Baker's scale, occurs when referring to the equivalence between the source text and the target text in terms of cohesion and information. The translator must choose whether to maintain the cohesion and coherence of the source text or change it depending on the target reader, the purpose of the text and the text type.

The last level is the pragmatic equivalence, where the translator must consider the implied meaning of a text in order to maintain the intent of the author of the source text while making it clear to the target reader who might be unaware of the culture, religion and traditions of the source culture which create the implied meaning.

The chapter discussed in details the definition of translation in the point of view of different scholars and then it shifted to the varied strategies and techniques used by translators to solve the problems facing them. The next chapters will study the "cross-cultural translation" specifically and will attempt to apply those definitions and techniques to it. The study will examine the techniques used by the translators of Arab literature in general and of Nawal El Saadawi in particular and will comment on the validity of those methods and strategies.

Chapter 2

Cross-Cultural Translation

2.1 Translation: Theory or Practice?

Some might ask whether translation is a theoretical or a practical act; whether translators need to study translation as a science or they can depend on their experience and skills. Until recent times, translation was a mere practical action performed in the absence of theory. Yet, translation was a successful method of interaction between cultures, facilitating the benefits of making use of the knowledge of "the other". Not all translations were successful; some lacked validity because translators did not possess the underlying theory and the talent to practice translation. There was no such thing as a general theory of translation, rather each translator developed his own principles and methods and followed them through his translations. Of course not all of those principles led to good translations especially that the fields of knowledge were not as diversified and complex as now

Different theorists have different attitudes regarding the use or non-use of theory in translation practice. Eugene Nida suggests that most successful and creative translators of the past have had little or no use for translation theories. In fact, some insist that only those who cannot translate become theorists, and then insist upon the necessity of using theories in the process of translation. In reality, outstanding translators are born, not made, since without an innate potential for the creative use of language the study of procedures and principles of translating is unlikely to produce outstanding results. As different theories appeared, presenting translation from different perspectives and having different methods in dealing with translation, Nida

states that none of the theories has gained wide acceptance, since there is no consensus regarding related disciplines and methods. He claims that, "throughout the scientific world people constantly strive for holistic theories, some single key to unlock the secrets of all problems and even mega-theories seems to be a preoccupation of all those who have been infected by the virus of scientism and theorem despite a growing awareness of indeterminacy, the role of chance, and the inevitability of chaos, even in mathematical systems."

Lefevre offers another way of looking at the differences between theorists and practicing translators, considering the present era of translation as well as the past when there were no theorists at all. Lefevre disagrees with theorists who claim that translation is impossible, pointing out that translation has been going on for at least the last four thousand years, leaving the theorists not only bewildered, but also looking more than a little out of touch, thereby supporting Nida's point of view.

Theorists are convinced that they are clarifying and ordering matters through offering principles and rules in a field that is considered more than a little chaotic. They consider statements made about the field much too anecdotal in nature to be of any great use for the further elaboration of further theories.

Practicing translators, on the other hand, are interested in quick solutions to the problems they are facing while translating. These problems are typically measured in relation to the next deadline imposed on them by the patrons who often provide their own rules and principles according to their goals, location, attitudes towards certain matters and line of approach. Practicing translators, in general, therefore have little time for applying theories. They do not have the luxury of being able to make changes according to the way they believe or to the schools of theories they belong to. Even

free lance translators are obligated by deadlines and by the client who has the right to demand a certain change or refuse another.

In an article published by the SIL International, it was mentioned that Larson (1991) looks at the relationship between theory and practice from a special perspective; he states that good theory is based on information gained from practice. Good practice is based on carefully worked-out theory. The two are interdependent.

Amin-Zaki. A (1995) studied the different translations of Shakespeare's works and compared the early translators such as Muhammad al-Sibai, Muhammad Iffat al-Qadi, Ali Imam Atiyah, Khalil Mutran and Sami al-Juraydini and the contemporary translators. She noticed that early translators ignored Shakespeare's plots to such an extent that their efforts sometimes had only a passing resemblance to his works. Most of their translations were not successful as they did not respect the source text or the target readers. They were not aware that readers are now more familiar with foreign cultures. They did not follow theories or rules, but created their own improvised rules. Early translators of Shakespeare tended to be quite cautious in their translations, trying to avoid religious or cultural offense, often deleting or softening ribald allusions. They were less likely to render obscene meanings than their more modern counterparts. The use of vows and bawdiness in Shakespeare's works created was problematic for the early translators. They either deleted them or Islamized them, being disloyal to the source text, thereby causing a loss in the meaning of the target text. In the *Tempest*, for example, Gonzalo refers to the boatswain, "I'll warrant him for drowning, though the ship was no stronger than a nutshell and as leaky as an unstaunched wench". Early translators Umar Abd al-Aziz Amin and Ibrahim deleted these lines completely. Al-Qadi changed their meaning entirely: '' إني كفيل له بأن لايموت من الأرض ''غرقاً ولو أن السفينة ليست بأكبر ولا أمتن من قشرة الجوزة وإنها أكثر تهيؤاً لقبول من المياه

المجدبة. His translation was "I warrant that he will not die by drowning though the ship were no larger and no sturdier than the shell of a walnut and it were more susceptible to accepting water than arid ground". "Jabra," a more modern translator, maintains the precise meaning of the original representing the ribald expression as "مومس نظيفة" (a discharging harlot). Another example is the oath "Zounds" (by God's wounds) which is rejected in Islam. Some early translators deleted it and some adapted using oaths that do not exist in Arabic like "يا جرح المسيح". Each of these methods weakens the translation by making it less faithful to the original. Personally, I think that there should be no deletion and no change in translating such words or phrases because the Arab reader is already aware that this text is coming from a different society that has its own words and traditions. The Arab readers nowadays are educated enough to realize the cultural differences which will prevent them from getting affected by an oath they read in a foreign book.

From the various translations of Shakespeare we notice that in the past translation was more a practical process with no existence of theory which produced successful as well as unsuccessful translations. We can also apply this principle to the present era, as some translators translate literally rather than take the risk of applying certain theories.

Theories can serve translation and can help create an outstanding work in the sense of defining the contextual and extra-contextual factors that play role in the translation process. However, successful translators who do not abide to theories can exist if they are talented enough to set and follow their own rules, and those rules are accepted by others.

To summarize, in this chapter we delved deeper into the process of translation, discussing more detailed translating strategies that can be adapted in cross-cultural

translation and clarifying the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy leaving the translator to decide which method to use according to the type of texts he/she is translating, the target audience, the era of the translation and the reason he/she is translating. We also considered different views about the theoretical and practical aspects of translation, presenting different opinions about the way translators look at translation. Finally, we attempted to answer the age old question, whether translation is a science or an art and concluded that it is a mixture of both, as it involves a high degree of artistic features while at the same time the translator has to be armed with theory just like any other science or discipline. Why there are better piano players than others even if both had the same education? Why are some computer engineers more skilled than their peers within the same academic background? Translation is the same: it is more than a science and cannot be merely a talent.

The coming chapter will apply the "cross-cultural translation" and its strategies to practical examples from Nawal El Saadawi's works. It will discuss why I chose El Saadawi as an example of "cross-cultural translation" and will provide translation problems that can occur while translating culturally sensitive books, in general, and El Saadawi's books, in particular.

2.2   Cross Cultural Translation: Definition

By the year 2005, all countries and continents became one world; "one village", as people say. Media and technology have brought the entire world together. If an incident occurs on a small, remote island in the Far East, the entire planet will be informed in seconds. Television, the internet, radio stations, written media and phones have brought people and countries together. These are the obvious famous

communication tools known all over the world. There is another communication tool, however, that participates in this huge interaction between every person and every place: translation. Translation is not a new communication means; for centuries it was the only method to share knowledge among the various cultures on earth.

Much more than a matter of transferring words and sentences from one language to another, the process of translation reaches beyond to the underlying cultures when those words and sentences originate. In the case of translating between Arabic and English, the translator faces the challenge of drawing together totally different cultures in the East and West. The translator has to be not only bilingual in order to produce a successful translation; he/she must be bicultural as well. For Pym, "the ultimate aim of translation is to improve intercultural relations" (1992) as Lindfors mentions in her article "Respect or Ridicule: Translation Strategies and the Images of a Foreign Culture".

In most cases target readers are not familiar with the source culture including their numerous traditions, colloquial language, idioms and religion. The translator's job is to create an impact on the target text reader that resembles the impact on the source text reader. That impact can be measured by comparing the reaction of the target language reader with the reaction of the source language reader. The translator faces challenge every step of the way in an effort to maintain loyalty to the author and his work bearing in mind the background of the target audience, the relationships between the target and the source audience, the place and the time the translation occurs, according to Cary, as Raddawi mentions in her article "The Concept of Translation Today" (1999).

In one of his lectures at the American University of Sharjah, Faiq discussed Lefevre's explanation of his point of view regarding translation and culture (1998) saying:

> Different cultures have tended to take translation for granted, or rather, different cultures have taken the technique of translating that was current at a given time in their evolution for granted and equated it with the phenomenon of translating as such. Histories of translation in the West have shown increasingly that the technique of translating in western cultures has changed repeatedly over the centuries, and that was accepted as "obvious" at one particular time was, in fact little more than a passing phase. The important point is that shifts and changes in the techniques of translating did not occur at random. Rather, they were intimately linked with the way, in which different cultures, at different times, came to terms with the phenomenon of translation, with the challenge posed by the existence of the Other and the need to elect from a number of possible strategies for dealing with the Other. We, are, therefore, finally beginning to see different methods of translating as well as different approaches to translational practice as contingent, not eternal, as changeable, not fixed, because we are beginning to recognize that they have, indeed, changed over the centuries. Paradoxically, once it is accepted that translation is contingent, it becomes possible to highlight the central position it has always occupied in the development, indeed the very definition of cultures. That contingency is even easier to see when two different traditions are compared. Such a comparison may, I

believe, shed light not just on the two traditions, but ultimately also ion the phenomenon of translation itself. (1998:12-13).

Lefevre thinks that each culture sees translation as its own and that people take it as a fashion. However, he believes, that each culture needs translation to develop. From Lefevre's explanation of the connection between translation and culture, we can notice that the issue of the Other and the cultural beliefs and traditions are not limited to Arabs only, rather it is considered an issue also among the Westerns who are not afraid to show their culture, with all its defects, to the Other as long as this will enrich their own culture and participate in developing it through sharing it with the other cultures.

In addition to that explanation, Lefevre also says that:

> Translators (..) are active negotiators between cultures, whose negotiations may, if not change the face of cultures all on their own, at least heavily contribute to doing so.

From this quote about the role of translators in changing the cultures, we can come out with a definition of cross-cultural translation in the point of view of Lefevre. Translation itself, he thinks, is a negotiation between cultures so cross cultural translation is a negotiation between different cultures through translation.

2.3   Cross-Cultural Translation: Strategies

What is the best approach to cross-cultural translation? The translator can choose one of two strategies when representing different cultures: foreignizing or domestication. Anne-Marie Lindfors (2001) explains the difference saying that foreignizing is taking the reader to the foreign culture and enabling him/her to understand it by making him/her feel the cultural and linguistic differences.

Domestication, on the other hand, is bringing the foreign culture to the reader to make it familiar and recognizable. The choice is left to the translator's judgment; to what extent should each of the represented cultures provide the basis of the final translation? The translator's judgment would be based on the function of the text, target audience, nature of the text (why are you translating and to whom?) The answers to those questions lead you to the kind of translation he/she would do and would decide whether the translation would be text-oriented or source-oriented or target-oriented.

Each strategy has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of domestication is that the text would be accepted in the target culture by avoiding the exotic feeling which can be created through foreignizing, despite the fact that it would lose some of its magic or special characteristics as a result. Foreignizing, on the other hand, would retain exotic feelings and ideas which might produce stereotypes surrounding the foreign culture. For example, when the translator faces a name of an Arab kind of food such as "غوزي", a kind of food eaten in special occasions and celebrations in some Arab countries, he/she might translate it into "goozi" which will be considered foreignizing or into "turkey" i.e. domesticating the word.

Other differences between the two strategies are presented by Xiaosong, a Chinese translator who maintains that the foreignized translation gives the reader more information than the domesticated one, since domestication familiarizes the foreign text, decreasing the information provided and the difficulty posed by the source text, while failing to supply additional background information to make understanding easier. Translated text is typically longer than source text, but domestication can shorten the length of a source text in many instances. Foreignization tends to increase the length of the notes if not the source text itself. Xiaosong proposes that when target

readers' information about other cultures and other parts of the world increases to a certain point, they will demand a truer presentation of the foreign elements in order to achieve a new view they have never seen before in their own language and culture so they will reach the third level which is complete foreignization.
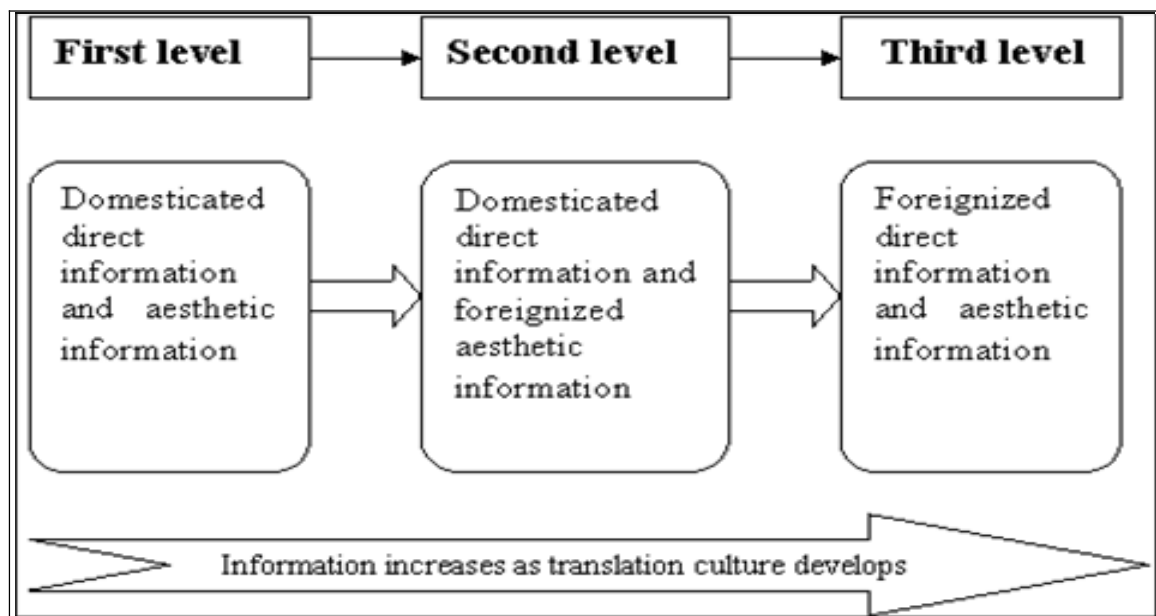
Xiaosong's table which explains the differences between domestication and foreignization

Appiah (2000) suggests another method called thick translation, explaining all cultural details in annotations and glossaries to improve the understanding of the cultural features of the source text. The disadvantage of this method is that such texts may require too much effort from the target reader to check the cultural explanation every now and then in the glossary or annotation which leads to loss of focus on the text. The other disadvantage is that these books may be considered too academic to hold the interest of non-academic readers.

2.4   Role of the Translator

Since translation transfers one text in one language to another text in another language, some might consider it as betrayal to the source text. There is a certain degree of loss in each translated text, decreasing its power and making it less effective than the source text. According to Maier (1995), this loss may occur in two cases: either the translator is not competent enough to transfer the source text without any loss, or the source text depends on shared knowledge that is only completely understood by the readers of its own language because they already have preexisting ideas about the content or topic. The latter problem can be solved by a skillful translator who can make target readers aware of the topic either by footnotes, through explanation within the text itself, through the introduction, or through any other way he/she finds suitable. The translation may seem to suffer a loss or breakdown in the "inner space;" in reality this inner space can also provide an opportunity to discover the differences in cultures.

Translators face numerous kinds of difficulties during translation. One such difficulty is whether to interpret what they translate or not; i.e. whether to be objective to the source text or not. Objectivity or loyalty to the source text does imply that the translator act as a static being; he/she will necessarily interpret the meaning of the source text in the performance of the translation.

There has been a turn in the translation theory in modern times as the unit of translation has expanded from words and sentences to whole texts and cultures. This turn has created a new opportunity for the translator to practice his/her interaction with the text and his awareness not only of the source language and culture, but also of the target language and culture.

In order to achieve the best target texts, the translator has to understand the value of the source text within the source-language discourse. To develop this understanding, the translator must be aware of the differences in the cultures and discourses of the source and target languages. The translator must discover the hidden structure and meaning of the source text through the use of various strategies related to discourse. The translator must be familiar with the culture, customs, traditions, religion and social settings of the source and target language speakers. He/she should also be familiar with different registers, styles of speaking, idioms, accents and social elements of both languages. This socio-cultural awareness, can improve the quality of translations to a great extent. According to Hatim and Mason (1990), the social context in translating a text is probably a more important variable than its genre. The act of translating takes place in a socio-cultural context. Consequently, it is important to view translating activity only within a given socio-cultural context.

2.5   Translation from Arabic to English

Arabic is one of the most controversial languages in the world as it involves many elements that the other languages lack. Arabic language is not considered only a mere language; it combines with its words, phrases and grammar a religion, certain traditions and beliefs and a certain background. Like other languages, it involves a certain culture but there is also an important element involved in translating from Arabic: stereotype. The image of the Arabian nights, the slaves, the oppression against women and the domination of men do not disappear from the eye of the English language reader. A certain image about Islam and about Arab society is spread throughout the West because most of the books that are being translated foster

that image. The Western expectations encouraged the publishing houses and the translators to focus on the books that talk about those topics.

To get a better idea of this image of Arab culture in the West, we consider the kind of books written by Arab authors that are being translated most, those that are becoming more popular in the West than in their land of origin. Such books typically include those written by feminist writers about how women in the Arab world are oppressed; books that talk about the backwardness of the Arab and Islamic world; books defaming or criticizing Islam; and books that criticize Arab culture in general. Hanan Al-Shaykh and Nawal El Saadawi are good examples of the authors who are popular in the West for their works aiming at reforming Arab society by pointing out its defects. According to Faiq. (2004), the stereotypes the Westerns have about the Arabs are caused by the numerous translations of the *One Thousand and One Nights* which has been the main source of Western representations of Arab culture, and by extension Islam.

Some claim that El Saadawi is popular in America and Europe because she says and writes what people there expect to hear and read. These critics argue that she does not write to realistically portray Arab society as she claims; not because she is a true defendant of women's rights; but because her focus is on the West; she writes to be translated into English or French. Such critics oppose authors like El Saadawi because they confirm the stereotype of Arabs in the West and distort the image of Arabs and Muslims. Critics insist that what is inside Arab society should remain inside it.

In an interview with Two Eyes Magazine (1999), Nawal El Saadawi defends her cross-cultural publications. Asked whether she finds it difficult to locate a balance to criticize Islam without pandering to Western prejudices about it, El Saadawi replies:

I am critical of all religions. When you criticize your own culture, there are those in your culture who are against you, who say, "Oh, don't show our dirty linen outside," you know? But I don't believe in this theory, the dirty linen, et cetera. I speak one language, whether inside the country or outside. I don't change my language, because I believe in what I'm saying. I'm critical of Islam, Christianity, Judaism. I speak about all of them with the same belief and the same courage. So that's number one. So I'm not really threatened by people who say, "Oh don't criticize your religion outside your country." No, I have to criticize everything. I must be honest with myself. So I have one language, which I speak. And we shouldn't be afraid of being blamed of being westernized. Some people say, "Oh, you are westernized, that's why you criticize Islam." But I criticize Christianity too. I criticize Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism and everything. But some people try to defame you, to ruin your reputation by saying you are westernized. Taslima Nasrin was a victim of that; people said, "She shouldn't criticize her culture in the West." I think this is trying to sabotage writers and women, and to intimidate them. And I don't care. I say my opinion anywhere, locally and internationally because when you believe in something, you do.

Reality should not be hidden. The author has the right to uncover the reality and to voice it with all its defects in a hope to change it. Western authors expose the reality of their culture without fear of being judged by Arabs, so why should Arab authors hide their views? Oppression towards women still exists, men retain the upper hand in society, taking as excuse or argument some distorted Islamic teachings, people prefer

to have a baby boy instead of a girl and Arab society is a male-oriented society. In an enlightened Arab society, people are transformed from their "backwardness" and women enjoy a full range of human rights just as men do. El Saadawi tries to take us to that enlightened society through her books, reaching beyond the purported stereotypes of one culture or another, and even helping English language readers as well, since every society suffers from a variable degree of mistreating certain groups of its members.

In the same interview, El Saadawi was asked whether she writes differently for different audiences or not, after being criticized for writing to the West, not to Arab readers as she claims. Many writers who are famous in the West like Hanan Al Shaikh are accused of the same: writing for the West even though they write in Arabic. These writers tackle such controversial issues as criticizing the situation of women in the Arab society such as oppression, inequality of rights, double standards, various aspects of Islam, like wearing the veil but being corrupt double-faced; and other customs that may be considered to be social defects. Nawal's answer regarding this matter was:

> No! I write in Arabic. All my books are in Arabic. And then they are translated. Because my role is to change my people. That's my role. I can not change people here in America and leave my country. So that's why I write in Arabic. I never write in English. And then my books are translated.

Chapter 3

Case Study: Nawal El Saadawi

3.1 Nawal El Saadawi: Her life

In 1931 a little girl was born in a small village called Khafr Tahla just outside Cairo, Egypt. This little girl looked like every other girl in the village, except that she was the only one who tried to free her hands from the chains holding her back from being an independent person. From the moment she was born. Nawal El Saadawi faced the curse which is called "discrimination against women". Om Mahmoud, the midwife who helped bring her into this world, tried to kill El Saadawi when she discovered her to be female. "When she did not see the sacred male organ between my thighs she dropped me into a basin of water and left me to drown", El Saadawi says in her article "Exile and Resistance" (2002). This was the first time El Saadawi experienced the superiority of men in this males' society many years after the dark ages of Arab history, where newborn girls were buried alive by their own fathers who preferred to kill their daughters rather than face a potential scandal in the future. El Saadawi denies such a society, trying her best to participate in forming a society free of discrimination. "I am dreaming of a just society", she says. Nawal El Saadawi, the rebellious little girl, was born into a large family of eight children, where she practiced her rebelliousness for the first time.

She was only a child when her aunts taught her to serve coffee to a suitor. They dressed her up and gave her the coffee tray. The ten-year-old child refused to be sold in a market called "arranged marriage." She disheveled her hair, wiped the lipstick

from her lips, and blackened her teeth with an eggplant. She entered the sitting room serving coffee but her suitor was alarmed at the sight of her and quickly escaped. This incident was the first step in El Saadawi's long, arduous journey in rejecting the traditions which have held women as slaves.

El Saadawi's longing for freedom and independence was represented in her vision of flying away from her body and losing its weight. The weight that symbolizes the ties that pull her to the ground; into the society she refuses. Her body was grounded, however, by the mysterious force of her being a female in Arab society. She describes her childhood feelings towards her gender saying:

> The feeling of "exile" from my body increased when I reached puberty. Like all Muslims I had to believe in both the Koran and the Bible. In these holy books women were looked upon as inferior to men. Menstrual blood was considered impure in the Koran but even more impure in the Bible. In the Old Testament if a woman gave birth to a male child she was not purified from her blood until thirty-three days had passed. But if she gave birth to a female child, she remained unclean for sixty-six days. Once she had been cleansed she had to slaughter a lamb, and a female pigeon or a female dove, and offer them to God, to be forgiven for her sins, and be cleansed completely from the impurity of her blood. In the Koran God did not request women to offer Him anything in order to be cleansed. He was more merciful towards poor women who had nothing to offer. In my school, the girls felt alienated from the holy books, whether they were Coptic (Egyptian Christians), Jewish or Muslim. Alienation from God is a form of exile, exile from religion, from the family, from history, culture, and politics, from the whole of society and the nation-state. Ever since

birth I have lived with this feeling of exile. It became greater when I
traveled abroad to foreign countries because in them I was described as an
"Alien".

El Saadawi began writing at an early age. She was only 13 years old when she
wrote her first story, "Memoirs of a Child," and submitted it to her teacher at school.
The teacher gave her a failing grade for her story stating it contained ideas that did not
suit the society and were not supposed to come from a girl. El Saadawi felt depression
and guilt for having written such a story. Fortunately, her mother found it and read it,
then gave Nawal her first lesson in writing: "do not quit when a person did not like
what you wrote". The mother encouraged her daughter to continue writing, assuring
her she was talented. El Saadawi describes her first relationship with writing in her
article "Exile and Resistance" saying:

> In my early childhood, before I had learnt to write I used to touch the
> letters of the alphabet with the tips of my fingers as they lie on paper,
> or draw them with wings like birds so they could fly.

Nawal's married life has also been unusual and different from that of other women
in Arab society who are forced to get married to someone their families choose for
them without having the right to agree or disagree on the man they will spend their
entire life with. Those women also did not have the right or the chance to get married
again in most of the cases. If they did get the chance, they get married only once after
their first marriage and in that case they have to tolerate with what people would say
about them including attacking them for being divorced and accusing them of
immoral behaviours.

El Saadawi got married three times, once to a doctor, then to a lawyer and finally to another doctor, her current husband. She married for the first time in 1955 at the age of twenty-four to Ahmed Elmy, a friend from medical school who fought against British colonization. Following the period of colonization, her husband became depressed due to his self-exile in Upper Egypt. As a result of his depression, he tried to dominate El Saadawi. When her salary became insufficient to fulfil both their needs, she turned to her father to help her get a divorce in 1957. Later, she lived with her parents, along with her daughter from that marriage, Mona, now a 44 year-old writer. El Saadawi married again in 1960 but her second husband, a lawyer, could not bear being married to a woman who ruffled so many feathers. They divorced within a year. "I didn't love him very much but he said he'd accept my conditions. I needed a partner. A secret love affair would have ruined my career. The social pressure to be married was great," she explained. Now, El Saadawi is married to Dr. Sherif Hetata, a medical doctor, writer and activist. They have a 39 year-old son, Araf, who is a film director. Nawal met Hetata after his release from prison where he spent fifteen years for his leftist activities.

Nawal El Saadawi's life is packed with activities, struggles and contributions. No one can deny her fruitful participations in searching for equality and freedom for all human beings. She deserves to be respected, even by her opponents.

Writing about sensitive cultural issues and being widely translated to the west is the main reason of choosing the books of Nawal El Saadawi as a case study for my thesis. Her life is the background for the topics she is writing about. The translation of Nawal's books provides a perfect example for studying the connection between literature and translation bearing in mind the most important link between them which

is "cultural exchange". The connection between them along with the "cultural exchange" will be studied and analyzed throughout the thesis supported with practical examples from Nawal's books.

3.2 El Saadawi's Achievements

El Saadawi began her career as a doctor in 1955. Since then, she has held a number of important positions such as Director of Public Health Education in Egypt's Ministry of Health; Assistant General Secretary of the Egyptian Medical Association; and Editor-in-Chief of the health journal *Medical Magazine* which tackles social influences on health. In 1972, she was dismissed from all of her positions and *Medical Magazine* was banned. The Egyptian Government condemned her for writing a scientific book about the sexuality of women. The book *Women and Sex,* published in 1971, was the first to cause her suffering and difficulty in her life. The second misfortune facing her was prison.

In 1981, during the reign of Anwar Sadat, El Saadawi was arrested and imprisoned along with 1,000 other writers and intellectuals for committing what were considered "crimes against the state." She was released in 1982, one month following Sadat's assassination. In an interview with Stephanie McMillan in 1999, El Saadawi talks about the reason she was arrested:

> Sadat put me in prison because of one article. I wrote just one article. It was not even critical of his policy; it was exposure of the contradictions in his policy and how he was ruining our economy and increasing the gap between the rich and the poor and how he was encouraging the religious

fundamentalist movement. I was writing scientifically and objectively, but this article made him furious and that's why he put me in prison.

Despite the hardships of prison, El Saadawi continued to do the most important thing in her life: writing. Lack of paper and pens was but a small obstacle for her. She used a black eyebrow pencil and a roll of old toilet paper to write her famous book, *Memories from the Women's Prison*, describing her experience there. When officers came to her house to arrest her, she did not surrender to the power of men without struggling for her rights. She refused to open the door for them without a written warrant, and when they finally took her into custody, she insisted on sitting near the window of the police car instead of sitting between two male officers. Women in the streets stood next to her shouting at the officers "Shame on you! Poking rifles in the face of a woman. Go fight Israel instead". In prison, Nawal and her mates fought for their human rights. They submitted a list of requests to the prison administration and sent letters to people in power at that time to inform them of the miserable living conditions there. Most of their demands were fulfilled. After being released, her braveness enabled her to meet the new President of Egypt, Mohammed Hosni Mobarak to discuss relevant political issues such as democracy and freedom. "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger" says Nawal of her experience in prison expressing her determination to go on with what she believes in regardless of the obstacles.

> When I came out of prison there were two routes I could have taken. I could have become one of those slaves to the ruling institution, thereby acquiring security, prosperity, the state prize, and the title of "great writer"; I could have seen my picture in the newspapers and on

television. Or, I could continue on the difficult path, the one that had led me to prison... Danger has been a part of my life ever since I picked up a pen and wrote. Nothing is more perilous than truth in a world that lies. Nothing is more perilous than knowledge in a world that has considered knowledge a sin since Adam and Eve. There is no power in the world that can strip my writings from me.

Losing her positions and imprisonment were but two of the harsh experiences El Saadawi faced. She lived her worst nightmare when her life was threatened by Islamic fundamentalists who put her name on a death list for attacking Islam, for being "an enemy of Allah", as they claimed. This threat forced her to have armed guards standing outside her house for years until she decided to accept a teaching position at Duke University in North Carolina. She subsequently spent several months in Europe and a few years in the United States until finally returning to Egypt to settle there with her husband when the death threats subsided. El Saadawi emerged from that experience stronger and more determined than ever.

Nawal El Saadawi's dynamic life shows through the different positions she has held inside and outside Egypt. These positions include being a visiting professor in Duke University Centre for International Studies and Program in Asian and African Languages and Literature, head of Women's Program in the UN-ECWA in Lebanon, consultant on Women's Programs in the UN, ECA, in Ethiopia and an author in the Supreme Council for Arts and Social Sciences in Egypt. She also was the founder of a number of associations such as, the Arab Association for Human Rights, the African Association for Women on Research and Development in Senegal, Egyptian Women Writer's Association, Health Education Association.

The local and international awards Nawal received throughout her life are a non deniable proof for the impact of her achievements and activities on both the Arab world and the western world. She has received a Literary Award of Gubran, Arab Association of Australia Award, Literary Award by the Franco-Arab Friendship Association in France, and a Literary Award by the Supreme Council for Arts and Social Sciences in Egypt

Revolution was the code of Nawal El Saadawi's books: Revolution against men, against the chains of traditions and against everything that can imprison women. Freedom for women is the search of most of El Saadawi's more than 30 books which have been translated into more than 30 languages and are taught in a number of universities around the world.

El Saadawi is an active feminist who has helped enlighten many women and men by means of her activities and achievements. One of her major contributions was in co-founding the Arab Women's Solidarity Association (AWSA) in 1982 along with 120 other women. The Association encouraged the struggle to liberate women and promoted active participation by Arab women in the social, economic, cultural and political life in their countries. AWSA was an international organization with branches in a number of Arab countries as well as in certain non-Arab countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia and a few European countries. Non-Arab branches were founded by female Arab emigrants, with AWSA's main headquarters in Egypt. AWSA was the first feminist organization in Egypt, registered with that country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and obtained a consultative status with the United Nations in 1985. It had 500 members in Egypt and more than 2,000 members around the world. AWSA was an active organization, holding international

conferences, publishing a magazine and organizing projects to raise money for the benefit of women in the Egyptian countryside.

Unsurprisingly, AWSA was closed down by the Egyptian government in 1991 and its funds were diverted to a religious women's association called "Women in Islam" after criticizing the United States' involvement in the Gulf War, stating that the issue should be dealt with by Arabs only as it was an Arab matter. AWSA sustained that the life of women and politics are integrally related. El Saadawi stood up for the rights of all women who participated in founding and who benefited from AWSA by taking the Egyptian government to court. Unfortunately, she did not win the case.

The freedom of expression El Saadawi has sought and struggled for was challenged when a case was filed against her calling for a divorce from her 78-year-old Muslim husband, Sherif Hetata, after 37 years of marriage. Nabih El-Wahsh, the Egyptian lawyer who filed the case claimed that "she is going too far" when she criticized basic Islamic rules in the *Al-Midan* newspaper. El Saadawi stated that the Islamic Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca had pagan roots, and she raised the issue of inheritance, arguing that women should inherit the same as men, instead of half, because most women nowadays work side by side with men and participate in the expenses of their homes. Islamic extremists were offended by her opinions on Islamic pilgrimage, the inheritance system and the veil worn by Muslim women, as she claimed it had Christian and Jewish origins. El Saadawi defended herself claiming she was misquoted by the newspaper, and what she said was taken out of context. That case, filed in 2001, was the most recent drawback facing El Saadawi in her difficult road in the search for freedom and equality in all its ways. The Public Prosecutor publicly stated there was no justification for any such charge to be brought against

Nawal al-Saadawi especially after the international outcry by human rights organizations, women organizations and individuals in all over the world.

Despite the obstacles and problems she has faced in the course of her ambitious fight for women, freedom and equality in all its respects, El Saadawi becomes stronger and more dedicated to advance what she believes in most writing:

> The novel is tormenting me. I've freed myself completely to write it, letting everything else go for its sake. It's intractable, like unattainable love. It wants me, my entire being, mind and body, and if it can't have that it will not give itself to me at all. It wants all or nothing - it's exactly like me. To the extent that I give to it, it gives to me. It wants no competition for my heart and mind - not that of a husband, of a son or daughter, or preoccupation of any sort, not even on behalf of the women's cause. (El Saadawi, 1983).

After so many years of hard work, El Saadawi has deserved all the positions she has held and earned all the awards she has received. Her fiction and non-fiction books are considered rich material for cultural, social and literal studies in a number of famous universities such as the American University in Cairo, Cairo University and Ain Shams University in Egypt, as well as around the world, universities such as Duke, Harvard, Yale, Georgetown, New York University, the University of Virginia, and Indiana University in the United States. She has lectured at Oxford and Cambridge, Sorbonne in Paris, Bern University in Switzerland and elsewhere throughout Europe. She has participated in a number of local and international conferences and lectures in Egypt as well.

Nawal El Saadawi's life is marked by outstanding contributions in various fields. She has held campaigns against the practice of female circumcision (the excision of

the clitoris extensively practiced in Egypt and elsewhere in North Africa as a way to control women through their sexuality); she contributed to the Report on United States War Crimes Against Iraq by former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark and others given to the Commission of Inquiry for the International War Crimes Tribunal; and she participated in a campaign to bring medical aid to Iraq in defiance of UN sanctions (Stephanie McMillan, 1993). She has participated in many political events in Britain as well. In the 1980s she became involved with British political campaigns: the miners' strike, Greenham common, sit-ins against NHS cuts, demonstrations against the National Front, CND and in 1978 she accepted a United Nations position as advisor on women's development. The UN post took her all over the Middle East and Africa. (Raekha Prasad, 2000). She has participated in demonstrations in London, Washington, DC, Barcelona, Porto Alegre, Paris, New York, Cairo, and other cities, including demonstrations against the war in Vietnam.

Many people familiar with the activities of Nawal El Saadawi, whether they agree with her opinions or not, do not realize that her efforts reach beyond sexual equality; she has struggled against discrimination of all types: sexual, gender, racial, religious, economic or political. Having been raised in a poor village family and suffered sexual, social and economic discrimination from a tender age, Nawal El Saadawi has always advocated human rights in general, as well as the rights of women.

She was recognized in France early in her career as a result of translations of her works by the Algerian writer Assia Djebar. Although El Saadawi was known in the USA and Europe for her activism and efforts as a feminist, her fiction did not appear in English translation until the 1980s. Most of her translated books were translated by her husband Sherif Hetata.

In her books and life in general, El Saadawi is a woman who is not afraid of criticizing anything or anyone she believes to be wrong. She even submits herself to her own scrutiny, criticizing herself for succumbing to her parents' wishes by becoming a doctor, although she yearned to be a professional writer.

This boldness and daring in her writings has led the Egyptian as well as most other Arab Governments to censor El Saadawi's books, causing her to publish in Lebanon. Nevertheless, isolation from her target audience has never prevented her from continuing her mission of writing to reform Arab society and thought of some Arabs.

3.3   Why Nawal El Saadawi?

As mentioned in the previous chapter, cross-cultural translation is one of the most complex issues in translation, mostly as a result of cultural and religious aspects that can only be profoundly understood by source language readers. Beyond cultural and religious aspects, other challenging features of cross-cultural translation include dialects, names of places, names of food, names of games and names of famous people who are only known in the source language area. Those translation problems can be considered as cultural problems but I have excluded them in a separate chapter because most of the Arab books share those problems so they are general issues. Then I have dedicated another chapter to the translation problems that exist only in a few books such as El Saadawi's books.

Nawal El Saadawi's books provide an excellent case study of cross-cultural translation from Arabic to English because of the complexities facing the translators of her works as well as the questions and arguments she raises in both the Arab world

and the Western world. Nawal El Saadawi's books are representative of the difficulties of cross-cultural translation because of the themes she writes about.

El Saadawi raises important issues between Arabs with polarized points of view regarding various topics. One party criticizes her for distorting the image of Muslims and Arabs as they are viewed in the West and for emphasizing the stereotype Westerners have about Arab countries instead of trying to improve and polish that image. They disapprove of the fact that she writes about the Islamic rules and principles which seem negative to the non-Muslim reader. Furthermore, they accuse her of directly addressing the West in her writings, focusing on what Western readers want to hear about the Islamic and Arab world, choosing the topics in which they are interested. On the other hand, the other party encourages her to expose Arab traditions and beliefs they find defective, like the circumcision of girls, the mistreatment of women, and the reduction of women's social status. Supporters approve of El Saadawi's attempts to change and improve these antiquated traditions.

I believe that Nawal El Saadawi addresses the Arab readers not the Western readers, as her opponents claim. The topics she writes about and the words and terms she uses is an obvious proof for that. She uses certain words and phrases that are known only among Muslims and Arabs without explaining them within the text itself. If she was addressing the Western readers, she would have explained them within the text so that when the translators translate her work, they would not face any problems delivering the same meaning to the English language reader. She would have tackled the same issues or topics but without using Islamic words, terms and phrases that are not known among the Westerns such as using verses from the Quran and the other religious and cultural elements which will be tackled in the following chapter.

Personally, I think that Nawal's critics should have an active role in transferring the image of Islam and the Arab world to the West by showing the existing gap between Islamic teachings and current "malpractice" resulting from misinterpretation of these teachings by some religious scholars who look nothing but into their own interests as males instead of those critics just having a passive attitude towards Nawal and other writers. They can write or translate books that talk about the beautiful side of Islam and how it is a merciful religion instead of attacking writers who are against some inherited obsolete rules and traditions. Those critics are being passive by only attacking feminists and writers who criticize some Islamic and Arab behaviors instead of being active and defend Islam in a better way.

3.4   Case studies

In the following chapter, I discuss two of Nawal's most famous books; *Woman at Point Zero* and *The Fall of the Imam*, which are excellent examples to study because of their respective plots deal with discrimination against women and questionable behaviors and beliefs of Arabs towards different areas of their lives and they are packed of dialectical, cultural and religious problems which I aim to study.

Woman at point Zero is based on a true story of a prostitute named Firdaus who faces execution for killing her pimp. Firdaus relates her life story to Nawal El Saadawi from early childhood until she became a prostitute and killed her pimp. Condemned by society for choosing such a disgraceful job, Firdaus was actually forced into that line of work by the very same society that condemns her. Firdaus' trauma begins with her uncle who first sexually abuses her, then forces her to marry an older man who beats her. She finds herself defenseless and runs away from her

husband. With nowhere to turn, she finds herself on the streets of Egypt where she is repeatedly raped, and finally ends up working as a prostitute.

Woman at point Zero provoked a sharp reaction from many Arab readers who disapproved of the fact that Nawal El Saadawi defends a prostitute, justifying her line of work, her killing a man, and her leaving her family in the first place. Many Arabs also reacted to certain details mentioned in the book, causing them to oppose not only the book's translation and publication in the West, but also the mere fact that it was written at all. An example of such controversial details is when Firdaus goes to her uncle to complain to him about how her husband beats her. Her uncle replies, "All husbands beat their wives." To this her uncle's wife adds, "It was precisely men well versed in their religion who beat their wives. The percepts of religion permitted such punishment. A virtuous woman was not supposed to complain about her husband. Her duty was perfect obedience" (p. 44). Nawal's attackers maintain that passages such as the one quoted above can perpetuate a negative image of Islam. In another instance, Firdaus' uncle is shown to be a very religious man, respected in his village, despite the fact that he sexually abuses his niece and beats his wife.

Another example of controversial Arab behavior mentioned in *Woman at point Zero* is female circumcision, which exists in some villages in Egypt and certain other Arab countries. The way Nawal presents this custom might be shocking to the foreign reader who is unaware of this practice and its reason for being. She mentions it without offering any cultural background: "one day I asked my mother about my father. How was it that she had given birth to me without a father? First she beat me. Then she brought a woman who was carrying a small knife or maybe a razor blade. They cut off a piece of flesh from between my thighs" (p.13). Nawal made this act

sound like a punishment, as if Arabs condemn girls when they ask questions of a sexual nature or when they behave in a certain way.

Nawal's most famous book, *The Fall of the Imam* deals with male power, permissiveness and dominance in Arab society, while that same society punishes women who exercise the same liberties as men. El Saadawi writes this book to encourage women to overcome male domination in their lives, whether the dominant male is a father, husband, brother, political leader or religious leader. The protagonist, Bint Allah, is a young girl who is mistreated by members of society because she was born out of wedlock. Her father is the "Imam," a man of great power in the country. The girl's mother is stoned to death for committing adultery while the Imam enjoys complete impunity from his actions, showing the double standards applied to men and women in Arab society. In *The Fall of the Imam*, one man describes his relationship with his wife: "I became her God. She worshipped me, chose to be at my feet like a dog, and now I possessed her completely but she had no hold over me at all" (. 41). In another instance, Bint Allah is shocked to see a woman turning the water-wheel blindfolded with her husband beating her with his stick whenever she stops to take a breath, while their buffalo rests. She was told that "We follow the laws of supply and demand. A buffalo costs more on the market than a woman, so a man can have four wives, but he can only afford one buffalo" (p.18). In these instances, men are shown as treating women as slaves or animals. Arab readers criticize Nawal for presenting this type of image to the West, when in reality many Arab men behave this way, though often in a more discrete fashion.

The statement, "a man can have four wives," is one of the sensitive subjects for which Nawal El Saadawi has received criticism. Many non-Muslims condemn Islam for allowing men to marry more than one woman. They are not aware of Islam's

restrictions and rules for marrying more than one woman, such as having a convincing reason to do so, requiring equal treatment of all wives and informing the first wife of the marriage instead of keeping it a secret. Muslims attack Nawal for writing about polygamy, arguing that she never explains it the way they want her to; rather she mentions that Muslim men are allowed to marry four wives, leading non-Muslims to form a negative image about Islam. In no instance does she describe how this rule was ordained by God, the restrictions on it, and the fact that Islam organized it in a proper way but it has been abused in practice. The defect is in the abusers, critics claim, not in Islam.

El Saadawi is also criticized for presenting Islam as a violent religion. She writes: "for the Imam ruled according to the laws of God's Shari'a: Stone adulterous women to death. Cut off the hands of those who steal" (p. 14). They blame her for focusing only on the rules of Islam that seem to be violent and aggressive to the Western world without mentioning how Islam is also a merciful religion.

In *The Fall of the Imam*, Nawal shows how people claim that even God prefers men to women and does not treat them equally: "Where did the Imam see God? They said: God visited him while he slept. But God also visited me in my sleep, said I. God does not visit women nor reveal Himself to them. God visited the Virgin Mary and she was a woman, I said. They looked at me and said: that only happened once in history and God Almighty is too great to do what He does a second time" (p.36). El Saadawi shows that what people say most of the time is nonsense. They claim that God does not repeat Himself, and for that reason He only appeared once for a woman; yet He has appeared repeatedly for different men. "El Saadawi presents God as having double standards for men and women", as some Arab critics claim. The truth is that

the way religion is interpreted and practiced by some men that lead to think that God has double standards, according to Nawal's works.

In Nawal El Saadawi's books, women are treated like objects. Men purchase their wives. Girls are not allowed to give their opinions about the man they are going to marry. Their families choose their husband based on how much he will to pay, as in *Woman at Point Zero* (p. 36-38), where the narrator's uncle tells his wife how he wants his niece to marry a rich old man he knows because he will pay them a large dowry. After the wedding, her uncle uses the dowry to pay his debts, despite the fact that the dowry is traditionally the bride's right. The narrator's uncle never even asks her opinion about her marriage. In *Woman at Point Zero*, Nawal describes how the father tries to sell his daughter for a big dowry before she gets old and undesirable, a disgraceful fate in the Arab world. In the Arabic version of the novel, El Saadawi says about all fathers:

"يبيع ابنته العذراء قبل ان تبور" (p.16). The verb used in the sentence "يبيع" demonstrates how women are treated as objects. The English translation was: "How to exchange his virgin daughter for a dowry while there was still time". The verb "exchange" used in the English version successfully transfers the image Nawal wanted to deliver to her readers. In *Woman at point Zero* the narrator says that she has many brothers and sisters and many of them die every winter. She then talks about her father: "When one of his female children died, he would eat his supper, my mother would wash his legs, and then he would go to sleep, just as he did every night. When the child that died was a boy, he would beat my mother, then have his supper and lie down to sleep" (p.18). She also emphasizes how husbands are allowed to treat their wives the way they like because they bought them with their money; they are permitted to have sex with their wives even if they refuse. In *Woman at point Zero*, there is a scene describing how the

narrator loathes having sex with her husband but is unable to refuse (p. 43). In another scene, her uncle's wife refuses to have sex with her husband but he forces her do so anyway (p. 38).

The myriad religious and cultural issues El Saadawi mentions in her books lead to a clash between her defenders and her attackers, making her an interesting case study. The mere mention of her name wherever her books are read creates debate about the themes of her books. Many say that her themes offend Islam and all Arab societies; upon deeper inspection, El Saadawi seeks fair treatment and rights for women in general. From the perspective of translation, her books reflect the complexities of translating between different cultures, especially from Arabic to English.

The chapter talked about the case study I chose for my thesis which is the translated works of Nawal El Saadawi, including her personal life, her achievements and the reasons I chose her to be my case study for. The next chapter will be a more detailed one, talking about general and specific problems of translating Nawal's books.

Chapter 4

Detailed Corpora Analysis and Problems

4.1 General Problems

4.1.1 Translation Problems

Translators of Nawal El Saadawi's works face numerous challenges. The cultural, religious and dialect problems will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. In this chapter, I will focus on the general problems of translating Arabic to English; in the following chapter I will focus solely on the problems associated with translating Nawal El Saadawi's books. The more general problems are the use of special words only known by Arab readers such as the names of places, kinds of food, names of games and Islamic occasions.

For instance, in *Woman at Point Zero*, Nawal refers to names of places such as "شارع محمد علي" and "العتبة الخضراء"(p.19) which are difficult to translate as they are not only names of places; they represent the economic level of life the narrator is experiencing, as those simple places seemed high class to her. Such a subtle distinction of lifestyle is difficult to transfer in translation. In English translation, those places are referred to as "Ataba Square" and "Citadel".

Names of local Arab games are also problematic for translators. For example, in "Woman at point Zero" the narrator talks about a game she used to play with her friends when they were young children called "عريس وعروسة" (p.18). The name of this game is enough for the Arab reader to figure out what the children were playing. The English translation yields "bride and bridegroom". Since this game does not exist in Western countries, the translator translated the name of the game literally. In this case,

the literal translation allowed the English language reader to have some understanding of the game.

Special occasions celebrated by Arabs are also difficult to translate. One example would be "العيد الكبير" in *Woman at Point Zero* and *The Fall of the Imam*. In *Woman at Point Zero* it was translated literally into "El Eid elkebeer" while in *The Fall of the Imam* it was translated into "the big feast" without any explanation about this festival or how Arabs normally celebrate it. The translation portrays it as merely a big dinner, when the Eid is much more significant. The translator could have used "the big Eid," adding a footnote to describe the Islamic feast, providing some details to spark the reader's imagination. If the translator wanted to avoid footnotes, he/she could have used "the Islamic celebration" or "the big Eid which every Muslim celebrates."

The names of food represent another difficult issue for translators. "العسلية", "الخروب", "العرقسوس", "عصير قصب" and "التمر هندي" are all local types of Egyptian food and drinks mentioned in *Woman at Point Zero* (p.25). They were translated into "dry *carob*, liquorices, and tamarind and sugar juice". The translation makes these words lose their flavor and consequently their impact on readers because those kinds of food and drinks do not give the same indication in English as they do in Arabic. The translations fall short of giving the reader the same feeling. Consequently, he/she will not be able to understand how children instantly become the happiest creatures on earth when they get enough money to buy these locally famous Egyptian sweets and juices. In such cases, domestication is needed as a solution. The translator could have picked up names of local sweets and juices famous among the children in the West in order to transfer the same intended image.

The two page introduction to the *Fall of the Imam* is filled with problematic features for the translator including cultural, religious, and other types of issues. One

complication in the introduction is the word "المعمامة المقدسة" which is translated as "godly turban," leaving a wide gap between understanding of the source text reader and that of the reader of the translation.

In literature, idiomatic expressions such as "الكر و الفر والاقبال والادبار" are widely used. In English translation, the beauty of the original expression is lost: "he used hit and run tactics, advancing towards me only to retreat with remarkable haste;" again the English language reader is left confused.

4.1.2 How did the Translator Manage?

Although most of Nawal El Saadawi's books have been translated by her husband Sherif Hetata, he has used more than one translation method; Hetata translated both *Woman at Point Zero* and *The Fall of the Imam*, using different strategies in each. The most noticeable difference is the use of footnotes. In *Woman at Point Zero* footnotes were not used, while in *The Fall of the Imam* copious footnotes were used, perhaps because the second novel involves more references to religious beliefs and rules. For instance, he uses a footnote to explain the word "Shari'a" as "Muslim religious jurisprudence" (p.14). Sherif Hetata also uses footnotes to explain "I could sit opposite the greatest of leaders with my right leg crossed over my left leg." He notes: "in the tradition, to cross one's legs in front of another person is a sign of equality and is considered by elders as disrespect" (p.72).

Sherif Hetata's 202-page translation of *The Fall of the Imam* provides exactly twenty-eight footnotes, a sizable quantity for such a short novel. Hetata's use of footnotes may be excessive in some instances, such where he explains the name "Marzouq." The footnote defines Marzouq as "fortunate creature of God," but the choice of this particular name was not intended by the author i.e. it is a name like any

other. The same is true of the footnote explaining the name, "Nemat Allah," explained as "blessing or gift from God" (p.28). Is it really that important for the target reader to know the meaning of her name? The footnote may actually distract the target reader from the course of events, directing him/her to concentrate on details of little significance instead.

In similar fashion, Hetata explains the expression "حزب الله" twice, once within the text and later in a footnote. On page ten, he translates it as "Hizb Alah (Party of God);" the second time it reads, "Hizb Allah," accompanied by a footnote defining it as "Party of God" (p.38). The same occurs in the expression "حزب الشيطان" on those same pages: "Hizb al-Shaitan (Party of Satan)," again with a footnote in the second instance.

In *The Fall of the Imam*, Hetata translates "الوزير" as "Vizir" with a footnote saying, "cabinet minister" (p.104). Why translate "الوزير" literally, since it is not a proper name? A simple use of the word "minister" without using footnotes would have resulted in a clearer, more straightforward, less complicated text.

On the one hand, use of footnotes can be advantageous, where they help the target language reader understand cultural and religious elements as well as various foreign words in the source text. The disadvantage is where they break the flow of the text, distracting the reader. Excessive use of footnotes indicates that the translator simply may not be capable of transmitting the meaning of the source text through translation only, without relying on glossaries and footnotes. Footnotes are good solutions only in limited cases where no other solution will work; they are not the solution for every difficult word the translator faces.

Analyzing the translation issues in Nawal El Saadawi's books serves to demonstrate some of the complexities of cross-cultural translation. Regardless of the

translator's methodology and technique, it is a very difficult task to transfer precisely the same image or atmosphere to the target reader, except in those cases where the reader has a certain awareness and understanding of the beliefs, religion, cultural behaviors and lifestyle of the society portrayed in the source text. The translator must make his/her best effort to make these elements more familiar to the target reader using any means he/she finds suitable, including footnotes, glossaries or explanation within the text itself, taking care to employ these techniques in the most effective way possible to avoid their associated pitfalls. This depends, of course, on the translator's skills and on the text itself as there are texts that, even in their source language, are clear enough and do not involve many religious or cultural elements that may seem foreign to the English language reader.

4.2   Specific Problems

In this part of the chapter, I will take that case study one step further, to focus on key practical aspects of those same translations, arriving at the main problems that face Nawal El Saadawi's translators. Minor translation complexities such as the names of places, games, kinds of food and special Islamic occasions and events are commonly faced in the translation of most Arabic language books. Nawal's books present additional, more difficult and complex problems for translators. These problems arise in her extensive references to cultural and religious elements along with her use of Egyptian dialect. Even though the Egyptian dialect problem exists to a greater extent than merely in El Saadawi's books, it is considered here along with cultural and religious problems because of its complexity. El Saadawi frequently uses dialect in her novels to deliver a certain specific message to the readers.

The chapter is divided into three parts: In this part, I will draw examples of the three kinds of problems from the two novels I chose: "Woman at Point Zero" and "Fall of the Imam". The second part discusses how the translator dealt with each problem. The last step is my commentary on the problems and the translations. I will comment on how the translator handled those problems and then provide my own solutions and suggestions explaining why I chose this translation and refuted the translation of the actual translator of the work. Finally, I will offer my overview about how El Saadawi's books were translated and whether the translations were successful or not.

4.2.1 Dialectal problems:

امرأة عند نقطة الصفر	سقوط الإمام
الترعة (ص.18)	فاكر ياوله اسم هذه البت؟ (ص.57)
الجبة (ص.28)	إيه ياجدعان؟ (ص.73)
القفطان (ص.28)	ولا الملك شهريار في زمانه (ص.73)
الكردان (ص.28)	من كاتي دي؟ (ص.83)
السبت (ص.29)	الأفندية (ص.94)
الخص (ص.31)	بمب العيد (ص.97)

الطبخ (نفس) (ص.42)	ماتت موتت ربنا (ص.75)
فتح الله علينا (ص.74)	إن بعض الظن إثم ياجدعان (ص.75)
فالصو (ص.44)	تسحره أو تسخطه (ص.58)
أتوبيس (ص.72)	اخرسي قطع لسانك (ص.12)
حواري (ص.72)	

4.2.2 Cultural References

امرأة عند نقطة الصفر	سقوط الإمام
يبيع إبنته العذراء قبل أن تبور (ص.16)	في اليد اليسرى مسبحة صفراء (ص.24)
نرسلها إلى الجامعة؟ لتجلس بجانب الرجال؟ (ص.42)	ماهذا الصوت؟ زغاريد أم صراخ؟ (ص.25)
المقهى ليس لعابري السبيل. ضريح السيدة زينب على بعد خطوات (ص.53)	شرفة الحريم (ص.31)

حرام إيه ونبي إيه يامره؟ (ص.96)	ظلت ملاءة العرس بيضاء من غير سوء (ص.33)
الأزهر عالم مهيب لايدخله إلا الرجال (ص.26)	تصورت أنه عين الحسود وحوطت عنقه بدوبارة تتدلى منها خرزة زرقاء وألبسته ملابس البنات (ص.45)
أتت بإمرأة معها مطواة أو شفرة موس وقطعوا قطعة من اللحم بين فخذي (ص.17)	وهبنا لك هذه الجارية فخذها كي تخدمك في الجنة (ص.137)
يهزون رؤوسهم بالاعجاب والايجاب على كل ماقاله فضيلة الشيخ الامام، يهزون رؤوسهم، ويمسحون أيديهم اليدي باليد أو اليد بالجبهة. (ص.17)	تزوجتها على عهدة الوزير وسنة الله والرسول.اشتريتها بمهر عال (ص.32)

4.2.3 Religious References

امرأة عند نقطة الصفر	سقوط الامام
يصلي الجمعة في الجامع (ص.16)	رجم الزانية وقطع يد السارق (ص.13)
يبسملون ويحوقلون (ص.17)	قل أعوذ برب الفلق من شر ماخلق ومن شر غاسق إذا وقب ومن شر النفاثات في العقد (ص.27)
فضيلة الشيخ الامام (ص.17)	خروف العيد (ص.27)
يتلو ألفية ابن مالك كما يتلو القرآن (ص.19)	ليلة العيد الكبير (ص.12)

الدين يبيح ضرب الزوجة وليس للزوجة الفاضل أن تشكو زوجها وواجبها الطاعة الكاملة (ص.52)	هل سافرت وحدها بدون رجل معها؟ بدون محرم؟ (ص.94)
خطبة الجمعة (ص.16)	قيام الساعة (ص.61)
	الزنا والفاحشة وخلط الأنساب (ص.95)

The chapter presented the general and specific problems facing the translators of Nawal's books including the dialectical, cultural and religious problems using examples from *Woman at Point Zero* and *The Fall of the Imam*.

Chapter 5

Analysis and Comments

The following chapter discusses how the translators of Nawal's books handled the translation problems in El Saadawi's books, presents my point of view regarding those translations and finally presents my own suggestions to solve those problems.

5.1 How the translation problems were dealt with by the translators

5.1.1 Woman at Point Zero

SOURCE TEXT	TARGET TEXT
الترعة	stream
الجبة	*jebbah*
القفطان	*kaftan*
الكردان	Golden necklace
السبت	basket
الخص	Bed of straw
الطبخ (نفس)	Cooking is the "spirit you breathe" into it
فتح الله علينا	If Allah is bountiful to us
فالصو	rubbish

أتوبيس	bus
حواري	streets
يبيع إبنته العذراء قبل أن تبور	How to exchange his virgin daughter for a dowry when there was still time
نرسلها إلى الجامعة؟ لتجلس بجانب الرجال؟	To the university? A place where she will be sitting side by side with men?
المقهى ليس لعابري السبيل. ضريح السيدة زينب على بعد خطوات	Sayeda Zeinab mausoleum was very close
حرام إيه ونبي إيه يامره؟	What the hell, woman?
الأزهر عالم مهيب لايدخله إلا الرجال	El Azhar was an awesome world peopled only by men
أتت بإمرأة معها مطواة أو شفرة موس وقطعوا قطعة من اللحم بين فخذي	They cut off a piece of flesh between my thighs
يهزون رؤوسهم بالاعجاب والايجاب على كل ماقاله فضيلة الشيخ الامام، يهزون رؤوسهم، ويمسحون أيديهم اليد باليد أو اليد بالجبهة.	Rub their hands one against the other, wipe their brows
يصلي الجمعة في الجامع	Head to the mosque to attend the weekly prayer
يبسملون ويحوقلون	They invoked Allah's name and called upon his blessings
فضيلة الشيخ الامام	His Holiness the *Imam*

يتلو ألفية ابن مالك كما يتلو القرآن	He recited from the thousand verse poem of Ibn Malik just as though he was reciting from the Koran
الدين يبيح ضرب الزوجة وليس للزوجة الفاضل أن تشكو زوجها وواجبها الطاعة الكاملة	Men well versed in their religion who beat their wives. The precepts of religion permitted such punishment. A virtuous woman was not supposed to complain about her husband. Her duty was perfect obedience

5.1.2 The Fall of the Imam

SOURCE TEXT	TARGET TEXT
إيه ياجدعان؟	fellows
ولا الملك شهريار في زمانه	Not even King Shahrayar at his mightiest was like that
من كاتي دي؟	Who is this Katie of yours?
الأفندية	Dressed like city dwellers
بمب العيد	crakers
ماتت موتت ربنا	She died God's death
إن بعض الظن إثم ياجدعان	The smallest doubt is a great sin
تسحره أو تسخطه	She used sorcery
اخرسي قطع لسانك	Not another word. May your tongue be cut out of your head
فاكر ياوله اسم هذه البت؟	Do you remember the name of the girl?

في اليد اليسرى مسبحة صفراء	He fingers a rosary of yellow beads
ماهذا الصوت؟ زغاريد أم صراخ؟	Voices raised in great hallelujah? Or people screaming?
شرفة الحريم	Balcony reserved for the harem
ظلت ملاءة العرس بيضاء من غير سوء	With no slightest drop of virginal blood
تصورت أنه عين الحسود وحوطت عنقه بدوبارة تتدلى منها خرزة زرقاء وألبسته ملابس البنات	She thought that the deformity in her son's leg was caused be evil eye, so she tied a blue bead round his neck with string and dressed him in the clothes of a girl
وهبنا لك هذه الجارية فخذها كي تخدمك في الجنة	I bestow this black woman on thee
تزوجتها على عهدة الوزير وسنة الله والرسول.اشتريتها بمهر عال	I paid a big dowry to betroth her
رجم الزانية وقطع يد السارق	Stone adulterous women t death. Cut off the hands of those who commit a theft
قل أعوذ برب الفلق من شر ماخلق ومن شر غاسق إذا وقب ومن شر النفاثات في العقد	Say I seek refuge in the Lord of the Breaking Day. From the Mischief of Things Created. From the Mischief of Darkness when it Envelops. From the Mischief of Those Blowing into the Embers of Occult Magic

خروف العيد	Sacrificial lamb
ليلة العيد الكبير	The night of the big feast
هل سافرت وحدها بدون رجل معها؟ بدون محرم؟	Did she travel alone without her man, without a male companion?
قيام الساعة	Day of Judgment
الزنا والفاحشة وخلط الأنساب	Adultery or sin or fornication

5.2 Solutions for Dialectal Problems

The first problematic word in "Woman at Point Zero" was "الترعة" which was translated into "stream". The translation was not wrong, yet it does not give the English language reader the same image it gives to the Arabic language reader. Water steams, in English, can exist in many places, not like the "ترعة" which exists only in the countryside. Nawal El Saadawi wanted to show in the novel a full image of the Egyptian countryside and the "ترعة" is a part of this image. It could be translated into "the local stream", for example.

Names of clothes such as "جبة", "قفطان" and "جلابية" presented another problem for the translator. These names represent a certain social standard of the person wearing them. For example the narrator of "Woman at Point Zero" says that her uncle quit wearing "الجبة" and the "قفطان" and starting wearing a suit and a necktie. This change of clothes goes along with the shift of his social standard as she means that he started acting as a high class man. This intended meaning is difficult to transfer to the target

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reader. The translator, Sherif Hetata was not successful in translating those words as he used transliteration. His translations were "*jebbah*", "*kaftan*" and "jallabueih". He only used italic letters to make the target reader understand that those words are foreign. Is it that hard for the target reader to realize that those words are foreign? He failed in delivering the meaning the author wanted to deliver to her readers. He could have said "my uncle stopped wearing the local traditional clothes and started wearing a suit and a necktie" or "he stopped wearing the traditional clothes, the jebbah and the kaftan, and started wearing a suit and a necktie". Maintaining the same exotic word is considered as foreignizing which will make the English language reader feel the linguistic differences between his/her language and the Arabic source language.

"الكردان" is a necklace. Not necessarily a "golden necklace" as the translator translated it. He has adapted Malone's method which is repackaging which means either to add to the source text or delete from it. However, mostly in Egypt they refer to the golden necklaces as "كردان" more than they refer to the silver ones so the translator was successful in his addition.

"السبت" also is an Egyptian dialect used for the big straw which save stuff in the past and nowadays it is used to carry food and other things by old ladies when they travel. Hetata translated it simply as "basket". As a matter of fact, it is difficult to translate such words as they do not have an equivalent in English. It could have been translated into "my grandmother's big basket" although it will not have the meaning in the source text. "Wicker basket" is a translation of "السبت" suggested by an Egyptian translator which will make it clearer for the English language reader than just saying "basket".

"Bed of straw" was how the translator translated "الخص". That was a straight forward translation.

"الطبخ نفس" is a famous Egyptian saying which means that the cook is what determines the taste and quality of the food i.e. people can cook in the same way, yet someone's meal will be tastier than the others. It was translated into "cooking is the spirit you breathe into it". Vinay and Darbelnet defined equivalence as the translation of idioms when two languages refer to the same situation in totally different ways which was not the case in this example. The translation lost the special magic of the Arabic saying. An Egyptian translator recommended translating it into "cooking is a mere taste".

"فتح الله علينا" was translated into "if Allah is bountiful to us". That was also a straight forward translation using calque which did not harm the text.

Both "فالصو" and "اتوبيس" were said in the Egyptian dialect but El Saadawi did not intend a special meaning from shifting to the dialect like she did in other cases so whatever the translation was, it will not make the text loses its intended meaning. An Egyptian scholar has suggested translating "فالصو" into "fake" because you do not say "rubbish jewelry"; instead you say "fake jewelry".

Hetata, who translated the two books of El Saadawi failed in general to translate the Egyptian dialect. The conversations in all Nawal's books are usually in standard Arabic, except when she intends to show the reader the social class of the speaker. For example, this shows in the conversation between two low class men in "The Fall of the Imam" who raped a girl and were talking about her. One of them says to the other "فاكر ياوله اسم البت؟". Their social standard is clear enough to the Arab reader after the use of the word "وله". The translator, Hetata, was not able to transfer that image. He translated it as "do you remember the name of the girl?" which does not give any clue about what Nawal intended with that sentence. He could have translated it into "do you remember the name of the girl, man?" or "hey you, do you remember the name of

the girl?". Hatim, B. and Mason, I. (1990) state that in case of using non-standard language in the source text, the aim of the translator has to reflect the speaker's social and linguistic standard through using non-standard grammar or deliberate variation of the lexis of the target language.

Another example of the failures of the translator in capturing the little details of the novel and the Egyptian dialect is the word "حواري". In "Woman at Point Zero", Nawal uses the word "حواري" more than once. This word does not mean "streets" as Hetata translated it; they actually mean the poor narrow neighborhoods. The word "streets" does not provide the atmosphere of the source text which the author intended. A more proper translation would be "poor narrow neighborhoods" or "traditional areas".

In "Fall of the Imam", Nawal writes "ايه يا جدعان" which was translated into "fellows". Usually, in the Western countries young men do not call each other "fellows". So the proper translation can be "guys", for example, i.e. to domesticate the way the man in the novel was calling his friends.

There is also a refer to the famous novel "The Arabian Nights" in saying "ولا الملك شهريار في زمانه" as it was translated into "not even King Shahrayar at his mightiest was like that". King Shahrayar is famous in the Western countries so the translator was right not to add any explanation about him.

"من كاتي دي" presents the jealousy of the wife of another woman so the translator was successful in his choice; "who is this Katie of yours?"

Domestication was needed when translating "بمب العيد". The translator could have used "Jelly Beans" which is received by children in the Easter. This will deliver the image of the special sweet that is eaten only in special occasions.

"اخرسي قطع لسانك" presented problematic phrase "ان بعض الظن اثم", "تسحره او تسخطه" and for the translator. He translated them in a good way, yet they lost their beauty in the Egyptian dialect. Egyptian scholars have suggested some solutions to solve the dialectal problems in Nawal's texts. They have suggested translating "اخرسي قطع لسانك" into "shut the hell up" or "hold your tongue". Domestication worked perfectly in these two translations. They have translated "تسحره أو تسخطه" into "conjure him up" and " ان بعض الظن اثم" into "suspicion is some cases is a sin" which are accepted translations as they deliver the meaning of the source text without losing the beauty of the phrases.

Hetata, in some occasions, used literal translation in its wrong place which made the translation sometimes look insignificant. For instance, he translated " ماتت موتت ربنا" into "she died God's death" which absolutely has no meaning in English. There was no need to use literal translation in that place. He could have translated it into "she died a natural death".

As we mention the word "God", we notice that the translator did not stick to one translation in translating the word "الله". He sometimes uses the word "God" and sometimes "Allah" not paying attention to the fact that the English language reader might not be familiar with the word "Allah". If he insisted on using "Allah", at least he should have maintained it so that the reader would understand from the context what the author means.

5.3 Solutions for Cultural Problems

The cultural references are the most problematic issues in translating Nawal El Saadawi's works. For example, it was difficult to translate " يبيع ابنته العذراء قبل أن تبور", أتت بإمرأة معها مطواة أو شفرة موس وقطعوا قطعة من اللحم "، "نرسلها إلى الجامعة؟ لتجلس بجانب الرجال؟" يهزون رؤوسهم بالاعجاب والايجاب على كل ما قاله فضيلة الشيخ الامام يهزون رؤوسهم "، "بين فخذي

ما هذا الصوت؟ زغاريد أم "" , "في اليد اليسرى مسبحة صفراء" , "ويمسحون ايديهم اليد باليد أو اليد بالجبهة تزوجتها على عهدة الوزير وسنة الله "" , "وهبنا لك هذه الجارية فخذها كي تخدمك في الجنة" , "صراخ؟ صراخ عال "شرفة الحريم" and "والرسول.اشتريتها بمهر عال. They all refer to cultural beliefs or traditions that the English language reader is not aware of. Domestication can not work in this case. The only solution is to foreignize them. Nawal El Saadawi proves by the mention of such sentences that she does not intend to address the Western readers as those elements will remain ambiguous for him/her. She could have used only expressions that can be easily translated if she was writing to the West, as many people claim.

It was also difficult to translate the sentence which appeared in "The Fall of the Imam" that says " تصورت أنه عين الحسود وحوطت عنقه بدوبارة تتدلى منها خرزة زرقاء وألبسته ملابس البنات" which was translated into "She thought that the deformity in her son's leg was caused be evil eye, so she tied a blue bead round his neck with string and dressed him in the clothes of a girl". In the Arab culture, when the mother thinks that an evil eye has badly affected her son, she dresses him like a girl. This tradition or belief is not known in the west which might make this sentence foreign and unfamiliar to them. However, from the context the target language reader might understand that tradition. The translator, in this case, can use Malone's recrescene which means explaining the phrase or sentence rather than making any cultural adaptations in order to bring the target reader closer to the source language and culture.

Another cultural problematic tradition is when a girl gets married, the husband is supposed to take the bed sheet and show the blood on it to his family and to the girls family to prove to them that she was a virgin. This tradition exists only in some Arab counties nowadays and the target readers are not familiar with it. So it was difficult translating the sentence "ظلت ملاءة العرس بيضاء من غير سوء" but the translator somehow

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tried to solve this problem by saying: "with no slightest drop of virginal blood" as he added the word "virginal blood" to clarify to the target reader that the bed sheet was supposed to have the virginal blood on it.

5.4   Solutions for Religious Problems

Nawal El Saadawi tends to mention some Islamic rules in her books. For example, she says "الدين يبيح ضرب الزوجة وليس للزوجة الفاضلة أن تشكو زوجها وواجبها الطاعة الكاملة", " رجم Nawal makes it. "هل سافرت وحدها بدون رجل معها؟ بدون محرم؟" and "الزانية وقطع يد السارق" obvious in the first two sentences that this is an Islamic rule, except for the last sentence. The translator should have added that information by himself saying "did she travel alone without her man, without a male companion? That's wrong in Islam" or "did she travel alone without her man, without a male companion as Allah ruled?". That will make the sentence more understandable to the English language reader.

There are some references to some Islamic places in the novels such as "المقهى ليس ضريح السيدة زينب على بعد خطوات "لعابري السبيل" and "الأزهر عالم مهيب لا يدخله الا الرجال". The English language reader can understand the intended meaning of "ضريح السيدة زينب" from the context but "الأزهر" was more ambiguous so the translator could have added "the famous Islamic school", for example.

Islamic acts are also mentioned for a number of times in the novels. For example, "يصلي الجمعة في الجامع", "يبسملون ويحوقلون"and "يتلو ألفية ابن مالك كما يتلو القرآن". The Western readers are familiar with the praying in mosque and with reciting from the Quran so the translator did not have to add anything to those two sentences. "يبسملون ويحوقلون" was translated into "they invoked Allah's name and called upon his blessings" which gave the intended meaning, even though it lost its beauty.

Domestication was used by the translator while translating "حرام ايه ونبي ايه يامره؟" as he translated it into "what the hell, woman?". He avoided mentioning the word "حرام" and "نبي" and he just transferred the meaning. He was successful in translating that sentence. However, he foreignized the word "امام" and left it as it is, with italics. He could have kept the name only adding "the religious leader" in the first time it appears.

There is a mention of some Islamic facts like "العيد الكبير", "قيام الساعة" and "الزنا والفاحشة وخلط الأنساب". Most of the Western readers are familiar with those references so it would be easy for them to understand their meaning, except for the verses which are used for some times in Nawal's books. She shifts from regular writing to verses immediately without any hint before which can mislead the Western reader as he/she will notice a shift in the narration. The translator could have added at the end of the verse "as Allah said", for example.

The expression "أرى الرجل والبنت وثالثهما الشيطان" in the introduction refers to the Islamic belief that whenever a man and a woman are alone together, Satan will be with them, implying that they will commit adultery. Thus it is prohibited for a man and a woman who are strangers to each other to be alone together. The Arabic phrase is translated as, "the man leans over the girl and beckons to Satan," confusing English language readers not familiar with this Islamic belief.

To conclude with, we can notice that the translator was successful in dealing with some problematic issues in El Saadawi's books and unsuccessful in some other issues. Sensitive texts like Nawal's texts which offer many cultural and religious references are difficult to translate and not any translation can provide the same meaning intended by the author to the target language readers. Cross-cultural translation is not an easy kind of translation at all. It involves elements that make the process of

translation a very complex one but not impossible if those elements are taken into consideration such as objective of the translation and target audience (Raddawi, 1999).

Conclusion

The thesis went through varied aspects regarding its core issue which is cross-cultural translation. In order to discuss the different opinions about cross-cultural translation in general and about Nawal El Saadawi's books in particular, I had first to give an overview about El Saadawi's life. In order to examine cross-cultural translation, translation itself had to be defined and discussed so the thesis shifted to theory through defining translation and going through its different strategies. Those strategies were applied to the translation of Arabic literature into English taking into consideration the cultural and religious differences between the Arab readers and the Western readers. Nawal El Saadawi was taken as a case study to examine the advantages and disadvantages of cross-cultural translation. The translations of El Saadawi's books were used as examples to comment on the validity of translating into another culture to a totally different audience.

The study was an attempt to answer a question that is raised among Arab readers and critics: "does the translation of Nawal El Saadawi's works help in shedding the light on the strange "other" and make its culture more familiar to the West, or does it foster the stereotypes Western readers have about Arabs?". While the question pinpoints the work of one author in particular, conclusions reached by way of profound study can be applied to the broader inquiry regarding cross-cultural translation in general, and whether it serves the source culture by the image portrayed to target readers.

I began my inquiry by defining "cross-cultural translation," discussing its advantages and disadvantages and providing different views about it in an attempt to

reach an answer to this question. After a long study, I have reached a dead end where there is no definite answer that can be generally applied in all cases. People have different views regarding writing about sensitive issues in their culture, and Arab culture is no exception. Those who oppose cross-cultural translation, have stronger objections when it comes to translation of written texts. They are against writing about those issues in an attempt to protect the reputation of Arab culture in the West.

The solution to the dilemma of stereotypes lies not in hiding Arab social problems from Western readers, pretending to be a perfect society; the solution is to realize change and reform in that society, eventually overcoming the antiquated image of Arabs, I think.

At the same time, writers take care to avoid offending source language readers of their work. In Nawal El Saadawi's case, she criticizes negative behaviors and ideas in Arab society in an attempt to reform it. Her aggressive way of presenting her ideas and of condemning society is offensive to the very people she endeavors to communicate with. A talented writer such as El Saadawi is capable of conveying her message without creating negative reactions from her fellow Arabs by attacking their traditions and for giving Western readers a dreadful image about Muslims and Arabs.

Translators are integrally involved in this matter. When translating this kind of text, they must strive to clarify its foreignness by any means they find suitable. Some target language readers do not have pre-existing notions about the topics Nawal and others write about; other target language readers are aware of those topics but have little or no idea about them; this kind of books can make them believe all Arabs and Muslims behave and think in a negative way. The author of such books needs to clarify that while certain thoughts and behaviors do exist in Arab society, they do not pervade all people and all areas of the Arab world. By creating a better overall

representation, misunderstanding and erroneous generalizations of target language readers are avoided, while source language readers will not be so inclined to attack the author and avoid reading his/her books. Many people refuse to read Nawal El Saadawi's books simply because she attacks Arab beliefs and way of living, although they read other books that address the same topics in more accepted ways. Losing Arab readers is not Nawal's aim. She purports to restructure Arab society, and therefore should inspire all Arabs to read her books with an open mind. In summary, El Saadawi should continue to address the topics she raises, but present and discuss them in a less offensive manner. Arabs are not used to free voice. That's why Nawal was shocking. Maybe a whole restructuring of the interpretation of religious teachings is needed and taboos should be sometimes eliminated so as to speak freely about different social issues and try to find a possible remedy to them.

Cross-cultural translation is a successful method of shedding the light on "the other," bringing different societies closer together. Arabs learn about Western society, largely by way of American movies. American cinematographers tackle the various negative aspects of their society, including drug abuse, crime and other social defects, rather than try to present a skewed, idealized image. They have the courage to shamelessly show their reality to people around the world. Nawal El Saadawi has the same courage; yet there is a difference between the two. The West presents their defects as exceptional; not all Westerners behave in the same way and when they choose a questionable or mistaken path in life, society tries to modify them as it refuses this kind of behaviors. El Saadawi presents all Arabs as behaving and thinking in only one way; consequently she has lost many Arab readers and been accused of exclusively addressing the West in her books.

The best method available to Arabs to present their society is writing, since Arab media is not yet popular in the West. Arabs must use this method effectively. The three parties sharing responsibility for effective writing are Arab authors, Arab readers and translators. The Arab readers should support authors' efforts to write about Arab society fearlessly; Arab authors should write endlessly about their society, its positive and negative sides, but without offending their own people; and translators should strive to best to transfer the source text to the target readers achieving the intended understanding and reaction.

Cross-cultural translation is one of the most effective methods to make all people around the world familiar with each and every culture no matter how far and how different it may be. It should be perpetuated through exchanging information and sharing experience between one culture and "the other" culture. The method may vary from one person to the next, whether in the role of author or that of translator; in the final analysis, everyone has the same goal: to make his/her own culture reach the whole world, and to profoundly comprehend the culture of "the other."

Recommendations

- Arab readers should be more open minded towards texts attacking their societies and should be aware of their positive role in restructuring the society and getting rid of all its social defects.

- Arab authors should continue playing their role in reforming the society fearlessly. Yet, they have to respect the feelings of the Arab readers especially that the Arab people are known for being emotional. The writers should take advantage of that instead of letting it limit the popularity of their books, and, as a result, stand against their social mission. The current famous publishing

houses that publish Arab translated books (Al-Saqi and Quartet in England, Sindbad in France and Three Continents Press in the United States) are rare and their production regarding Arab books are even rarer.

- Translators and publishing houses have to translate all kinds of Arab literature, not only the literature that meets the western expectations. This will make them avoid the accusation towards them and towards the Arab authors of addressing the Western audiences.

- The translators are also to be blamed for fostering the false image about Islam and about the Arab culture in the West. They should figure out methods and strategies that clear out the foreign elements in the Arab literature. They should not leave the English language reader to his/her lost and give him/her the chance to analyze matters on his/her own way. Sometimes domestication is the solution for foreign phrases and explanations within the text itself can help.

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