Comparative Literature

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What is Comparative Literature?

Comparative Literature is traditionally known as the study of two or more literatures in comparison (English and German, for example) and their multi-dimensional components which may encompass aspects such as the historical, gender, economic, cultural, social, philosophical, religious, and linguistic factors of the distinct cultures being analyzed.

Students and instructors in the field, usually called "comparatists", have traditionally been proficient in several languages and acquainted with the literary traditions, literary criticism, and major literary texts of those languages. Many of the newer sub-fields, however, are more influenced by critical theory and literary theory, stressing theoretical acumen and the ability to consider different types of art concurrently over proficiency in multiple languages.

Overview and history of comparative literature:

Comparative literature is an interdisciplinary field that compares different literary traditions, genres, styles, and movements across cultures.
The overview and history of comparative literature can be traced back to ancient times when scholars began comparing Greek and Roman literature. In the Middle Ages, comparative literature was used as a tool for translating works from one language to another. During the Renaissance period, comparative literature became more focused on comparisons between European and non-European literatures.

In the modern era, comparative literature has expanded beyond Europe and includes all forms of world literature. The field also encompasses various approaches such as structuralism, semiotics, feminist criticism, and postcolonial theory. Some notable figures in the history of comparative literature include Erasmus, Montaigne, Goethe, and Levy-Bruhl.

Definition of comparative literature:

Comparative literature is a field of study that compares and contrasts different literary works from various cultures and time periods.
It involves analyzing similarities and differences in themes, characters, plot structures, language use, and other elements across different texts. The goal of comparative literature is to gain insights into the cultural values, beliefs, and historical contexts that produced these works. This approach can also be used to explore the influence of one culture on another through their shared literary traditions.

Importance of comparative literature in literary studies:

Comparative literature is an interdisciplinary field that involves comparing and contrasting different literatures from various cultures and languages.
The importance of comparative literature in literary studies lies in its ability to provide insights into the cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts of different

literatures. By examining similarities and differences between different texts, scholars can gain a deeper understanding of the themes, motifs, and techniques used by writers across different traditions. Additionally, comparative literature allows for cross-cultural dialogue and exchange, promoting global literacy and appreciation of diverse perspectives. It also enables scholars to identify patterns and trends in literary history, contributing to our overall understanding of the development of literature as a form of artistic expression.

Types of texts compared in comparative literature:

Types of texts compared in comparative literature include works from different languages and cultures, as well as different genres within a single language or culture.

Some common types of texts compared in comparative literature include epic poems, plays, novels, short stories, essays, and treatises. Comparisons may also be made between different forms of non-fiction such as biographies, memoirs, and autobiographies.

In addition to comparing texts across different languages and cultures, scholars in comparative literature often compare texts within a single language or culture but from different periods or styles. This can help to identify changes in literary trends over time or to analyze how certain themes or motifs have evolved or remained consistent throughout history.

Comparing different cultures through literature:

Comparing different cultures through literature is an approach to studying and understanding other cultures by examining their literary works. This approach involves analyzing the similarities and differences between literary works from different cultures in order to gain insights into the cultural values, beliefs, and traditions of those societies. By comparing these works, scholars can identify common themes, motifs, and symbols that transcend national borders and language barriers.

Some examples of comparative literature studies include examining the ways in which Shakespeare's plays reflect the social and political issues of his time, or comparing the depictions of women in traditional Japanese and Western narratives.

Overall, this approach provides a unique way of exploring the complex interplay between culture and literature, and offers valuable insights into the diverse experiences and perspectives of people around the world.

Theoretical approaches to comparative literature:

Theoretical approaches in comparative literature include various methods and frameworks for analyzing and understanding literary works across different cultures and languages.

One approach is comparative semiotics, which involves examining how meaning is constructed and interpreted through language and symbols in different cultural contexts. Another approach is comparative poetics, which focuses on the analysis

of poetic forms and structures across different traditions.

Other theoretical approaches include comparative narratology, which studies the structure and function of narratives in different cultures; comparative discourse analysis, which analyzes the ways in which language is used to construct social identities and power relations; and comparative trauma studies, which explores the ways in which traumatic experiences are represented and addressed across different cultures.

Overall, these theoretical approaches provide valuable insights into the complex interplay between culture, language, and literature, and help us better understand the diverse ways in which human experience is expressed and represented around the world.

Methods used in comparative literature research:

The methods used in comparative literature research include:

1. Comparative criticism – This involves comparing different literary works from different cultures and time periods to identify similarities and differences in themes, styles, and techniques.
2. Translation studies – This involves analyzing translations of literary works from one language to another, focusing on issues such as cultural adaptation, preservation of meaning, and loss of original context.
3. Intertextuality – This involves studying how literary works reference or allude to other texts within their own culture or across cultures.
4. Genre theory – This involves examining the characteristics and conventions of

specific genres, including comparisons between different versions of the same genre in different cultures.

5. Cultural studies – This involves exploring the social, political, and economic factors that influence the production and consumption of literature in different cultures.

Significant figures in the development of comparative literature

Significant figures in the development of comparative literature include:

1. William Golding – British author who wrote “The Lord of the Flies” and was known for his use of comparative literature in his works.

2. Toni Morrison – American writer who is considered one of the most important voices in contemporary African-American literature. She has used comparative literature to explore themes such as race, gender, and identity.

3. Chinua Achebe – Nigerian novelist and poet who is widely regarded as the father of modern African literature. He incorporated traditional Igbo stories into his work and also used comparative literature to explore colonialism and its effects on Africa.

4. Miguel de Cervantes – Spanish writer who is best known for his novel “Don Quixote”. His work helped establish the genre of the novel and he also made significant contributions to the field of comparative literature by exploring themes such as chivalry and romance across different cultures.

5. Franz Kafka – Czech writer whose works often deal with themes of alienation

and existentialism. He drew inspiration from a variety of literary traditions including German, Jewish, and Eastern European literature.
6. Edward Said – Palestinian-American academic and intellectual who is known for his work on postcolonial studies and comparative literature. He argued that Western literature had colonized other cultures and that it was necessary to reevaluate these texts through a critical lens.

Examples of comparative literature projects:

Examples of comparative literature projects include:
1. Comparing different versions of classic works across cultures and languages to identify changes in themes, characters, plot points, etc.
2. Analyzing how literary works from different regions or time periods reflect and respond to social, political, and cultural issues prevalent at that time.
3. Comparison of myths and folktales from various cultures to explore their similarities and differences in terms of themes, motifs, and symbolism.
4. Analysis of the representation of women in literature from different cultures and historical periods to examine gender roles, stereotypes, and challenges faced by female characters.
5. Study of the influence of one culture on another through literature, such as the impact of European colonialism on indigenous literatures in Africa and Asia.
6. Exploration of the use of language and style in literary works from different cultures to understand how they convey meaning and shape our perceptions of the world.

Challenges faced by scholars working on comparative literature:

Challenges faced by scholars working on comparative literature include:

1. Language barriers – Scholars may face language barriers when studying texts from different cultures and languages. This can make it difficult to fully understand the meaning of the text and interpret its cultural context accurately.

2. Different literary traditions – Comparative literature often involves comparing texts from different literary traditions, which can be challenging due to differences in style, structure, and themes.

3. Access to primary sources – Finding and accessing primary sources such as manuscripts, archives, and other historical documents can be difficult for scholars working on comparative literature, especially those who are not based in major research libraries or archives.

4. Interpretation – Interpreting texts across cultures and languages can be subjective and open to interpretation, leading to debates among scholars over the true meaning of the text.

5. Limited resources – Due to funding constraints and limited resources, many scholars working on comparative literature have difficulty traveling to study materials in person, making remote access and digital tools essential for their work.

Future directions for comparative literature research:

One potential future direction for comparative literature research is a focus on interdisciplinary approaches that bring together different fields such as literary theory, cultural studies, and philosophy. Another area of interest could be exploring new technologies and digital humanities tools to analyze and compare texts across languages and cultures. This may include using natural language processing algorithms or developing interactive digital platforms for readers to engage with diverse literary works. Additionally, there may be an increased emphasis on globalization and transnationalism in comparative literature research, examining how literature reflects and responds to cross-cultural exchanges and interactions. Overall, future directions for comparative literature research will likely involve pushing beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries and embracing innovative methods and technologies to better understand the complexities of global literatures.

Arab Culture and English Literature: An Affinity

This part discusses the literary osmosis between Arab culture and English literature, more precisely it subtracts the issue of influencing and being influenced between the writers in the two cultures. As it shows the influencing on the Iraqi poet Badr Shaker Alsayab by the British poet T. S. Eliot, it also shows the influencing on Lord Alfred Tennyson by the Arabian poet Imru al- Qays. Many of Arab influences in the English literature are raised in this part, in poetry also it discusses the influencing on the father of English poetry Geoffrey Chaucer by the *Arabian Nights* tales. In the novel, it discusses the influencing on Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe* by the novel of Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*. In drama it discusses the influencing of the famous story in the Arab culture of the hero and beau Antar Bin Shadad on the great poet and playwright William Shakespeare especially in his play *Othello*, more comparisons are discussed in this paper. At the end of the study, we conclude that the modern Arabic literature influenced by English literature, the English literature is also influenced by the Arab literature in the middle ages. *The Arabian Nights* was influential on many writers in the English literature. The mainspring of the influence on English writers caused a renewal and development of English literature. The translation movement helped to make the Arab culture influential on the civilizations around, including the influencing on the English literature. The Orientalists contributed to transfer the Arab Culture to Europe via translation of the Arab literature to their languages.

Introduction

Arab civilization contributed in the Middle Ages in literature, arts and thought as well as in science in influencing the civilizations around. Arab civilization has strong presence and prosperity which conduced to the entry of Arab culture to Europe by European Orientalists who provided for the transfer of Arab culture to their countries, besides the impact of Arab civilization on the people and their language, food, clothing, also has effected on English literature, as a European thinker says, 'If the Arabs did not appear on the stage of history, the European renaissance would delayed for several centuries'. Mainspring of the influence on European writers was to renewal and evolution of their literature as Dr. Youssef Ezzedine says, "Literary Osmosis is that develops the literature and saves it from deadlock", he also adds, "Literary Osmosis stronger in West than of us now, it started from the roots of Arab culture, interested in Arab Arts and Humanities and appeared in their poetry and prose literature". Arab heritage in Middle Ages was on a high level of prosperity and maturity and it occupied the foreground of the world at that time scientifically, culturally, intellectually and in Literature too. Thereby European and Oriental travelers led to establishing relations between East and West through translation via three routes; the Crusades, trade across the island of Sicily, and the Islamic conquest of Andalusia. In the Crusades alone (1096 - 1291 AD), the largest translation movement in history is known for over two centuries, where most of the Arab heritage and reference books were transferred to the west, allowing for Arab Culture to enter from a wide door to Western civilization, and keeps important significant impact which contributed to raise the

prestige of cultural, scientific .and civilization of the West and lifted Europe out of the Dark Ages.

The Role of Translation Movement

Translation Movement is the main factor that transfers the Arab Literature to Europe. The translation of *Alf Layla wa Layla* or *The Arabian Nights* or also *des Mille et Une Nuits* in French as it is translated first by the French Orientalist Antoine Galland (1646-1715) introduced *The Arabian Nights* to Europe and left a clear impact on the Western literature, and this impact was greater on English literature after Andrew Bell translated the tales in English which made orientation and modernity in literature. Also, the translation of *Mu'allaqat* or *The Hanging Poems*, (because these poems were hung on or in the Ka'ba at Mecca), translated by Sir William Jones, effected poetry and prose in English literature. These translations along with other effects contributed to the refinement of Western literature in spinning platonic love. *Troubadour* (lyric poetry) with its impact in English poetry is not different from its role in Europe, and the origin of this art, in fact, is from the Andalusian Muwashah and Zajal which have common features with *Troubadour* , and poets in both, are singing poetry from disinheritance more than from contact, and beloved remains truthful despite disinheritance, and this course of love was not known by the Latin tradition of thought as it is common in the Arab tradition.

Literary Osmosis in the Modern Arabic Literature

Literary Osmosis is also applied on the Modern Arabic literature, in poetry for example, some of Arab poets have been effected by English Romantic Poetry, they are; Abbas Mahmoud Al-Akkad , Ibrahim Mezni and Abdul Rahman Shukri. They also founded The Diwan School which appeared in the first half of the twentieth century, and calls to take advantage of English poetry. Also at the individual level, Badr Shaker Alsayab was attracted by T. S. Eliot as he said, "I admire Thomas Eliot, influenced by his style, no more".

In drama, George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* has clear influence on the Egyptian playwright Tawfiq al-Hakim. Tawfiq al-Hakim watched it as a film and despite the fact that the play of Tawfiq al-Hakim had the same name, which Bernard Shaw's play afford, Hakim denies that he was influenced by Bernard Shaw's play. He says that the reason for the effect was due to the painting, "Pygmalion and Galatea" by the artist, Jean-Léon Gérôme, whom he admired.

Whether the writer admitted it or not, the impact of Bernard Shaw's play on Tawfiq al-Hakim is clear when we compare the two plays.

Ghassan Kanafani in his novel *What remained to you* was Influenced by William Faulkner. Kanafani says, "For Faulkner I am very impressed with his *The Sound and the Fury*, I think this is true; I am very impressed with Faulkner, but in *What remained to you* is not effected mechanically by Faulkner, but it is an attempt to

take advantage of the aesthetic tools and artistic accomplishments achieved by Faulkner for the development of Western literature".

POETRY

As mentioned earlier, *The Arabian Nights* and the *Hanging Poems* attracted some of eminent English poets, such as Geoffrey Chaucer, the father of English poetry. Chaucer was influenced by *The Arabian Nights* in his poetic stories: "The Canterbury Tales", especially in the Squire's tale. The influence on Chaucer was not direct through the translation of *The Arabian Nights*, but even then he was influenced by it. The main factor to influence Chaucer was through his contacts with some of the pioneers of Italian literature such as Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. Boccaccio for example, was influenced by *The Arabian Nights* in his allegory (*Decameron***)** or *The Ten Days*. For the similarities, when we compare these two works, we find that the character Scheherazade in *The Arabian Nights* resorted to tell stories, fearing the injustice of her husband who may try to kill her. Thus, other youth and women in the Decameron hided in a rural palace, fearful of death and they eliminate the fear by telling stories, and this is what was revealed by some researchers when they studied *The Ten Days* allegory. As for Italian writers who lived at the same period with Chaucer, and how they were attracted by *The Arabian Nights*, is likely to be, as Muhsin Mahdi, the Professor of Arab Studies at Harvard University and an investigator of *The Arabian Nights* says that some European Orientalists who visited Cairo in eighteenth century, knew about

the book and it was translated into their languages from hand-copied manuscript and they thought it was incomplete, so they came looking for a full copy of it.

Lord Alfred Tennyson was one of the poets who have been influenced by translation of *The Hanging Poems.* Tennyson read *The Hanging Poems* with its explanations by Zouzni and Tabrizi written in prose. The main effect on Tennyson in his poem “Locksley Hall” was in the standing on the ruins and describing it, which is existing in *The Hanging Poem* of Imru al-Qays. Here is a comparison between the translation and “Locksley Hall*”*:

STAY!—Let us weep at the remembrance of our beloved, at the sight of the station where her tent was raised, by the edge of yon bending sands between Dahul and Haumel.

"Tudam and Mikra; a station, the marks of which are not wholly effaced, though the south wind and the north have woven the twisted sand."

Thus I spoke, when my companions stopped their coursers by my side, and said: "Perish not through despair: only be patient."

"A profusion of tears," answered I, "is my sole relief; but what avails it to shed them over the remains of a deserted mansion?"

"Thy condition," they replied, "is not more painful than when thou leftest Howaira, before thy present passion, and her neighbour Rebaba, on the hills of Masel."

“Locksley Hall” :

Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet't is early morn: Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn.

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call, Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall;

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts, And the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts.

Dr. Youssef Ezzedine explains many aspects of influencing “Locksley Hall” in his book, *The Impact of Arab Literature at Depths of Western Literature.*

In addition to the poets mentioned above, William Wordsworth in his poem “The Gipsy” narrates a carefree life of Arabic farmers. Among the early British authors, John Milton, Carew and john Donne were more or less attracted with the Arabic life style of the folds, sheep and farmers. Among the Romantic poets of England, Robert Browning is found highly enamoured with the Italic conjugal life and love for the art of the contemporary rulers which we can find in his poem “My Last

Duchess". Though America has a short history on the world map yet we find that Edgar Allan Poe, the eminent Romantic poet and multi- faceted genius was hypnotized with the Arab culture. His poems "The Haunted Place", "Lenore" and "Eldorado" are based on Islamic legends. His poems "Al Aaraaf", "Eldorado" and "Eulalie" are based on the description mentioned in the *Kuraan.* Moreover, his tales "The Cask of Amontillado", "Ligeia" and "The Premature Burial" are purely the description of Arab Culture as Poe had studied *Kuraan* very well. Other eminent American philosophers like Herman Melville, Robert Frost, Emily Dickinson, Dylan Thomas, Ezra Pound, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Tennessee Williams etc. too have described Arabic art, customs, social life, rustic life and culture in their literature.

Novel

Besides *The Arabian Nights*, the novel *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* or *Living, Son of Awake* by Mohammad Ibn Tufayl (1100-1185 AD) have had an impact on English literature and was clearly shown in the first novel of English literature, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe as most of researchers say. Hayy Ibn Yaqzan was translated in 1671 by Edward Pococke - the son, who carries the same name as his father - the English Orientalist appointed as the first Professor of Arabic at the University of Oxford in 1636 AD.The father sponsored the translation of his son for Arabic Fiction. Hayy Ibn Yaqzan can be described as the researcher and

Oreintal thinker about whom Clifford Edmund Bosworth- the Professor of Arabic Studies at the University of Manchester- says, "It is the biggest deep philosophical work and has had ongoing impact on English literature and composition rational and intellectual in England and the West in general, as the hero of the story. Hayy tries to access to the religious-philosophical truth in research, its causes without the use of any broker from abroad. This work has been a rapprochement with rational thinking that has prevailed in the West in the eighteenth century".

In return to *Robinson Crusoe* and compare with Hayy Ibn Yaqzan we find these similarities: the space in the two novels is same; remote Island and one man tries to understand and explore all that surrounds, so in both novels there is one main character in similar circumstances. The secondary character also, which appear contingently in the island after the stability of the main character, and the meeting of the two characters after a long period of isolation on the island - and all other similarities in the two novels are listed in the research, *Applied Approaches in Comparative Literature* by Majida Hammoud. When we look at the life of Daniel Defoe (1661 – 1731), we find that Defoe escaped to Spain (the homeland of Ibn Tufayl) for the fear of risk of exposure, including prison because he had participated in some revolutions that broke out in his turbulent era and he spent two years in Spain. So it is normal to be effected by the most famous novel at that time.

Drama

The great impact of *The Arabian Nights* did not stop at the names mentioned earlier, but it came to the great writer of English literature, William Shakespeare. Some scholars of the heritage of Shakespeare –including the British Orientalist Arthur John Arberry – said that the play of Shakespeare, *Othello* which revolves around the Moroccan noble man who strangles his wife, Desdemona because he thought that she betrayed him, and, when he observed his own error of doubts he killed himself at once for his sin, is similar to the story "Qamar-uz-Zaman and His Beloved", and the name ‘Othello’ is a distortion of ‘Obaidullah’- the hero of the tale in *The Arabian Nights*. As well as when comparing *The Tempest* with the tale, "Island of Treasures" in *The Arabian Nights*, both are full of witchcraft and sorcery, and revolve around the Sultan or the Governor of the island where the devils and jinn (ghost) obey him.

In a comparative study, conducted by Professors of literature at the University of Taiz - Yemen, under the title, “From the Arab Desert to London Theatre: Shakespeare's *Othello* and Antar ibn Shaddad”, the study investigates in the Arab story of Antar ibn Shaddad filled with manifestations of love with his beloved, Abla and also the knighthood in the hero, Antar, who has never been defeated, and comparing this story with the play *Othello* by Shakespeare. The researchers found more than 70 similarities in two stories among them:

1. The story of Antar ibn Shaddad revolves in an atmosphere filled with wars, raids and battles between Arab tribes and the story of *Othello* revolves in an

atmosphere filled with wars and battles between the State of Venice and the Turks.

2. Antar ibn Shaddad was a black Arab from one of the Arab tribes in the Arabian desert and Othello was also a black Arab from one of the Arab Maghreb countries.

3. Physical strength and skill combat made Antar "Hero of Abs and Adnan" whilst made Othello to be "the hero and commander of the Army of Venice".

4. Abla is the daughter of a supervising masters and notables of the Abs tribe and Desdemona is daughter of one of the dignitaries of the state of Venice.

5. Antar was able to acquire the heart of his beloved Abla as well as with Othello and Desdemona.

6. Marriage between Antar and Abla was the same as of Othello with Desdemona.

7. Tribe was amazed of Abla's love for black slave which is contrary to the customs of the tribe and royal people also were amazed of Desdemona’s love for black slave - contrary to the customs and traditions of society.

8. Antar was famous in swinging his sword and for his glorious and heroic battles as well as Othello.

9. Chiboub, the friend of Antar is famous as a womanizer and a pauper, as well as Casio, the friend of Othello.

10. Chiboub, a close confident friend of Antar , accompanied in errands, dispersed only in the storm, as well as Casio for Othello.

A lot of other similarities are here that prove the impact of Antar ibn Shaddad on Shakespeare's *Othello*. And for how Shakespeare influenced by the story, is as the Oreintalist E. L. Ranelagh said, “Petrus Alphonsi – born in al- Andalus in the 11th century – wrote a book named *Councils of Learners* and contained a multitude of Arab tales that later mingled in English literature in England and other European countries**."** Antar ibn Shaddad’s story have great impact in the tales in Alphonsi's book. Ranelagh and Victor Chauvin agree that some writers such as Cervantes, Boccaccio, Chaucer and Shakespeare borrowed from Alphonsi’s book which leads us to say that Shakespeare was influenced by the story of Antar ibn Shaddad . It is generally observed that Shakespeare's plays are not without glimpses of Oriental appearance. The Arabic names frequently mentioned in Shakespeare's plays from Arabia, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco etc. are examples to it.

Conclusion:

Arab literature influenced English literature in all the fields of literature - Poetry, Novel, and Drama. The Greatest influence was in the tales of *The Arabian Nights* and it influenced different eras of the English literature. The Orientalists contributed to transfer the Arab Culture to Europe via translation of the Arab literature to their languages. The mainspring of the influence on English writers caused a renewal and development of English literature.

Crusades and trade across the island of Sicily and the Islamic conquest of Andalusia introduced Arab civilization to Europe. Literary Osmosis is a normal thing, as the Arab literature influenced English literature. Today the situation is different not only with Arabic language but with all of the other languages of the world also because the English people ruled over the world for several centuries and made English an international language to develop their trade in the world. The influence of Arabic literature on English literature can be directly observed, or through other languages such as French, Italian, Spanish etc.

The Representation of Women in Literature

Representation of Western Women in Fiction

A seminal work that studies Western women representation in literature is Cynthia Griffin Wolff's "A Mirror for Men: Stereotypes of Women in Literature." She views literature as a mirror that reflects the prevalent social attitude towards women. It is not whether or not the work of literature revolves around a feminine character that matters, Wolff argues; rather it is how this character is portrayed. Unlike masculine problems, such as the "Oedipal" problem, establishing masculine identity or resolving conflicts with authority, the corresponding feminine problems, such as resolving the "Electra" problem or establishing feminine identity are rarely the focus of literary interest. Women are portrayed in ways that reflect the stereotypical images of women; that is, they are presented as they respond to the different needs of the masculine (204- 22 205). Reviewing women stereotypes that have existed in literature written in English, Wolff categorizes them into five types: the virtuous woman and the sensuous woman (who usually appear together in the same literary work), the sentimental woman (one that is emotional and helpless), the liberated woman (who is intelligent and talented but who has a problem in finding meaningful employment of that talent; this stereotype appeared in the 19th and 20th century literature), and the American girl (whose function is to magnify the man who supports her and whose profession is

usually that of a teacher; this stereotype appeared as a post-Civil-War phenomenon). What concerns Wolff is the persistent acceptance and adoption of women stereotypes even by women writers in modern Western literature. Another seminal work on Western women representation in terms of stereotypes is Mary Anne Ferguson's Anthology Images of Women in Literature. The anthology consists of three parts and covers seventy-two works that illustrate women's traditional images and reflect the changes in those images as a result of the women movement. The first part of the book, entitled "Traditional Images of Women," describes the stereotypical images of women associated with their biological roles as they are assigned to them by the culture out of which they arose. These images are wife, mother, woman on a pedestal and women without men. Part Two, "Becoming," analyzes works written by more contemporary authors and shows the processes by which women seek to go beyond their ascribed roles. Part Three of the book, "Self-Images," shows how women, who are caught by race, economic class and gender, have perceived themselves. A further study of how women are represented in terms of gender stereotypes is Women in Literature: Reading Through the Lens of Gender edited by Jerilyn Fisher and Ellen S. Silber. The book examines the selected literature for teaching and argues that despite the changes in women's roles as a result of the feminist movement, the canonical classical and contemporary literary fiction selected for teaching at schools and colleges is still full of bias and stereotypical representations of women, and is still taught

with fondness and admiration in traditional ways that lack a female perspective. For the majority, these "great books" according to the editors, represent mainly what men of educational privilege have most valued as readers and writers, something that marginalizes at least half the human experience (xxiii). Among the themes covered in the essays are gender stereotypes, women's search for freedom, intersection of race, ethnicity and gender, and social construction of gender, among many more. Images of Women in Fiction Feminist Perspectives is a further example of Western's women representation in fiction. Edited by Susan Koppelman Cornillon, the book is a collection of essays that deal with forms of analysis growing out of new consciousness. These essays, according to Cornillon, were written at a time when women and men began to see literature in new perspectives that were opened by the Women's Liberation Movement. The essays depict the roles which women were forced to assume in society and the roles they started to occupy. The essays begin with the traditional stereotypes of women as heroine and invisible person, and progressing through an awakening to reality where a woman is treated as a person, and ending with the insistence by women that they are equal to men (x). It could be argued that Western women have been portrayed in terms of stereotypical images until more recently, and thanks to the Women's Movement, they have started to appear in fiction as equal to men, particularly in women's writing.

Representation of Arab Women in Fiction

Arab women characters in literary works are less fortunate than their Western counterparts and are often portrayed as different from Western women. In this regard, Nadje AlAli in Gender writing/Writing Gender: The Representation of Women in a Selection of Modern Egyptian Literature, argues that Arab women have generally been represented as different from Western women and are mainly defined as Muslims. By being represented in terms of their religion, Arab women are portrayed as either women oppressed by the male and/or society and the norms that prevail, or, more recently influenced by feminism, as women who challenge these norms to forge a female identity. Unlike Western women, Arab women suffer not only from the power of male dominance and society expectations from within the inside, but also from the stereotypical images and expectations assigned to them by Western feminists. An example of a study focusing on how Arab women are represented in terms of stereotypes is Mona Mikhail's Seen and heard: A Century of Arab Women in Literature and Culture. In this study, Mikhail investigates the images of women in North African literature of French expression and tries to assess the theme of "search for identity," which was prevalent in the writings of the 1950s, such as those by the two novelists Assia Djebar and Rachid Boudjedra. Mikhail studies Djebar's work to analyze how women characters are seen by women authors, while Boudjedra's work is analyzed because it depicts the alienation of women in traditional Muslim societies. Mikhail shows that North African writers are still grappling with their portrayals of women. While Djebar's work represents the

woman character as one that has hope despite the oppressive weight of social pressure and religious sanctions, Boudjedra records the prison that society has made for the woman character. The study shows that both women and men writers tend to represent their women characters in a way that still conforms to the traditional gender stereotypes even though women writers tend to add the element of hope to the image of the woman character. What seems to be a problem in the representation of the Arab woman is the systematic image of all Arab women as victimized. The expression Arab world is used to refer to the twenty-two Arab countries in the Arab Middle East and North Africa. Thus, to generalize about women on behalf of these countries requires studying more than one country or one author (see Figure 1). Figure 1. Countries of the Arab World. In this regard, Marnia Lazreq criticizes the generalized view of Western feminists on women in Algeria as being subsumed under the less-than-neutral label of Islamic women, or 26 Middle Eastern women. In "The Politics of Translation," Gayatri Spivak also criticizes the way Western feminists expect feminist writings from outside Europe to be translated into their languages of power that usually eliminate the identity of the cultures that are less powerful. While advocating literal translation, Spivak also criticizes Western translation strategies that translate Third World literature into English without taking into consideration linguistic, cultural and geopolitical differences (400-406). Spivak argues: In the act of wholesale translation into English there can be a betrayal of the democratic ideal into the law of the strongest. This happens when all the

literature of the Third World gets translated into a sort of with-it translatese, so that the literature by a woman in Palestine begins to resemble, in the feel of its prose, something by a man in Taiwan. (400) Going back to how Arab women are represented, it can be argued that the stereotypical image of the Arab woman in the West tend to be that of a veiled and submissive creature; and works selected for translation tend to emphasize this image whether these works are written by women or men. For example, only certain Arab authors are translated and these authors, such as Naguib Mahfouz and Nawal Sadaawi, tend to present similar images of women in their works. Peter Clark suggests that the selection of texts for translation from Arabic can reinforce prejudices and stereotypes (21). Other scholars such as Michelle Hartman and Elliot Colla share the same view. While Hartman indicates that Arabic literature is read and "appreciated" for its sociological value rather than its literary value (20), Colla, an Islamic studies scholar and translator of Arabic novels, argues that American audiences usually read themselves when they want to read literature. Even when they are curious about other cultures, American audiences prefer to read what an American has to say. He adds that only a small fraction of American readers is interested in Arabic literature. However, he specifies "this hunger raises more questions than it answers." and when they read Arabic novels, they look for two types of stories: "stories about the Western self, and stories about the Arab Other" (online interview).

The Translation of Arabic Literature

Introduction

Arabs have historically complained about their image in the West. They accuse this West of deliberately distorting their image to justify its political approach towards them. According to Said (1978), this image of the Arabs was established through the work of Orientalists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including the translation of selected Arab literary works. Those works were carefully chosen and manipulated to help create the desired image of Arabs.

According to Faiq (2007), Said's argument is still valid today; i.e. the selection of Arab literary works to be translated into English and other Western languages is still made based on the degree of their conformity to the stereotypical image of Arabs. Further, translators deliberately manipulate texts to ensure consistency with that image.

The aim of this thesis is to examine the above argument to establish whether it is still valid in our age of globalization and open communication through digital media. To do so, the thesis assesses Nancy N. Roberts' (1995) translation of ٥٧ بيروت (1993), a novel by the Syrian novelist Ghada Samman. The thesis concludes that things have changed somehow, with the addition of market demand as an important element in the process of literary translation

from Arabic. As for deliberate manipulation by translators, this is not always applicable, because such manipulation can now be easily detected and may well damage the reputation of the translator.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter one introduces the topic and significance of this research. It also outlines the organization of the thesis. Chapter two provides an overview of translation studies. It starts with the linguistic-based works of Jakobson, Nida, Catford, Newmark and Vinay and Darbelnet, and then moves onto the functional theories of Reiss, Vermeer and Nord. This is followed by the discourse analysis approaches of House and Hatim and Mason. The chapter ends with the cultural approaches to translation pioneered by Lefevere and Bassnett.

Chapter three focuses on literary translation from Arabic to English. It outlines three phases of interest in translated Arabic literature, and then examines the master discourse of translation from Arabic. As this discourse is dominated by stereotypical representations of Arabs, the chapter traces how these representations were developed in the first place, and how they have been maintained. According to the manipulation school, these stereotypical representations have been maintained primarily through the selection of literary works to be translated and the application of manipulative translation strategies.

In the modern era, interest in translation from Arabic began with the European colonialism of the Arab region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The

motive for this interest and translation was Orientalist interest rather than literary appreciation. Arabic literature was looked at as a documentary record of the social conditions without any real literary value. This continued in the twentieth century until 1988 when Naguib Mahfouz was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature (Büchler & Guthrie, 2011).

Altoma (2005) distinguishes three phases that Arabic fiction went through in the twentieth century. The first phase was between 1947 and 1967, and during which it was very difficult to find publishers willing to publish translated Arabic literature because of the very limited interest then. The second phase starts in 1968 and extends to 1988. During this period, Arabic fiction started to be appreciated, and more Arabic works were translated. The awarding of the Nobel Prize to Naguib Mahfouz marks the beginning of the third phase, which extends from 1988 to the present day. This period has witnessed an increasing demand for Arabic fiction with more publishers willing to invest in translating and promoting Arabic literature.

Interest in the Arab world has significantly increased after the events of September 2001. In the UK, there were initiatives aimed at promoting translated Arabic literature. The Arts Council of England funded translations from Arabic as part of the subsidies provided to publishers, and in 2009, it joined efforts with the British council to organize an Arabic-English literary translation workshop in Cairo and to support Beirut 39, a project by the Hay

Telegraph Festival which selected and celebrated 39 Arab authors under the age of 39 whose works were translated. Those works were published in 2010 in a Bloomsbury anthology titled *Beirut 39: New Writing from the Arab World* (Büchler & Guthrie, 2011).

Translation of Arabic literature into English is now dependent on subsidies, which is an obstacle in the face of its dissemination in English as the selection of titles for translation, the translation strategies, and the marketing of translated works are dictated by the commercial aspects of the publishing industry. The leading translated genre is the novel, with short stories in the second position (Büchler & Guthrie, 2011).

The Master Discourse of Translation from Arabic

According to Faiq (2007), the master discourse of literary translation from Arabic into Western languages has been dominated by "established systems of representation, with norms and conventions for the production and consumption of meanings vis-a-vis people, objects and events" (pp. 1-2). These systems of representation are based on certain "topos" or stereotypes which "dictate the discoursal features used in the writing of translations or other texts about the source culture" (p. 14). Despite the passage of time, "the Arab and Islamic worlds are still seen as stagnant entities with the dangerous addition in the last few years of new terms to the vocabulary of a master discourse that refuses to alter its system" (p. 4). Within this system, the Arab and Islamic

worlds are seen as a homogeneous entity, with its main characteristics being: primitive, barbarous, destructive and dependent.

But how did these stereotypes develop? And how are they maintained? These are questions that will be answered in the following sections.

Stereotype Development

In his book *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said explains how the stereotypes of representation were created and maintained in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. When the French and British empires started expanding into the Orient, they needed to know its peoples to be able to maintain their domination over them. So a new branch of studies developed to cater to the needs of the colonial empires; some researchers lived among the people in the Orient and started recording their observations. However, at this stage, the political goal of domination affected the way those observers saw the 'Orientals.' In their observations, the dominant idea was the contrast between the civilized conquerors and the primitive inhabitants of the land who needed to be civilized. According to Said, the problem is that these images and stereotypes of the Orient never changed later, "The Orient [is] always the same, unchanging, uniform, and radically peculiar object" (1978, p. 98).

When a second wave of Orientalists came to the region, they saw it through the eyes of their predecessors:

In a fairly strict way, then, Orientalists after Sacy and Lane rewrote Sacy and Lane; after Chateaubriand, pilgrims rewrote him. From these complex rewritings the actualities of the modern Orient were systematically excluded, especially when gifted pilgrims like Nerval and Flaubert preferred Lane's

descriptions to what their eyes and minds showed them immediately. (Said, 1978, p. 177)

So, when the Orientalists attempted to translate the literature of the Orient, including Arabic literature, they had an established system of representation which they adhered to. For example, Richard Burton, who translated *The Arabian Nights*, describes Arabs as follows:

Our Arab at his worst is a mere barbarian who has not forgotten the savage. He is a model mixture of childishness and astuteness, of simplicity and cunning, concealing levity of mind under solemnity of aspect. His stolid instinctive conservatism grovels before the tyrant rule of routine, despite the turbulent and licentious independence which ever suggests revolt against the ruler; his mental torpidity, founded upon physical indolence, renders immediate action and all manner of exertion distasteful; his conscious weakness shows itself in an overweening arrogance and intolerance. His crass and self-satisfied ignorance makes him glorify the most ignoble superstitions, while acts of revolting savagery are the natural results of a malignant fanaticism and a furious hatred of every creed beyond the pale of Al-Islam. (cited in Faiq, 2004, p. 6)

Carbonell (1996) notes that this image presented by Burton is not the result of any encounter he had with an Arab; but had rather been established "long before Burton even set foot in Alexandria." (p. 81).

While Said (1978) contends that "Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient's difference with its weakness" (p. 204); Leeuwen (2004) argues that Said's framework is too rigid and inconsistent. Instead, he proposes Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of 'dialogism' to analyze the cultural exchange between Europe and the Arab world. He explains that the nineteenth century witnessed a cultural exchange between the two sides. The commodities exchanged were of a different nature; Europeans were fascinated by the mysticism, romantic barbarism and sensual sophistication of the Arab world, while the Arabs were interested in the sciences, technology, warfare and socio-economic organization of the Europeans. Hence, "Orientalism in Europe and Occidentalism in the Arab world are two sides of the same dialogic process" (p. 20).

In essence, Leeuwen provides an alternative explanation of the process through which the stereotypical image of the Arab was created, but he does not deny the fact that such an image exists. On the other hand, Said seems to be more interested in how Orientalism created and perpetuated that stereotype than in whether it had its roots in reality; "The things to look at are style, figures of

speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, not the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original" (Said, 1978, p. 21).

This thesis is more concerned with the *result* than the *process*. The stereotype of the Arabs was created out of the encounter between the East and the West in the colonial period, and this stereotype proved to be very difficult to change. Even though Said provides a valid explanation of how this stereotype was created by the powerful West at a time when the East was not able to speak for itself, his theory does not explain the continuity of this stereotype after the East started acquiring the ability "to speak for itself". Most third world countries, including the Arab countries, gained their independence from the former colonial powers in the 1950s and 1960s. Still, more than 50 years later, the same stereotype is still dominant. Why?

This is partly because in any encounter between individuals, the first impression lasts. The same applies to encounters between two groups of people. In this case, an image is created through the observation of the behavior of few individuals, and is then generalized to the whole group. This is stereotyping thinking. Hilton and von Hippel (1996) explain that:

Stereotyping thinking typically serves multiple purposes that reflect a variety of cognitive and motivational processes. Sometimes, for example, stereotyping

emerges as a way of simplifying the demands on the perceiver. Stereotypes make information processing easier by allowing the perceiver to rely on previously stored knowledge in place of incoming information. Stereotypes also emerge in response to environmental factors, such as different social roles, group conflicts, and differences in power. Other times stereotypes emerge as a way of justifying the status quo, or in response to a need for social identity. (p. 238).

There is nothing wrong with using stereotypes; it is part of human nature. The human mind tends to categorize people using similar attributes because this makes it easier to understand and control the world. These categories highlight the differences; the other is defined as lacking the characteristics of the self.

Stereotypes do change, albeit slowly, based on any change noticed by the human mind. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the stereotype of the Arab seemed fixed for Said because the Western mind did not notice any major change in the behavior of Arabs. So, the Arab was seen as leading a primitive life in the desert, riding camels, etc. However, in the last few decades, the stereotype of the Arab in the mind of the Westerner has had new characteristics added to it to reflect new observations. Some of the new descriptions of the Arab, which did not exist before, are “bomber” and “billionaire”, which reflect current changes noticed in the real world. This means that the stereotypical

image of the Arabs can be changed for better or for worse, mostly depending on how the media portrays them.

The stereotypical image of the Arabs still dominates the mind of Westerners, and it determines what they expect when it comes to Arabic literature. Faiq captures this idea very well when he says "as with native texts, the reception process of translated texts is determined more by the shared knowledge of the translating community and its language, than by what the translated texts themselves contain" (2007, pp. 9-10).

It is assumed that this image has been maintained through manipulation and the selection of certain works for translation. The following sections examine this assumption in detail.

Manipulation

According to Faiq, texts are domesticated to fit with the established system of representation of Arabs and their culture; "exotic, manipulating, subverting and appropriating translation strategies still govern intercultural encounters through translation from Arabic and associated representations of its speakers" (2007, p. ix). For Venuti (1995), this is not limited to Arabic, but is part of the dominant trend in Anglo-American translation projects; i.e., invisible translators producing translations which reflect the dominant culture.

Hatim & Mason (1997) refer to Venuti's distinction between foreignization and domestication. Venuti shows that "the predominant trend towards domestication in Anglo-American translations over the last three centuries had a normalizing effect by depriving the source text producer of his voice and re-expressing foreign cultural values in terms of what is familiar to the dominant culture." (p. 121).

For Faiq, the very act of translation involves "manipulation, subversion, appropriation and violence" (2004, p. 2). This view is also held by Venuti (1995), who sees violence in the very purpose of translation:

The reconstruction of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs, and representations that pre-exist in the target language, always configured in hierarchies of dominance and marginality, always determining the production, circulation, and reception of texts ... Whatever difference the translation conveys is now imprinted by the target-language culture, assimilated to its positions of intelligibility, its canons and taboos, its codes and ideologies. The aim of translation is to bring back a cultural other as the same, the recognizable, even the familiar; and this aim always risks a wholesale domestication of the foreign text, often in highly self-conscious projects, where translation serves an imperialist appropriation of foreign cultures for domestic agendas, cultural, economic, political. (pp. 18-19)

One of the key arguments of Said's Orientalism is that the Orient is manipulated in such a way as to make it resemble the European ideas about the Orient.

Orientalism exhumes the turaath (tradition) but in order better to mummify it, in that it makes the works accessible to us, but in unreadable translations, which at the same time widens the distance between them and us. It enshrines in the target language the image of a 'complicated Orient', to use de Gaulle's expression, and in doing so, not only reinforces that very stereotype, but also confirms the orientalist's status as the expert and as the indispensable mediator. (Jacquemond, 2004, p. 121)

Appiah states that the aim of a literary translation is to produce a text which complies with the literary and linguistic conventions of the culture of the translation. He added that producing a translation that is identical to the original is impossible and that "it might be necessary to be unfaithful to the original in order to preserve formal features that are more important" (cited in Venuti, 2000, p. 397).

Carbonell (2004) makes an important statement in this respect:

This does not mean that the translator always substitutes familiar references for foreign ones, which may be the case in certain texts where those references are secondary to the purpose of the translation (e.g. Bible translation), but rather the opposite is true particularly in literary translation from languages such as Arabic where references to alien concepts or customs are usually preserved and somehow clarified in the translated text or explained in footnotes. (p. 27)

This is less applicable now than it was in the past because of globalization. Any unjustified manipulation in the translation, especially in how a different culture is presented, will affect the reputation of the translator. Many more people now have access to both the original and the translation, and can easily spread the word of how a certain translator dishonestly manipulated through translation. Therefore, it is expected that there will be less domestication and more foreignization, as we will see under the analysis of the translation of ٥٧ بيروت.

Manipulation is not necessarily the result of a hidden agenda. It could simply occur because of the structural and lexical differences between languages. According to Hatim and Munday (2004), "The key problem for the translator is the frequent lack of one-to-one matching across languages" (p. 35).

Leeuwen is one of those who reject the idea of manipulation and subversion.

For him:

“Translations are not merely aimed at cultural appropriation, but are rather points of reference in a broader context of relations and a means to rethink and revise existing practices and ideas. The texts will never be understood or interpreted according to the society that produced them, but will always be placed in the receiving society and be utilised according to its specific needs. (2004, p. 19)

These two opinions will be examined in relation to the translation of بيروت ٥٧ to determine whether the translator manipulated the text, and if so, what dictated the manipulation.

Selection of Works for Translation

As previously mentioned, it is assumed that the selection of works to be translated depends on the extent to which they are consistent with the established systems of representation. In the case of Arabic, texts which fit with the established stereotypes about Arabs are selected for translation, and texts which do not fit are filtered out. Said points out that “there seems to be a general ‘embargo’ except for texts that reiterate the usual clichés about ‘Islam,’ violence, sensuality, and so forth” (cited in Faiq, 2007, p. 15).

Faiq elaborates on the same idea:

The West, satisfied and content with its own representations, has not deemed it necessary to appreciate appropriately, through translation, the literatures and respective cultures of these peoples, except for texts that fit the requirements of the master discourse of the translating culture. (2007, p. 14)

He goes on to state that "Arabic literary texts are rarely chosen for translation for their innovative approaches or for their socio-political perspectives, rather texts chosen are recognizable as conforming to the master discourse of writing about and representing Arabs, Arab culture and Islam" (2007, p. 17).

So, two processes are at work: an exclusion process whereby undesired texts are left out, and an inclusion process whereby some members from the other (Arab writers) are accepted as long as their writings are in line with the systems of representation. According to Leeuwen (2004):

Translators are often reproached for selecting titles for translation, which are bound to strengthen European prejudices about the Arab world and for refusing to give a balanced picture of the Arabs' cultural heritage. They are accused of seeking financial gain or promoting orientalist biases, appropriating texts to fit their own discourses and endorsing the European foothold in Arab culture. Moreover, they fail to appreciate Arabic literature, as it should be, because of a traditionally depreciative attitude towards Arabs and because of the European monopoly on the formulation of literary standards. (pp. 23-24)

It is true that texts are selected for translation when they are consistent with the established stereotypes in the minds of the target audience. However, today the underlying factor behind this is the economic factor; i.e., because some texts will be expected to generate much more sales than others, and not because the translator or the publisher has an agenda to reinforce certain stereotypes. In fact, it is rare to find a publisher who is prepared to invest in publishing books for which there is no demand, which is the case of literary works translated from Arabic.

Neil Hewison, the Associate Director for Editorial Programmes at the American University in Cairo Press, which has a policy of systematic publication of contemporary Arabic literature in English translation, has the following to say regarding the demand for Arabic literature in translation:

We're a non-profit organization: we publish a range of books, some make money and some lose money. Literature — with the two exceptions of Mahfouz and al-Aswany — doesn't generate income! So if we were a commercial house we would have dropped most of our literary list years ago. […] Our literature sales are not spectacular. Mahfouz and al-Aswany sell well enough, but the rest of them are done for love, and for the idea of it, the mission, really, of making Arabic literature available to a wider audience, not for money. (cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 25)

But this problem is not limited to literature translated from Arabic. Ashley Biles, the Sales Manager at Saqi Books, points out that this is a problem of translated literature in general:

There's no particular struggle with the promotion of the Arabic books over all, no particular prejudice against it — it's a general prejudice against all translated literature! Shelf life is determined by sales, so shops return the books to us if they don't sell quickly. (cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 38)

The same idea is reiterated by the Lebanese author Hanan Al-Shaykh:

Any author, not only an Arab author, needs a little bit of commercial success

— if you don't have that, they won't publish you again. So if you're not funded by the Arts Council or someone else, you must sell or you won't get published again. You must sell at least 2,500 – 3,000 copies of a book for it to be fully commercially viable. (cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 32)

According to Landers, “literary translation, at least in the English-speaking world, faces a difficulty that texts originally written in English do not: resistance by the public to reading literature in translation” (2001, p. 7).

The question here is: if there is little demand for Arabic literature in translation, how do publishers select works which they expect will sell?

Here are some answers:

- “Presumably for commercial reasons, publishers often choose works which they think will sell well for their extra-literary features” (Translator Catherine Cobham, as cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 68).

- “I’m pretty disappointed [about the way publishers approach Arabic literature], as often as not. One respected editor told me that he was looking for a comedy about ethnic tensions in Iraq” (Translator William Hutchins, as cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 68).

- “I do think that generally the books that are translated are the ones that are making noises in the Arab world, the controversial best sellers like Girls of Riyadh or The Yacoubian Building being so widely read in Arabic clearly deserve to be translated so they can be read in English. I don’t believe that we should just be translating arty

stuff that no one in the Arab world is reading" (Translator Tony Calderbank, as cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 31).

- "Publishers say 'I'm really interested in stuff from Iraq right now,' with politics as the main impetus behind that interest" (Translator Marilyn Booth, as cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 69).

- "We try to select books carefully, on good advice. Although we publish 10 to 15 or even up to 20 a year, we would never put out books just to keep up that quota, definitely not. And of course this is all subjective, so we please some and upset others. There's no way I can say that our selection represents absolutely the best books of the year — we can only translate a tiny drop per year from that ocean of the thousands of books which appear in Arabic" (Neil Hewison, Associate Director for Editorial Programmes at the American University in Cairo Press, as cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, pp. 23-24).

We cannot but ask: whose advice is Hewison talking about?

According to Büchler and Guthrie (2011), when UK publishers select Arab authors for translation, "Information is filtered selectively through certain sources without enough direct reference to native speakers of Arabic familiar with the Arabic literary scene of various countries" (p. 30). Hanan Al-Shaykh expresses her frustration with this situation:

I would like to know about a group of judges, a panel, who would choose the best novels to be translated. You seldom find mainstream UK publishers who

are willing to use [professional] readers to tell them about books — they just go for something that has already been translated. The Yacoubian Building was already a best-seller in Arabic and doing well in its French translation before it was picked up in the UK. (cited in Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 30)

So, why was ٥٧ بيروت selected for translation? Was it because it adhered to the established system of representation of the Arab culture, or because it sold well in its Arabic version? This is one of several questions that the following part addresses.

Data Analysis and Findings

This part explored the master discourse of literary translation from Arabic to English, by examining the criteria for selecting works to be translated and the dominant translation strategies used. This chapter examines the reasons why Ghada Samman's novel بيروت ٥٧ was selected for translation —whether it adhered to the established system of representation of Arab culture, and if so, whether there was deliberate manipulation on the part of the translator to conform to this system. Examples from the novel are discussed to establish how the translator handled cultural references, how Arab culture is presented through translation, and when foreignization or domestication is used and the implications in each case.

Methodology

This part examines the novel بيروت ٥٧, the author Ghada Samman, the translator Nancy N. Roberts, and the way the translated novel was received to find out the reasons behind its selection for translation. The result of this examination will confirm or otherwise the commonly held assumption that Arabic works are selected for translation only when they conform to the established system of representation of Arabs and their culture in the West; in other words, to further sustain the stereotypical system of representing Arabs. For this purpose, 19 examples with references to Arab culture have been

chosen from the novel. These examples are discussed to establish the translation strategies used by the translator, and how those strategies relate to the theoretical approaches presented in chapters 2 and 3 above. Particular reference will be made to the approach of Vinay and Darbelnet who prescribe literal translation unless there is a good reason not to do so.

The Novel

بيروت ٥٧ tells the story of five people (Farah, Yasmeena, Abu'l-Malla, Abu Mustafa, and Ta'aan) who share a taxi heading from Damascus to Beirut, where the two main characters (Farah and Yasmeena) hope they will be able to achieve their dreams. Beirut, however, turns out to be a corrupt place, which will eventually destroy the five characters. Farah sells his soul to become a singer, but eventually loses his mind. Yasmeena sells her body to get love, but is eventually killed by her brother because she stopped giving him money after her rich lover deserted her.

Abu'l-Mulla dies of a heart attack when he tries to steal an ancient statue from a site he is supposed to guard. The fisherman Abu Mustafa carries dynamite and hysterically jumps in the water to catch the magic lamp, which he has been dreaming of for 30 years. Finally, Ta'aan becomes paranoid about people from a rival family trying to kill him in revenge, and ends up killing a stranger who was about to ask him for directions.

The Author: Ghada Samman

Ghada Samman is a Syrian writer and journalist born in Damascus in 1942. She received a B.A. in English Language and Literature from Damascus University, and a M.A. in Theatre Studies from the American University of Beirut. After completing her study, she became a journalist and worked in Beirut. She lives between Beirut and Paris, and has never returned to Damascus since she left in the 1960s.

Samman's first collection of short stories, عيناك قدري (*Your Eyes are My Destiny*), was published in 1962, followed by another collection, لا بحر في بيروت (*No Sea in Beirut*), in 1965. She published her first novel, بيروت ٥٧ (*Beirut 75*), at the end of 1974. Her other works include novels such as كوابيس بيروت (*Beirut Nightmares*) (1977) and ليلة المليار (*The Night of the First Billion*) (1986), and many collections of short stories, poems and articles (Ashour, Ghazoul, & Reda-Mekdashi, 2008).

The Translator: Nancy N. Roberts

Nancy N. Roberts is a North American prolific literary translator best known for her translations of Ghada Samman's works: *Beirut 75* (1995), *Beirut Nightmares* (1997), and *The Night of the First Billion* (2005). She also translated other works such as Mohamed El-Bisatie's *Over the Bridge* (2006), Salwa Bakr's *The Man from Bashmour* (2007), and Naguib Mahfouz's *The Mirage* (2009) and *Love in the Rain* (2011), to name just a few. She works in other fields as well, such as healthcare, law, current affairs, Christian-Muslim relations, Islamic law and Islamic thought and history. In fact, she presents herself as a translator specialized in Islamic thought, as she has translated several works in this area (Büchler & Guthrie, 2011).

Talking about her translations of Ghada Samman's works, Roberts states that she translated them "just for the love of it" (Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 66), before finding publishers to publish them. She won the Arkansas Arabic Translation Award in 1995 for her translation of *Beirut 75*, and received commendation from the Banipal Literary Award committee in 2008 for her translation of Salwa Bakr's *The Man from Bashmour*.

Why *Beirut 75*?

As mentioned under the previous sub-section, the translator chose to translate this novel 'just for the love of it', but what exactly made the translated novel likely to sell in the West and most importantly convinced the publisher to take the risk?

There are several factors which make the novel a good choice from the perspective of a Western publisher. Some have to do with the writer Ghada Samman, and some have to do with the novel itself.

When Ghada Samman wrote بيروت ٥٧, she was 32 years old. There is high demand in the West for novels written by young female writers. Reporting on personal experience of translating contemporary Arabic literature into English, Peter Clark writes:

I wanted ... to translate a volume of contemporary Syrian literature. I ... thought the work of 'Abd al-Salam al-'Ujaili was very good and well worth putting into English. 'Ujaili is a doctor in his seventies who has written poetry, criticism, novels and short stories. In particular his short stories are outstanding. Many are located in the Euphrates valley and depict the tensions of individuals coping with politicisation and the omnipotent state I proposed to my British publisher a volume of 'Ujaili's short stories. The editor said, "There are three things wrong with the idea. He's male. He's old and he writes short stories. Can you find a young female novelist?" Well, looked into women's literature and did

translate a novel by a woman writer even though she was and is in her eighties. (cited in Faiq, 2007, pp. 14-15)

Memory in the Flesh by Ahlam Mustaganami is another example confirming this idea. The novel was translated into English twice. The first translation had many errors, which made the publisher arrange for a retranslation by another translator. The second translation was also criticized for the use of inappropriate register. However, the book survived all this and sold well due to "the fame of the original and that of its *female Muslim rebel* author" (Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 37) [emphasis added].

Another factor which has to do with the writer herself is the fact that Ghada Samman studied English language and literature and was influenced by the Western

literary tradition. ٥٧ بيروتincludes references to Dante’s *Inferno*, Shakespeare’s

Macbeth, *Faust*, *Odysseus*, Atlantis and Columbus. The writer also breaks taboos. This makes her work closer to the Western audience, although she was not writing specifically for them.

One of the factors which relates to the novel itself is the title بيروت ٥٧. The first image that this title conjures up is the Lebanese civil war, which started in 1975. As explained above, Arabic literature is very often appreciated for its documentary value as a record of the social conditions in Arab countries. So, Western readers would be eager to read the novel and expect to learn something about the causes of the Lebanese civil war. In fact, this is how the novel was received, as will be shown below. In the words of Awwad (cited in the introduction of the translated novel, p. vi), "the novel may almost be described as prophetic, in that its characterization and setting lay bare the complex roots of the ongoing strife."

Another factor is that in 1975, Beirut was the most Westernized Arab city. Most cafés and restaurants in Beirut mentioned in the novel carry foreign names: Café de Paris, Horseshoe Café, Popeye's Restaurant, Café du Roi, The Panache and Wimpy's. There is also a reference to Carl Orff music. All these references would bring the novel closer to Western audiences. In this sense, it becomes not only the capital of Lebanon, but a globalized city where every reader would find something to relate to. In her introduction to the translation, Roberts notes that:

Beirut 75 offers a message relevant both to the Arab and the non-Arab reader. Deepening our understanding of central issues facing men and women of Arab society may offer insights into problems and questions plaguing Western society as well, for the concerns laid bare in *Beirut 75* are not unique to the experience of modern Arabs, but in one degree or another are reflective of the "human condition" common to present-day societies throughout the world as they are forced to rethink previously unquestioned values and practices and as they search for ways of establishing communal identities which affirm the dignity of all individuals. (p. vii)

Reception of the Translated Novel

The translated novel was awarded the University of Arkansas Arabic Translation Award in 1995. The University of Arkansas press website (2013) describes the novel as "a creative and daring work which prophetically depicts the social and political causes for the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975. It addresses the struggles of Arab, and particularly Lebanese, society, but the message is one of the universal human condition."

Kim Jensen wrote a review of the novel in Al Jadid Magazine under the title "Ghada Samman's *Beirut 75* Unmasks Gender and Class in Post-Colonial Society." Jensen describes the novel as:

a short, yet harrowing exposé of the political reality of Beirut at the outset of the civil war. This frighteningly raw novel, which traces the lives of five strangers, lays bare the deep social divisions which led to one of the most dismal periods in modern Arab history.

With a storyline reminiscent of such Western works as Balzac's "Lost Illusions" or Flaubert's "A Sentimental Education," "Beirut '75" describes the unveiling process whereby "the glittering city" is revealed to be nothing more than an alienating prison. In this case, Beirut replaces Paris as the city of madness and death. But here Beirut, unlike Paris, is the site of post-colonial dismemberment -- a city torn asunder by class rivalries and outdated allegiances (ironically, to Paris). This political and cultural "dismemberment" is incarnated in the book in haunting ways -- all too prescient of the butchery that became prevalent during the war. (Jensen, 1999)

So, the novel is viewed mostly as a record of the political and social conditions prevalent in Beirut at the time of its publication. Ghada Samman is applauded for her ability to depict 'the social and political causes for the outbreak of the Lebanese civil' and reveal 'the political reality of Beirut at the outset of the civil war.' This stresses the idea that Arabic literature is still viewed as a record of the political and social conditions in the Arab world and is not appreciated as much for its literary value.

Examples

This section examines how the translator handled cultural references in the novel. Nancy Roberts is quoted above to the effect that her technique has always been "fairly intuitive," and that as she gained experience and confidence, she became "less bound" to the literal text than she used to be at the beginning of her career (Büchler & Guthrie, 2011, p. 66). In the light of this and keeping in mind that *Beirut 75* was among Roberts' first translations, it is expected that her strategy in translating the novel would be more intuitive and literal.

Example One

) ٥.ص(." بيروت.بيروت"والرجل الواقف أمام باب الكراج، وهو ينادي بصوت مذبوح

and the man standing in front of a nearby garage calling out hoarsely, “Beirut!

Beirut!” (p. 3)

Commentary

‘Garage’ is a mistranslation of the word ‘كراج’ in this context. In Syria, this term is used to refer to a bus terminal, or to a shared taxi terminal in this particular case, as people travelling between Damascus and Beirut in the 1970s used to share taxis rather than ride buses. The translator seems to be unaware of this meaning of the word in the Syrian culture. She could not understand what a garage has to do with someone traveling from one city to another, and assumed it must be a ‘nearby’ garage. A more appropriate translation would be:

The man standing at the entrance of the shared taxi terminal calling hoarsely, “Beirut! Beirut!”

Example Two

) ٧.ص(.والسيارة تغادر المدينة، تمضي في طريق الربوة والهامة

Departing the city, the taxi headed for the foothills and mountain peaks, (p. 4)

Commentary

This is another mistranslation resulting from the translator's unfamiliarity with some aspects of the Syrian culture. 'الربوة والهامة' refer to two villages near Damascus on the road to Beirut. So these are proper nouns (names of villages) that need to be transliterated and not translated, or at least the ways they are internationally represented in English are used. An appropriate rendering would be, and perhaps substantiated with a footnote:

Departing the city, the taxi crossed Rabwa and Hama.

Example Three

) ١٠.ص(آه يا زمن ..آه

Oh-oh my! (p. 9)

Commentary

In this example, the translator goes for domestication to convey the feeling of pain expressed by the character. Literal translation would have resulted in something meaningless in English, and there is no need to explain to the reader that this is how people in Syria or Lebanon express their pain. So although the translator did not use the word ‘time’, this is completely justified and cannot be considered manipulation on the part of the translator. Still, the translator was not very successful in this instance. Perhaps, a functional translation would be:

Life sucks.

Example Four

ص(هذا المرابي سيمتص دمي.

١١(

This moneylender is going to milk me dry (p. 10)

Commentary

The context here is that the fisherman, Abu Mustafa, is reflecting on his recent visit to the moneylender. We learn later that he had to pledge his boat as a bond against the money he owed to the moneylender. The word ‘مرابي’ is culturally loaded. It refers to someone who lends money and charges high interest to the

borrower. It has bad connotations because taking interest is something forbidden in Islam. ‘Moneylender’ in the Western culture implies taking interest, but does not have an equivalent bad connotation as the word ‘مرابي’. The translator could have added a footnote to explain the negative meaning of the word in the Arab culture, but this is not really necessary because the rest of the sentence ‘milk me dry’ conveys the idea that this person is doing something unethical.

‘سيمتص دمي’ is a figure of speech that is used idiomatically in the Arab culture. The translator opts for an equivalent figure of speech and an idiom in English. In this case, domestication is more effective than foreignization, because literal translation would have sounded unidiomatic. The translator’s strategy here is consistent with the approach of Vinay and Darbelnet who prescribe literal translation unless there is a good reason not to do so.

The translator could have preserved the blood sucking figure of speech by using ‘bloodsucking’ as a pre-modifier of ‘moneylender’:

This bloodsucking moneylender is going to milk me dry.

Example Five

) ٧١.ص(! عفواً يا أخ:حتى أنه حين داس على قدم كلب وجد نفسه يقول هل معتذراً

Once when he accidentally stepped on a dog's foot, he even found himself saying, "Excuse me, sir!" (p. 16)

Commentary

In This context, Farah, the main character reflects on the contrast between poverty and richness in Beirut. Even the dogs of rich people lead a better life than poor people; they wear colorful clothes and have scornful looks. When Farah accidently stepped on a dog's foot, he felt he must apologize to it.

'يا أخ' is used in the Syrian culture to address a stranger in a relatively formal situation. So, the character is formally apologizing to a dog. Using the literal translation 'brother' in English would not have resulted in the same level of formality as it corresponds to something at a different level of language (here again is one of the reasons given by Vinay and Darbelnet for avoiding literal translation). The translator's use of the word 'sir' is very effective in conveying exactly the same meaning of the original text. So, again this domestication, or departure from literal translation, is completely justified.

Example Six Nishan Bey is in Europe (p. 22)

Commentary

) ٢٢.ص(نيشان بيك في أوروبا

The translator opts for foreignization here by using the literal translation ‘bey’ which is associated in the mind of Western readers with people from the Orient. There is no reason for departure from literal translation which has a foreignizing effect here. The translator reminds the reader that these characters belong somewhere else. Using ‘Mr. Nishan’ would have distorted the identity of the character without any textual justification.

Example Seven

) ٢٢.ص(معك قرش بتسوى قرش

If you’ve got a piaster, you’re worth a piaster. (p. 22)

Commentary

This is another instance where the translator chooses literal translation to achieve a foreignizing effect. Domestication could have been achieved by replacing

the whole sentence with ‘Money talks’, but the translator prefers to preserve the otherness of the source culture.

Example Eight

عصير البندورة المكثفة("الكيتشاب"يمسك بزجاجة( )ص( )٣٢.

He picked up a bottle of catsup (p. 23)

Commentary

This is one of two examples in the novel which show that the writer Ghada Samman was writing for Arab readers. Back in 1975, most people in Syria would not have known what ‘catsup’ is, so she provides an explanation. The translator deletes this explanation in her translation because it will be redundant for the English language reader. This is a fully justified strategy.

The use of ‘catsup’ is an over-domestication since such use is limited to some parts of southern United States, while ‘ketchup’ is the word used in most countries around the word. So, using ‘ketchup’ looks to be a better alternative:

He picked up a bottle of ketchup

Example Nine

) ٥٢.ص(وجد في نفسه قوة "بالمصباح السحري"لكنه حين فكر

However, when he thought about the magic lamp, (p. 25)

Commentary

This reference to the ‘magic lamp’ is reminiscent of *The Arabian Nights*. The translator preserved this cultural reference because it is consistent with the Western reader’s idea about this exotic region where people still believe in magic and practice it.

Example Ten

سيدعكه ثالث مرات فينتصب جني المصباح عموداً من دخان، مهيباً كالليل، ثم يركع بين يديه ويقول

(٥٢ .ص) شبيك لبيك عبدك بين يديك :له He would rub it three times, and a genie would rise up in a pillar of smoke, awesome and terrible as the night. Then it would kneel before him and say, “Master!

Master! Your wish is my command!” (p. 25)

Commentary

Like the previous example, in this case all references to Arab culture with its exoticness are preserved. This conforms to the established system of representation of Arabs, who are still living in a magical world of genies that come out of the lamp when their master rubs it three times and are ready to fulfill his wishes. Still, the word 'Master!' is unnecessarily repeated. The result is redundancy, which can be avoided by deleting the second instance of the word 'Master'. So a suggested translation of the last sentence could be:

Master! Your wish is my command.

Example Eleven

) ٦٢.ص(ابريق فخاري للشرب

clay water pitcher (p. 26)

Commentary

This is another cultural reference that is carried into the target text. It reminds the reader of the otherness of the source culture, where people are still using

clay pitchers. The translator could have domesticated this reference, but that would have been unjustified manipulation.

Example Twelve

(هذا ابني مصطفى بصف البكالوريا ص.٧٢)

This is my son Mustafa. He's been studying in the university (p. 27)

Commentary

In this example, the word 'بكالوريا' is mistranslated into 'university' without any clear justification. One explanation could be that the translator thought that the important thing is that he is studying, regardless of the level he is at. But this is not true. 'بكالوريا' means Grade 12. It is the final stage of secondary education, and in Lebanon, the successful completion of Grade 12 puts the person in a higher social position than someone who has not completed this level of education. When Abu Mustafa forces his son Mustafa out of school when he has reached Grade 12 to work with him, it means that he is in a very desperate situation that he cannot even wait one year until his son has completed this important level of education. This implication is

lost in the translation when Mustafa ‘has been studying’ in the university for a couple of years or at least for few months. A more appropriate translation would be:

This is my son Mustafa. He is a secondary school student.

Example Thirteen

ص(سيحل محل أخيه المرحوم علي.

٧٢(

He’ll take the place of his brother Ali. (p. 27)

Commentary

The word ‘المرحوم’ is unnecessarily deleted from the translation. There is no justification why the translator decided to omit the reference to the fact that Ali is now dead. A more effective translation would use something to indicate that the person is dead. It is true that the Arabic word carries an implied wish of ‘may God have mercy on his soul’, but with repeated use, this meaning has become so weak that most people do not have it in mind when they use the word. So, the translation of this sentence can be restructured as follows:

He’ll take the place of his brother Ali, who is no longer with us.

Example Fourteen

) ٨٣.ص(نقلها من منصة المدعي العام إلى قفص االتهام

In so doing he had removed her from behind the prosecutor’s podium and placed her on the witness stand. (p. 39)

Commentary

In this example, the translator did a very good job translating ‘قفص االتهام’ as ‘witness stand.’ This is because the Arabic sentence is used figuratively. The heroine of the novel, Yasmeena, was indirectly accusing Nimr of being unfaithful to her, and he replied by suggesting that by not trusting him, she was

unfaithful to him. So, she was trying to interrogate him, but he started questioning her behavior.

In the courtroom in Arab countries, the accused person will sit in a box all the time, and will answer questions from the box. In the Western culture, however, the accused usually sits next to their lawyer. A person who is to be questioned in the courtroom, be they a witness or an accused, will sit in the witness stand. Therefore, to say that Nimr placed Yasmeena in the seat of the accused will not convey to the Western reader the meaning that he started interrogating her. This meaning will be well conveyed by having Yasmeena removed from the prosecutor's podium and placed at the witness stand. This is domestication for a very good reason: to bridge the gap between the source culture and the target culture.

Example Fifteen

) ٦٤.ص(! وهم سبب خراب القرية"فدائيين"تسمونهم

You call them 'fedayeen' or fighters willing to sacrifice their lives for their homeland. But they're the ones who've brought ruin on the village! (p. 47)

Commentary

In this example, the word ‘فدائيين’ has no equivalent in the target language. Although ‘fedayeen’ found its way to English dictionaries in the last few decades, it may have acquired a different ideological connotation from that of ‘فدائيين’ in Arabic. Therefore, the translator had to decide between domesticating the text by choosing the closest available English equivalent, or foreignizing it by borrowing the Arabic word, with the associated risk of losing the ideological connotation. She chose foreignization, and to make sure the reader understands the meaning, she added the explanation of the word. This is a sign of respect of the Arab culture.

The second sentence can be improved by replacing the word ‘ruin’ with ‘pillage’, which rhymes with ‘village’ and makes the translation more idiomatic:

You call them ‘fedayeen’ or fighters willing to sacrifice their lives for their homeland. But they’re the ones who’ve brought pillage to the village!

Example Sixteen

"وقل اعملوا فسيرى الله عملكم ورسوله والمؤمنون")ص.٦٤)

God said to the prophet Muhammad in the Holy Qur’an, “Say, work, and God shall see what you do, as well as His apostles and the believers.” (p. 47)

Commentary

In this example, Ghada Samman uses a verse from the Quran for a particular purpose. Arab readers will instantly know this and will understand its pragmatic function, but English readers will not. The translator added an introducer sentence, ‘God said to the prophet Muhammad in the Holy Qur’an’, to clarify that this is from the Quran, but she did not explain the pragmatic function of the verse.

Usually, when encountering a Quranic verse in a text to be translated, most translators simply relax and copy one of the available translations of the Quran, such as Yusuf Ali's, without considering the pragmatic function of the verse in the particular context. Nancy Roberts did not do that. Instead, she translated the Quranic verse herself, albeit she was not very successful; 'ورسوله' was mistranslated as 'His apostles'.

We have two clear mistakes here. First, the word 'apostle' could mean 'رسول' in a Christian context, but not in a Muslim one. In Islam, the phrase 'رسول الله' means the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), unless the name of another messenger of God is clearly stated. So, the correct translation here is 'Prophet.' Second, the word 'رسول' is singular in the original text, but plural in the translation. These mistakes are the result of the translator's unfamiliarity with the Islamic culture. The translator could have conveyed the intended meaning without translating the Quranic verse by opting for an English idiom such as 'you reap what you sow.' But she preferred to foreignize the text and preserve the verse. To avoid the mistakes, she should have asked or searched for help re the meaning of this verse. In this case, a more effective translation could be:

God said to the prophet Muhammad in the Holy Qur'an, "Say, work, and God, His Prophet and the believers shall see what you do."

Example Seventeen

من؟: قرع طويالً، ثم أطل صوت مسكون بالنعاس..قرع باب الرفيق نديم

افتح يا نديم.أنا مصطفى

ماذا: نديم يسأل وهو يرى شباب مصطفى مغسوالً بالمطر والدمع والرعد. ضوء متماوت.صرير باب

حدث؟

. لم أجد حالً آخر.سأنضم إليكم

) ٨٥.ص(. أهالً بك.لن تندم أيها الرفيق

He knocked on the door of his friend Nadeem. He knocked for a long time. Then, finally, a sleepy voice answered, “Who is it?” “Open up, Nadeem. It’s Mustafa.” The door creaked as it opened [...] Nadeem asked, “What’s happened?”

“I’m going to join you. I haven’t found any other solution.” “You won’t regret it, friend. Welcome.” (p. 61)

Commentary

In this example, the word ‘رفيق’ is mistranslated as ‘friend’ instead of ‘comrade.’ The context is that young Mustafa decided to join a socialist party to fight social oppression and exploitation. This is implied by the word ‘رفيق’ which is used by communist and socialist parties to refer to party members. It seems the translator did not notice this reference because of her unfamiliarity with the political culture in Syria and Lebanon. A more functional translation could be:

He knocked on the door of comrade Nadeem

…

“You won’t regret joining us, comrade. Welcome.”

Example Eighteen

شربته برشفة واحدة...)الفودكا بعصير البندورة("بلودي ماري"في المقهى طلبت الفتاة كوباً من .

)ص.٧٩ (

We went into a cafe where Fifi ordered a Bloody Mary which she downed in a single gulp. (p. 104)

Commentary

This is the second example in the novel which shows that Ghada Samman wrote for Arab readers. She explains ‘Bloody Mary’. The translator deleted this explanation in her translation because it would be redundant for the English reader. Again, this is justified.

Example Nineteen

(كانت له عين واحدة في منتصف وجهه كغول أألساطير ص.٢٠١)

He had one eye in the center of his face, like a ghoul straight out of legends and myths. (p. 110)

Commentary

This is one of many references in the novel to legendary creatures, exotic places and magical worlds. The translator preserved all these references, thereby meeting the expectations of Western audiences and enforcing their stereotypical ideas about Arabs, who still live in those enchanting worlds.

Discussion

In most cases, the translator seems to be following Vinay's and Darbelnet's approach of sticking to literal translation unless there is a good reason not to do so. Literal translation has a foreignizing effect. The translator presents elements of Arab culture without any changes. The use of domestication is very limited and used only when necessary. Sometimes, the translator provides explanations for terms or references that are difficult for the English language readers to know by themselves. The result is keeping the readers aware all the time that they are looking at a different culture.

Still, the readers find shared elements between their culture and that of the novel. This has nothing to do with the techniques used by the translator, but rather with the novel itself; a novel by a 'Westernized' writer about characters living in one of the first globalized cities in the Arab world.

This chapter has examined Ghada Samman's novel بيروت ٥٧ to establish the elements which contributed to its selection for translation. The chapter has discussed 19 examples from the novel to determine the translator's approach in dealing with cultural references in the Arabic text.

Conclusion

This part has examined the culture of Arabic to English literary translation with a view of establishing whether the ourse of mast translation is er still dominated disc by stereotypical

images about Arabs and Islam. It has done so by بيرو to determine the assessing Nancy Robert's translation of Ghadaت Samman's novel ٥٧

reasons why it was selected for translation. It also analyzed examples of cultural references in the novel to explore the strategies used by the translator.

The stereotypical image of Arabs and their culture still exists in the minds of Western audiences, and it determines the demand by these audiences when it comes to literary works translated from Arabic. The selection of works to be translated is governed by this demand, as literary translation is looked at as a commercial activity that should yield profit. No publisher is ready to risk publishing a work which is not expected to sell.

The novel بيروت ٥٧ was translated and published because it meets the demand in the market for novels written by young Arab female writers. Further, it is seen as a documentary of the political and social conditions in Lebanon on the eve of the civil war, which started there in 1975. So, it was not selected for translation because it conforms to the established system of representation of Arabs and their culture.

The examples discussed in the previous chapter show that the translator opted for literal translation, which has a foreignizing effect, most of the time with the aim of preserving elements that reflect Arab culture. She departed from literal translation and resorted to domestication only when there was a good reason for that; a gap between the two languages and the two cultures that would make it impossible to properly convey the intended meaning through literal translation. Overall, it seems that the translator did not manipulate and distort the image of Arabs to make it consistent with their stereotypical image in the mind of Western readers.

The assumption that translated literature is used to maintain the stereotypical image of Arabs and their culture is not always a valid one, and does not squarely apply in the case of Nancy N. Roberts' translation of Ghada Samman's بيروت ٥٧. In fact, it may be the other way round; the selection of works to be translated is affected by the stereotypical image, an image that is now maintained through the media. If Arabs are to change this image, they have to focus on the media and not on translated literature.

The Influence of the Arabian Nights on English Literature

Introduction

The *Arabian Nights* or the *"Thousand and One Nights,"* a gem of world literature, is the English version of the original Arabic *Alf Layla wa Layla*. It is a collection of charming fables, fairy tales, romances, and historical anecdotes of varying ethnic sources, including Indian, Persian, and Arabic oral traditions. In these stories, the Arabs are portrayed as inhabitants of a magical and mysterious kingdom of boundless wealth and unutterable beauty, full of Jinns, devils and goblins, men flying in the air, flying horses, magic, a Dance of Death, and supernatural birds, talking fishes, and exotic scenes of harems, slaves, eunuchs, princes, and kings along with wonderful stories like those of Ali Baba and Sindbad. J.B. Trend remarks that the English romance of *The Seven Sages of Rome* is modelled on the Arabian imaginary traveller Sindbad or Sendebar. This romance was translated from the Arabic for the *Infante Don Fadrique* in 1253 under the title of *Libro de los Engannos Asayamientos de las Mujeres* or *Book of the Wiles and Deceptions of Women* (Arnold: 195) The oddly-named Libro de los gatos (Book of Cats) is derived from an Arabic source into the Narrations of the English Monk, *Odo of Cheriton* (c.1185).

The Arabian fiction was borne to Britain from an early period by various waves of influence. This was brought about by closer and first-hand contact. During 1096-1270, Crusaders conquered

Palestine. As pointed out by Dorothee Metlitzki, the Crusades resulted in "the Arab influence on a wide range of Frankish activities- on military techniques, on vocabulary, on food, clothing and ornamentation' (Kidwai, 1997:4). The Arabian origin of the Andalusian Spanish literature is maintained by a growth of the Arabian style and the lustrous heroic interest of the narrative. The themes and the subjects of the Spanish literature utilized Arabic stories. The Arabian material developed the contact of the Christian Spaniards with the Moorish Arabs. The Arabian origin of the Spanish art is apparent in the songs and ballads of the troubadours and Provencals.

The influence of the *Arabian Nights* is frequent in its impact on English writer in making his\her literary work. As will be demonstrated in the pages that follow, the *Arabian Nights* has exercised a strong, enduring and multifaced influence on the various genres of English literature across the English literary periods. The influence is embodied in the interest and readings of the translations of the Arabian tales, *The Arabian Nights*; and its combination of fantasy with the soberly sensual grace of Eastern imagery.

Early Versions and Publications of the *Arabian Nights*

The Arabian stories had popularity in Medieval English folklore literature. Medieval English poets were exposed to the literary influence of the translations from Arabic in the use of scientific imagery. Special mention may be made of the poem *The Owl and the Nightingale,* composed between 1186 and 1216. Dorothee Metlizki's notes that 'the interests that led the English scholar to Arabian learning are discernible in the poem in two areas: astrology and

Galenic Medieval thought' (p.56). It witnesses for some admiration for the Arabian life and ways. While the precise origins of these Arabian tales remain unidentified, it can be said that the stories had been circulating orally for centuries before they were written down in the fourteenth century in Syrian Arabic manuscript as a copy of Arabian tales is kept at the Bibliotèque Nationale in Paris.

Early references to the anthology are found in the writings of Masudi (died 956), who reveals it as a translated book full of fictional stories. Ibn al-Nadim (987–88) disapprovingly views a "coarse book" of Arabian tales with repetition of some stories such as the stories of Shahryar and Scheherazade. In the earliest references, the book of Arabian tales was published with Persian title, *Hazar Afsan.* The version of "A Thousand Tales" was with the fashionable Arabic name *Alf Layla* "A Thousand Nights"; the name "One Thousand and One Nights" is first shown in the twelfth century version for a Jewish bookseller in Cairo (Irwin: 50). Two main Arabic manuscripts of the *Nights* are identified as the Syrian and the Egyptian. Therefore, the earliest significant manuscripts that are still conserved at present date only from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The Arabian images of the *Nights* were full with magnitude and wonder of Arabian romances which were considered to be part of the medieval European entertainment. Europe also had Arabian legends in Greek and Roman literatures. In depth, the conventional Arabic style which has a narrator who says the story of other narrators telling stories, is seen in such works as Dante Alighieri's (1265– 1321) *Divine Comedy,* Boccaccio's (1313–1375) *Gesta Romanorum* and *Decameron,* and Geoffrey Chaucer's (c. 1343–1400) *The Canterbury Tales.* Modern readers to Chaucer *Canterbury Tales* (c.1388-1400) can recognize a possible source

of the effect of the *Arabian Nights'* themes. For instance, the motif of the mechanical horse in the Arabian tale, 'The Story of the Enchanted Horse,' is present in Chaucer's 'The Squire's Tale'. Likewise, the frame-story of "The Sleeper Awakened" tells the Arabian story of Abu Al-Hasan, a simple Baghdadian merchant, who is deceived to believe that he himself, at once, becomes in the place of the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad, Haroun al Rashid.

The story of the Caliph Haroun al Rashid appears in some form in William Shakespeare's 'Awakened Sleeper' in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1592). This similar story is used by Shakespeare as a framing device (Mack: xiii). In contrast with the 'Awakened Sleeper', there is a similarity between Shakespeare's Christopher who substitutes Abu Al-Hasan and the Lord who has taken the role of Caliph Haroun al-Rashid in *The Taming of the Shrew* (Saa'd: 226). Saa'd makes a connection between Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* and the Spanish play *La vida es sueno* as well as the *Arabian*

Nights story of the ' Sleeper Awakened' (226). Similarly, Shakespeare's Othello represents the image of the Arabian slave Ubaydallh in the *Arabian Nights* story of 'The Tale of Qamar al-Zaman'. Both the stories deal with the consequence of strong jealousy. Othello, like Ubaydallh, suffocates his beloved wife to death. However, a noticeable difference between Desdemona in *Othello* and Qamar al-Zaman in 'The Tale of Qamar al-Zaman' is that while the former is faithful to her husband, the latter is not.

The *Arabian Nights'* amazes the English audience with the Arabian culture. *Arabian Nights* bears out that Muslims used to conquer many states and a number of female captives were taken into a legal concubinage (Kidwai: 1995: 89). The theme of *Arabian Nights'* sensuality before and after marriage is not common in the Arabian society because Islam prohabits it. This view seeps into the English literature of the time, of which Samuel Rowlands' poem *The Bride* (1617) is a good example. The poem draws the image of a bride and her bridesmaids in a way that the portrayal resembles the Arabian story of Scheherazade. This stereotype would be continued in the representation of the Arab in more recent history where, according to Edward Said (1979), the Arab is described to have "an undifferentiated sexual drive" (p.311).

In the eighteenth century, the French statesman Antoine Galland's (1646-1715) translated the *Arabian Nights* into French, introducing it to Europe. The Syrian tradition includes the oldest manuscripts; was published by Fort Williams College in Calcutta (1814–1818) and edited by Shaikh Ahmad ibn-Mahmud Shirawani, a teacher of Arabic at the college. It is represented in print most notably by the Leiden Edition (1984), which is based above all on Galland's manuscript whose editions came into view in twelve small volumes between 1703 and 1713. Burton believes that Galland's manuscript is the purest expression of the style of the

Mediaeval *Arabian Nights* (iii). Then comes the English translation of Andrew Bell (1713-1715), which popularized the image of Arabs. The eighteenth century literature was occasioned by a growing general interest in the centuries of the Orient. As a result, the themes of *Arabian Nights* became a fertile pasture for budding English writers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The impact of this English translation of *Arabian Nights* was strong. Burton comments on the comparison of Galland's and the other translations: 'Without the name and fame won for the work by the brilliant paraphrase of the learned and single-minded Frenchman, Lane's curious hash and Latinized English, at once turgid and emasculated, would have found few readers. Mr. Payne's admirable version appeals to the Orientalist and the stylist, not to the many-headed; and mine to the anthropologist and student of Eastern manners and customs' (Meester, 1914: 12). Therefore, these English translations of the Arabian stories popularized the image of Arabs.

The Arabian themes of fables, fairy tales, romances, and historical anecdotes are in the English literary works of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For example, the inspiration of the *Arabian Nights* is remarkable in works such as Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World* (1760), Johnson's *Rasselas* (1759), and most particularly Beckford's *Vathek* (1786). John Payne in *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night* (1884) remarks that these superficial tales were improved for the Western conditions and to the taste of Western civilization (Meester, 1914: 12). Haroun al-Rashid (763-809), Caliph of Baghdad, who figures in many tales of the

Arabian Nights, together with Jaffar, his minister and Mesrour, his executioner, is celebrated in a poem by Longfellow (1807-82):

One day, Haroun al-Raschid read A book wherein the poet said:

Where are the kings, and where the rest Of those who once the world possessed?

They're gone with all their pomp and show, They are gone the way that thou shalt go.

o thou who choosest for thy share

The world, and what the world calls fair Take all that it can give -or lend,

But know that death is at the end! Haroun al Raschid bowed his head:

Tears fell upon the page he read. (*Haroun Al Raschid*, 1-12)

Southey comments on the Payne's translation that 'the Arabian tales certainly are abound with genius, [though] they have lost their metaphorical rubbish through the filter of a French translation' (p.29). Sir Richard Burton remarks on the comparison of Galland's and the latter translations:

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Sir Richard Burton's *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* (1885, ten volumes) is a simple literal translation with an introduction and explanatory notes on the manners and customs of Arabs. It has popularity in England. Meester admirably speaks about this translation saying:

[These stories] furnished on our languages with number of expressions and images, they have imprinted on our minds many scenes of Oriental life. This last point is among the greatest merits of the *Thousand and One Nights*: they give such a faithful picture of the Orient, its life and customs, that many people who afterwards happen to visit those countries on oriental conditions and described in the *Nights'* (Meester, 13).

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Arabian Nights' Influence on 18th Century English Literature

The *Arabian Nights* participated in the birth of English fiction. The framework of the story of Daniel Defoe's (1660-1731) *Robinson Crusoe* imitates the style of Arabian tales. *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) portrays the life and adventures of Crusoe, who saved himself from the spoil with the assistance of a few stores and utensils. The discovery of Crusoe looks like the discoveries of the Bagdadian Sindbad during seven arduous journeys as a merchant. Sindbad's experience with the 'Roc', a giant bird that could lift elephants in its claws, is best shown in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). Again, Jonathan Swift (1667 –1745) in *Gulliver's Travels* sets out on an imaginary voyage to remote lands all over the globe. He gathers giants as well as pygmies all together. There is also a flying island and a civilized race of horses in *Gulliver's Travels*. The *Arabian Nights* has equivalent stories. Sindbad launches his voyages

despite the hardships which he faced. If seems that Sindbad and Gulliver work against fate. In looking deep to the production of *Gulliver's Travels* or *Robinson Crusoe,* one would conclude that they would not be any work of fiction without the *Arabian Nights*.

Lady Mary W. Montagu (1689 -1762) was also inspired by the *Arabian Nights*. In her writings, the allusions and themes are Arabian. She is fascinated by the charming portrayal of the Harem life, the den of the affective beauty, the Turkish baths, and the Oriental rituals in the *Arabian Nights*. In Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *The Turkish Embassy Letters* (1763), the heroine Fatima describes a scene which might be easily known with an equivalent situation of sumptuous residences in the *Arabian Nights.* Fatima admirably speaks, "I was met at the door by two black Eunuchs who led me through a long gallery between two ranks of beautiful young girls with their Hair finely plaited almost hanging to their Feet, all dress'd in fine light damasks brocaded with silver" ((*Un)building the Divide*, 213). Lady

Mary in her *Embassy Letters* goes on to illustrate a typical *Arabian Nights* scene, marked by sensuous pleasures. She says: ‘her fair Maids were rang'd below the Sofa to the number of 20, and put me in Mind of the pictures of the ancient Nymphs. I did not think all Nature could have furnish'd such a scene of Beauty’ (*ibid*).

The play of Mary de Lariviere Manely’s (1663-1724) *Almyna or The Arabian Vow* (1707) sets in Arabia. It is a marvelous experience of the Caliph Valid Almanzor. The character of *Almyna* is modelled on Scheherazade. In *Arabian Nights*, Scheherazade works to raise the voice of freedom. Almyna, the over-romantic heroine, confronts with the violation of women rights as being broken by tyrant Arab sultans like Sharayar in the *Arabian Nights.* The influence of the *Arabian Nights* on the English mind and literature is extraordinarily strong. In this connection, Martha P. Conant (1908) claims that the Arabian Tales are the fairy godmother of English novel (p.243). Yeats considers the *Arabian Nights* as one of the greatest books in the world. He places the *Arabian Nights* next to Shakespeare. In a gathering in America, he remarks:

Then somebody asked what would be my six books, and I said I wanted six authors, not six books, and I named four authors choosing not from those that I should, but from those that did most move me, and said, I had forgotten the names of the other two. 'First comes Shakespeare, 'I said, 'Then the Arabian Nights in its latest English version (Jeffares & Cross, 1965: 29).

The Arabist academician Sir William Jones (1746-1794) is influenced by the *Arabian Nights.* There is a comparison between Jones’ poem ‘The Seien Fountains’ and the Arabian story of 'Prince Agib,' the Second Calendar (Meester: 17). In the *Arabian Nights*, the young Prince

spends a year of pleasure with 'forty damsels, and is then left to the temptation of the hundredth door of gold. In Sir W. Jones's tale, the same story happens but when the Prince Agib comes in the seventh door, he finds behind it an old man. His name is Religion, and has to take Prince Agib to Heaven. As Prince Agib's eye is hit by the magic horse, the horse puts him on the top of the palace, and the Prince realises that the old man is a mendicant.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) delivered a lecture in 1818 entitled "On the Arabian Nights Entertainment." Coleridge expresses his fascination with the *Arabian Nights'* entertainments as one tale of a man who was compelled to seek for a pure virgin. This story made Coleridge a deep impression on him (Matthew, 2007: 318). Coleridge also made an effort to write a play, Diadeste - *an Arabian Entertainment*. In his *Kubla Khan*, the Oriental dreams of kings and prophets are interwoven in the poem. Coleridge was keen to bring the morality of *The Ancient Mariner* to the same approach as he had found out in the *Arabian Nights* (Ahmad, 1959: 15). The works of Coleridge strongly indicates his awareness of the Oriental tales.

Another literary writer fascinated with the *Arabian Nights* is William Thomas Beckford (1760– 1844). His *Vathek, an Arabian Tale* or *The History of the Caliph Vathek* (1786) is influenced by the *Arabian Nights* because of its Arabian elements of supernatural machinery, exotic settings and peculiar experiences. The originality of *Vathek* lies in revealing two distinct worlds, the creative world of man's soul; and the actual exterior world known through his senses. Both the words are blended into an exotic whole which impressively stirs the writer's imaginative faculties into deeper dimensions of the soul and its mysteries, perhaps most conspicuously in the story of the 'Hall of Eblis.' One may agree with Conant

(1908) that *Vathek* "gives an impression of an extraordinary dream" (p.66). But unlike other dreams it advances man's quest beyond the normal dimensions of his understanding and thoughts to find his true identity. Such a creative world is an outcome of the concrete, exotic East which is not only avowedly Oriental. The unkind and sensual Arabian Caliph Al-Wathiq ibn Mutasim, whose eye can kill with a glance, becomes a servant of Eblis (the Devil). This disagreement might hark back to the false portrayal of the Arabian personality of Haroun al-Rashid in the *Arabian Nights*. Despite the reputation of the Arabian tales in the period, *Vathek* is strange in its exposure to and consideration of the elements of Islamic life and customs.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, the influence of the *Arabian Nights'* material became momentous. John Keats's (1795–1821) literary works have evidence of his direct acquaintance with the *Arabian Nights*. In one of his letters to Fanny Brawne in July 1819, he makes an outstanding

reference to the story of 'The Man who Laughed Not' in the *Arabian Nights*. In his *Endymion* (1818), some myths are in fact taken from the *Arabian Nights*, *Vathek* and *Thalaba*. For instance, on the subject of the story of Glaucus, who was predestined to survive for a thousand years, Sidney Colvin (1920) observes, "[It] inevitably reminds us of such stories as that of the fisherman in the *Arabian Nights*, and of the spell laid by Suleiman upon the rebellious Djinn, whom he imprisoned for a thousand and eight hundred years in a bottle until the fisherman released him" (p.191). Colvin gives this perceptive comment on Keats's Oriental material: "The scenery, indeed, is often not merely of a Gothic vastness and intricacy: there is something of Oriental bewilderment - an *Arabian Nights* jugglery with space and time" (173). Douglas Bush (1969) states that the *Arabian Nights* and *Vathek* are likely sources for Keats' mythology in *Hyperion* (p.116). Overall, although Keats' Orientalism is marginal, it demonstrates Keats' fascination with the Orient.

During the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, the interest in the Orient developed with several translations of the most popular tales from the East. The *Arabian Nights* has popularized Oriental tales in the framework of English literature. They have gained general currency and found their approach into the leading literary journals of the day, as for instance, Steele and Addison's magazines, *Spectator*, *Tatler* and *Rambler*. Soon, other magazines such as *The Churchman's Last Shift*, *General Magazine*, *Lady's Magazine* and *Monthly Extracts* issued interesting stories of the *Arabian Nights.* The magicians, genies, fairies, charms, enchanted rings, lamps and talismans of all sorts caught public fascination. The play, *Aladdin or the Wonderful Lamp*, staged first in 1789, selected stories from the *Arabian Nights.* These stories were performed for years at the Theatre Royal in London.

Arabian Nights' Influence on the 19th Century English Literature

The *Arabian Nights* became tremendously popular in the nineteenth century. It had a significant influence on the Romantic models. Nasir (1976), a researcher in the Victorian affairs, confirms that it is not easy to find a person who had never read the *Tales* in his youth and does not remember them still (p.54). For the Romantic poets, Arabia with its topography and people is an existing exotic mystery in making Arabs free from the chains of classical traditions. Thus, Romanticism deals with nature as one unit with various portraits. William Wordsworth (1770-1850) in *The Prelude* describes the wonders of the Arabian fiction when he says: "I had a precious treasure at that time, A little, yellow canvas - cover'd book. It is a slender abstract of the Arabian Tales" (Ahmad, 1959: 13). It is to be noted that Wordsworth pays high appreciation to the *Arabian Nights* in his ode *The Prelude*. For Wordsworth, the *Arabian Nights* is a powerful source of entertainment ever known in the world. The stories of the romantic Arabia are the lamps that delight the dark nights. In one passage he says:

A gracious spirit o'er the earth presides, And o'er the heart of man: invisibly.

It comes, to works of unimproved delight, And tendency benign, directing those

Who care not, know not, think not what they do The Tales that charm away the wakeful night In Araby, romances; legends penned

For solace by dim light of monkish lamps. (260-7)

Byron is influenced by the *Arabian Nights.* The productive quality of Byron's Orientalism approaches penetratingly in his representation of Arab characters, mainly the fisherman is *The Giaour*. The episodes of the poem abide with authentic Oriental elements to portray Byron's acknowledgment to Islamic symbols. Moreover, the company of the fisherman narrator gives straight away to the Oriental ethos of the poem in which his images, allusions, and attitudes stand for a distinguished religio-cultural image of the *Arabian Nights*. In Byron's tales, Arab characters are lodging in genuine Oriental settings and alluding to actual Arabian customs and costumes. Byron has also utilised Arabian pictures and terminology. In *Don Juan* (1818), Byron refers to the exotic rich Orient when he says:

A far a dwarf buffoon stood telling tales

To a sedate grey circle of old smokers. Of secret treasures found in hidden vales, Of wonderful replies from Arab Jokers,

Of charms to make good gold and cure bad ails, Of rocks bewitched that open to the knockers, Of magic ladies who by one sale act Transformed their lords to beasts... (108-115).

The idea that Zuleika, the heroine in *The Bride* (1813) is the embodiment of spiritual values and childish innocence is emphasized by a sequence of Oriental descriptions to Mecca at the time of pilgrimage:

Blest – as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's wall To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call;

Soft – as the melody of youthful days. (*Bride,* 2,402-404)

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63) was really inspired by the *Arabian Nights*. In his *Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo,* in the chapter: *Smyrna, first Glimpses of the East*, where he writes about being with the *Arabian Nights* and on board of the Peninsular and Oriental vessels, and imagine to dip into Constantinople or Smyrna. He is amazed with the bazaars of the East. Thackeray's 'The Eastern Sketches' contains many references to the pleasure Thackeray' always took in the *Arabian Nights*. Thackeray remembers the *Arabian Nights* with pleasure, as a relief from the classical education whereas, for example, in one of his essays, *The Friends*, Thackeray recalls his 'first entrance into the mansion of a neighbouring Baronet' as being 'long connected in my childish imagination with the feelings and fancies stirred up in me by the perusal of the *Arabian Nights*' (I, 48). Thackeray

appreciates Tennyson's *Idylls* (1859) as it makes him 'as happy as I was a child with the *Arabian Nights'* (IV, 152). The influence of *Arabian Nights* is clear on Thackeray's novel *The Newcomes*, particularly in the following dialogue:

Clive: I remember one of the days, when I first saw you, I had been reading the 'Arabian Nights' at school-and you came in a bright dress of short silk, amber and blue-and I thought you were like that fairy princess who came out of the crystal box -because.

Ethel : Because why ?

Clive: Because I always thought that fairy somehow must be the most beautiful creature in the world-that is 'why and because (VIII, 493).

Like other English writers, Robert Southey (1774-1843) was under the *Arabian Nights'* fascination. In his poems *'Thalaba, the Destroyer'* and *'The Curse of Kehama'*, Southey borrows heavily from the *Arabian Nights*. For instance, in *Thalaba*, the young Arab, Thalaba, demolishes the kingdom of the magicians, Domdaniel, under the sea. With the aid of a magic ring, Thalaba, the hero, overcomes his enemies and razes the sorcerers and their rich kingdom. He scarifies his life in doing so, but is reunited in Paradise with his wife. The poem is full of magicians, magical settings and objects, flying car, magic boat which takes him across the sea to Domdaniel's Island. Again, in this poem, Thalaba fights with an 'Afrit,' an Arabic term for a demon, who has one eye ejecting fire. Southey (1978) states his indebtedness to the "New Arabian Nights" for the idea of *Thalaba* (p.29).

In a sharp contrast to Byron's Orientalism stands Robert Southey's *Thalaba*. Although this narrative poem has an all Oriental cast, they are found uttering Biblical expressions. The

culmination of Southey's revulsion for the Orient and his imperialistic learning are to the fore in the following passage, recording Thalaba's observations on Baghdad, capital of the Muslim empire of the day:

Thou too art fallen, Bagdad! City of Peace

So one day may the Crescent from thy Mosques Be pluck'd by Wisdom, when the enlighten'd arm

Of Europe conquers to redeem the East! (V. 72 and 83-85)

Southey's understanding of the Arab mind is evidently so complete that he can think and write like them, even though he has never been to any Eastern region nor understands any form of Arabic.

Southey continued to write in the Orientalist mode, landscape, dress, and military strategy. The Romantic emphasis on liberty also politicized his poetry, so that his Orientalist works—for example, Southey's *Thalaba* and *Roderick the Last of the Goths* (1814) depict the struggle to overthrow a powerful Oriental tyrant.

The influence of *Arabian Nights* on English writers came through different translations. Sir Richard F. Burton (1821–1890) is one of the most famous nineteenth-century Western adventurers and travel writers. His accounts of his journeys to India, Arabia, Africa, and North America gave him widespread celebrity in his lifetime, and his sixteen translations, including that of *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* in 1885, brought him enduring fame long after his death in Trieste, Italy in 1890. Burton's *Arabian Nights* represents the Arab World as a place of perverted sexuality, and of irrational violence. Burton's *Arabian Nights* astonished the prurient interests of Victorian readership. The Arabian tales improve for the Western understanding and taste of the Oriental material.

Another nineteenth century man of letter, whose writing carries the imprints of the *Arabian Nights,* is Victorian literary giant: Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809–1892). The Arabian element is markedly present in Tennyson's *Recollections of the Arabian Nights* (1830) as a happy imagination of English childhood. These recollections can be compared with the description of Haroun al Rashid's Garden of Gladness in the fantastic story of Nur-al-din Ali and the damsel Anis al Talis in the *Thirty- Sixth Night*. Tennyson completes every stanza with a description of "the golden prime\ Of good Haroun Alraschid."Arabia has a special significance in this collection. Tennyson expresses this perfectly in his poem. He portrays Baghdad as a paradise full with gold and 'high-walled gardens green and old'. He seeks to

recapture the splendour of Baghdad. His “Expedition of Nadir Shah into Hindostan” (1827) witnesses his criticism of Oriental repression while his “Written by an Exile of Bassorah while sailing down the Euphrates” (1827) puts across the homesickness on the part of the deported Noureddain.

Walter Savage Landor’s *Count Julian* (1808), George Crabbe’s ‘The Confidant’ (1818), and Leigh Hunt’s ‘Cambus Khan’ (1823) are quite close to the *Arabian Nights* in their morality, description of luxuries and gorgeousness. The element of the story in Robert Browning’s ‘Mulekeh’ (1880) and Matthew Arnold’s *Sohrab* and *Rustum* bring to mind the narrative form of Arabian tales. These tales show the exotic plot and imagery of the Oriental life and customs. Their costume, diction and local colours are light yet it underscores the authors’ familiarity with the tradition of literary Orientalism. Likewise, James Thomson (1834-1882) like Scott, Dickens and Thackeray, loved the *Arabian Nights,* when he was a boy. Referring to his poem 'The City of the Dreadful Nights' Thomson appreciates the city of the statues in the tale of Zobeide in the “History of the Three Ladies of Baghdad" and the "Three Calendars." This episode of the kingdoms of the Sea in "Prince Bedir" impressed Thomson in his boyhood more powerfully than anything else in the *Arabian Nights.*

The *Arabian Nights* played an enormous role in the development of Charles Dickens's (1812-70) imagination. Dickens generally uses allusions to the *Arabian Nights* in his novels and other writings, and in his speeches, to evoke a sense of wonder, beauty, glamour, mystery and terror. He employs such phrases as, “The three days that I passed there, were like *Thousand and One Arabian Nights* wildly exaggerated a thousand and one times” (1933: 225). Again in *David Copperfield* there is a reference to the *Arabian Nights* magician and the

Tales of the Genii which models on the fairy tales of the *Arabian Nights.* In *Great Expectations,* Dickens uses the powerful image of spirits from the 'Tales of the Genii". In another inspiration from *Matura Friends,* Dickens depicts a wedding feast which takes place at a hotel in Greenwich, with the following words:

What a dinner Specimens of all the fishes that swim in the sea, surely had swum their way to it and if samples of the fishes of divers colour that made a speech in the Arabian Nights (quite a ministerial explanation in respect of cloudiness and then jumped out of the frying - pan, were not to be recognized, it was only, because they had all become of one hue by being cooked in batter among the whitebait (1960: 60).

Charles Dickens is not different from his nineteenth century English writers who work the influence of *Arabian Nights*. In *A Christmas Carol* (1843), Scrooge exclaims, when seeing himself as a little school boy, “Why, its Ali Baba!” And later he says:

And what’s his name, who was put-down in his drawers, asleep, at the gate of Damascus; don't you see him I And the Sultan's groom, turned upside down by the Genii; there he is upon his head! Serve him right. I am glad to it. What business had he to be married to the Princes! (Scrooge and his Ghosts, II,I 10-12).

In *The Old Curiosity Shop*, Dickens has one of his characters, Richard Swiveller say, "If this is not a dream I have woken up, by mistake, In an Arabian Nights instead of London one", and later, "It's an Arabian Nights; that's what it is ... I am in Damascus or Grand Cairo. The Marchioness is a Genie and having a had a wager with another Genie about who is the handsomest young man alive...’ (*Chap*. 64, 40-2).

To sum up, *Arabian Nights* enriched the scope of inspiration with a wild inner sense of free thinking. It was not the exoticism of the *Arabian Nights* which evoked such an overwhelming reaction from readers in Europe. It is quite natural that the Arabian Nights by virtue of its enthralling themes, resplendent images and innovative narrative technique continues to enjoy the status of arguably the most widely read piece of Oriental literary material.

Arabian Nights’ Influence on the 20th Century English Literature

The *Arabian Nights* has influenced the English literature of the twentieth century too. One can easily find the Oriental elements in English literature, cinema, fiction, and in electronic media of the twentieth century. Among the twentieth century literary figures, Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad,

E.M. Forster, W.B. Yeats, H. G. Wells, James Joyce, T.S. Eliot and Doris Lessing, etc were all great admirers of the *Arabian Nights*. Their works contain allusions to the *Arabian Nights*.

Having been exposed to the *Arabian Nights*, Rudyard Kipling (1865 –1936) was inspired by Arabian legends. Kipling's *Treasures and Adventures: Tales from the Arabian Nights; Rikki-Tikki- Tavi; Treasure Island; Kidnapped* (1894) is among the most enthralling adventure books ever written for children. These Arabian tales depict the world as cunning with exploration, misfortune and enjoyment. They are early scientific fantasies of flight, imaginary journeys and utopias give us the flying carpet, a vehicle of enthusiasm and happiness as well as power over time and space. The character of Jinn in *Just So Stories* (1902) is modelled on the similar character in the *Arabian Nights*. This ghost experiences the feelings: envy and greed. These two traits bring trouble to mankind's existence. Mankind is usually caught in the Jinn's greedy struggle for power. The children will love to read the book how the whales has a tiny throat from a consumed mariner and tied a raft which blocked the whole, how the camel has a hump given him by a jinn as a penalty.

Joseph Conrad gives his impression to have a direct contact with the *Arabian Nights.* There are a number of allusions to the *Arabian Nights* in Conrad's letters. In one of the letters, Conrad remarks about his 'Autocracy and War' (1905) in portraying Russia as Arabia in saying: "This dreaded and strange apparition, bristling with bayonets, armed with chains,

hung over with holy images; that something not of this world partaking of a ravenous ghoul, of a blind Djinn grown up from a cloud, and of the ‘Old Man of the Sea” (p.89). Conrad utilizes the image of Jinn as it is in the *Nights* a symbol of hidden forces.

As for H.G. Wells, his *History of Mr. Polly* (1910) contains Arabian images to the *Arabian Nights*. Once more, Wells's *The Sleeper Awakes* (1898) appears to echo 'The Sleeper Awakened' in the *Arabian Nights*. There is a comparable image between the two. In Wells’s work when the Sleeper awakens after being asleep for over two hundred years, he finds himself a king. The story resembles Abu Hasan awakes to find himself Caliph, Graham, gradually finds out that he is 'King of the Earth’ in the *Arabian Nights*. On the other hand, Graham, like Haroun al Rashid, rambles in masquerade through the streets of his city by night. Another example which displays that Wells was under the influence of

the *Arabian Nights* becomes apparent in his *Experiment in Autobiography* (1934) when Wells states,

¨In 1900 … this would have been as incredible as a Journey on Prince Houssain's carpet' (II, 799).

The influence of the *Arabian Nights* on Joyce is deep. He had an Italian translation of the *Arabian Nights* in Trieste and when he moved to Paris, he replaced it with the Burton Club Edition. There are Arabian images from the *Arabian Nights* in Joyce's *Ulysses*, when Stephen dreams of *Open Hallway*, *Street of harlots*, *Remember*, and *Haroun al Raschid*. E.M. Forster, in *Aspects of the Novel* (1979), explains the apprehension, as created in *Arabian Nights*, where Scheherazade avoids death by leaving off her story-telling each sunrise at exactly right moment of tantalizing suspense: 'We are all Scheherazade's husband, in that we want to know what happens next' (p.56). Forster looks at the Orient as mysterious, exotic and fertile. The heroine Scheherazade of the *Arabian Nights* is resourceful and has never been more entertaining than in this fresh and vigorous version of this immortal book.

The *Arabian Nights* planted the seeds of an authentic Oriental movement about the East in the entire Europe. England was influenced especially by travellers and writers whose main concerns in the Arab World were not religious or political. Edward Said (1979), in his essay 'The discourse of the Orient', states that: 'The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences' (p.234). Rana Kabbani, a contemporary researcher of Orientalism, in the lines of *Imperial Fictions: Europe's Myths of Orient*, agrees with this inspiration, but further articulates it, and its implications. She says that:

In the European narration of the Orient, there was a deliberate stress on those qualities that made the East different from the West, exiled it into an irretrievable state of 'otherness'. Among the many themes that emerge from the European narration of the Other, two appear most strikingly. The first is the insistent claim that the East was a place of lascivious sensuality, and the second that it was a realm characterised by inherent violence (5-6).

The admiration of *Arabian Nights* never fades. Some Arabian stories were performed in the 2008 and 2010 productions of *The Arabian Nights* at Berkeley Rep, Kansas City Rep and Lookingglass. By the same theatre *Arabian Nights* came on stage in 2011. Images of medieval Arab characters with their costume and lifestyle on London stage such as Haroun al-Rashid, Jafar, Sheik al- Fadl, Sheik al-Islam, Abu al-Hasan, King Shahryar, and Scheherazade excites the English audience. This new 2011 presentation creatively inspires people. The director, Mary Zimmerman has managed to compress *The Arabian Nights* and turn it into a glorious night under the stars and in the hot Arabian Desert sands on London Arena Stage. *The Arabian Nights* becomes a fascinating trip the Middle East. This fascination is founded on the special nomad and cultural relationship between the two worlds.

The tales of Sinbad the Sailor and Aladdin have long entertained English children. Children Literature traces the evolution of the popularity of Arabian tales from the late eighteenth century to the present day. These tales have changed as they have been adapted for children in different volumes. The adaptations to the Oriental themes began immediately following the English translation of *Arabian Nights*. With the creation of the British Empire, the first adaptations of the Oriental tales reflected a desire to import a European morality to Britain's

"Oriental empire." From the 1920s onward, however, adaptations began to include a variety of textual apparatus, ranging from notes and glossaries to maps, biographies, and supplementary essays, all of which helped the young readers more fully and sympathetically understand the environment from which the stories originated, and the world they sought to depict from the fertile imagination of the *Arabian Nights*.

Today in the face of stiff competition from all sorts of amusements the *Arabian Nights* is still one of the bestsellers in English. In 1950s the prominent Orientalist A.J. Arberry, professor of Arabic at the University of London, and N.J. Dawood, an Iraqi Jew wrote their particular translations of the *Arabian Nights* which grew global circulation in the influential Western publisher, Penguin. Some other fantastic versions of English conversions of the *Arabian Nights* were in the last decade (1994- 2004), including its accessibility in the most recent digital forms such as Neil Philip's *Arabian Nights* (1994), Kate Douglas*'s Aladdin and other Tales of the Arabian Nights* (1996), Geraldine Mc Caughrean's *1001 Arabian Nights* (2000), *The Arabian Nights*: A Selection (2005), and Jack Zipes (Penguin Popular Classics).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the *Arabian Nights* combines the knowledge of the Oriental culture and artistic luxuriance with dramatic, gothic and ironic elements which eventually help any English writer to produce a work that suits his own formula. As far as the consequence of the *Arabian Nights* on English literature is concerned, its authority has a substantial ground under foot. It may appear difficult to outline the impact of the *Arabian Nights* on many English writers, for it is a globe which holds the whole lot – senses of mystery, love, matrimony, fortune, treason, purity, imagination, realism etc. The Western myths and narratives recycled the *Arabian Nights* with tyrannical constructs, military establishments and other forms of repressive monarchs erected by Arab rulers to subdue people and money, women and human imagination.

The *Arabian Nights* inspired world literature. The immense influence of the *Arabian Nights* on the English outlook and literature is so great that Conant describes the *Arabian Nights* as the fairy godmother of English novel (243). Positive interaction and influence have also taken place. Arabian civilization was indebted to the West for many of the resources that facilitated it to sponge, interpret and then to enlarge its own lofty civilization that made remarkable inputs

in philosophy, the disciplines and technology while the West went into obscurity in the Dark Ages. The West, in turn, acquired a constructive philosophical and literary legacy from Arabian culture which then became the groundwork for its Renaissance.

The Arabian Nights flourished in Britain. English writers write stories beyond their local geography; they escape into the exotic, and resort the frame narrative of the Arabian tale. They embrace *The Arabian Nights* as a productive source of imagination. This approach makes much awareness of the Oriental material in *Arabian Nights*. The heart of the material in understanding Arabian images is this power cultural relationship and how the West has employed and prolongs to utilize and value the Arabian material in Western terms. The West has a long history of persistently inspiration from the Arab World which reproduced a positive understanding to the Arabs. The Western imagination of the Arab World stands slight in similarity to the reality, and this imprecision is used to rationalize political and economic course. Therefore, the *Arabian Nights* will continue to enrich the world culture.

A Call for Comparative Approach to Arabic Literature

Arabic literature, produced by native Arabs in their homelands and in their chosen or enforced exiles all over the world, as well as by non- Arabs who have adopted Arabic as a medium of their creative writings, is the outcome of an all-embracing interaction between its centuries-long tradition and the various cultural and literary traditions of the rest of the world. Yet this extensive, rich and diverse experience of cross-cultural encounters is largely neglected by comparatists from both East and West. As leading post-colonial scholars and critics are now challenging Western centrism, there is a growing feeling amongst Arab comparatists that the comparative study of their literature deserves reconsideration for what it brings to our appreciation of a fascinating chapter in the history of interactions amongst world literatures. This paper examines the potential contribution that the study of Arabic literature comparatively can make to the theories of comparative literature, and demonstrates this through an exciting example of its encounter with other literatures.

The former President of **The American Comparative Literature Association (2009-2011)**, and the author of the **Association**'s *Report on The State of the Discipline*, 2004, which appeared later in a book-form, edited and introduced by him under the title: *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization* (2006), Professor Haun Saussey writes in his contribution to *The Blackwell's Companion to Comparative Literature***,** entitled 'Comparison, World Literature, and the Common Denominator':

(I think the job of the comparatist is to invent new relations among literary works (and relations with things that have not been previously classes among literary works)[1].

Such a suggestion from a distinguished authority on the comparative study of literature, might make the student of Arabic literature wonder whether he needs, if he ever thought of studying this literature comparatively, to look for relations between Arabic literature and other world literatures, and whether, if he does not find any, to invent these relations, not only between Arabic and other literary works, but also between Arabic literary works and other things that have not been previously classed as literary. Fortunately, such a student of Arabic literature is in no need to look hard for these relations, let alone to invent them, for they are as old as Arabic literature itself, as continuous and lasting as the enduring monuments of this literature, and as rich and diverse as the Arabic literary works themselves. In

fact, Arabic literature‘s relations with other literatures are essential threads of its very fabric.

To begin with, Arabic literature‘s relations with other literatures of the world go back to the pre-Islamic time if not earlier, when the Arabs of the Peninsula were in close contact with the various surrounding nations and empires. Their relationships with their neighbours were not only commercial, but also political, military, social and cultural. One aspect of the outcome of these ties is reflected in the many foreign words permeated the Arabic language from Aramaic, Syriac, Greek, Latin,

Persian, Amharic, Ethiopian, and several other languages of the Ancient Near East[2]. It is enough to refer in this context to the foreign vocabularies in the Qur‘an, the claimed miracle of the Prophet Muhammad which the eloquent Arabs, proud as they were, and are still, of their enduring heritage of verbal art, were challenged and failed to imitate. ―Language, as René Wellek rightly states, is the material of literature as stone or bronze is of sculpture, paints of picture, or sounds of music. But one should realize that language is not mere inert matter like stone but itself a creation of man and is thus charged with the cultural heritage of a linguistic group‖[3].Therefore, if the Arabic language, which is the medium of Arabic literature, was so exposed to other contemporary and ancient languages, the literary masterpieces produced with this medium should also have been touched by the cultures of these languages, whose loan words became an integral part of Arabic.

As for the literatures of these languages, they have been in a continuous interaction with Arabic literature, ever since their producers from the various neighbouring nations established any form of contact with the Arabs. Then, with the advent of Islam, came the greatest interaction between the Arabs and the rest of the people of the Ancient World. Thus Peter N. Stearns in his *Cultures in Motion: Mapping Key Contacts and Their Imprints in World History***,** writes about this interaction:

One of the great cultural contact experiences in world history involved the spread of Islam, from its initial base in the Arabian Peninsula and the Middle East to a host of areas in Africa, Asia, and Europe. Islam appealed to people in a variety of societies and cultures, bringing important changes as a result of contact while often in some respects merging with the established local belief systems.

Muslims compelled new cultural contacts from about 700 CE onward as a result of conquests, far-reaching trade, and, increasingly, missionary activity. The geographical dimensions of the Muslim world were pretty well established by 1450 CE— the end of the postclassical period—though a few key later chapters would be written in Africa, south Asia, and south Eastern Europe. Islam‘s spread was gradual though amazingly rapid given the extensive geography and diverse regions involved.

In fact, this gradual and rapid spread of Islam was accomplished through both military conquest and trade and missionary activities. Thus, Peter N. Stearns adds:

In some cases, Islam spread to other cultures in a context of military conquest, even though the religion was tolerant of other beliefs. Muslims rarely forced people to convert to their religion, often preferring to levy a special tax on minority communities instead. The famous jihad, or holy war described by the prophet Muhammad, was mainly used for defense of the faith, not forced conversion, though there were exceptions. But the success of Muslim armies could create a context in which other people found it prudent to convert, or in which they were attracted to the religion simply because of its manifest power and triumph. In other instances, Islam spread through more spontaneous conversions as people learned of it through trade and missionary activity. The religion was clearly attractive, with an explicit set of beliefs about what to do and what not to do in order to win access to heaven and avoid a lamentable eternity in hell. It appealed to lower-class groups because of its commitment to charity and spiritual equality; it also legitimated merchant activity more than did most belief systems at the time, and so could attract traders. The cultural and political achievements of Islam drew people eager to advance their societies in a variety of ways, including religious ones.

The spread of Islam, as a matter of fact, accompanied by the acquisition of Arabic as the language of worship, daily life, and later as a medium of literature,

consolidated even further this interaction, which had become so deep that it involved the very process of creative writing in Arabic, widely used by the newly converted Muslims. So keen on proving their allegiance and commitment to the new faith, they naturally articulated their new experience under the banner of the newly formed Islamic state in the language of the Qur'an, which they used to recite in their prayers five times a day. Thus, Sir Hamilton Gibb was right when he wrote in his *Arabic Literature: an Introduction*[5]:

Classical Arabic literature is the enduring monument of a civilization, not of a people. Its contributors, nevertheless, under the influence of their Arab conquerors, lost their national languages, traditions, and customs and were moulded into unit of thought and belief, absorbed into a new and wider Arab nation6.

As for the Europeans, they have been the closest neighbours to the Arabs for many centuries and to Muslims since the advent of Islam in the seventh century. They were ―neighbours in constant contact and communication, often as rivals, sometimes as enemies, and with attitudes towards each other formed and confirmed by centuries of experience, and for the Europeans, of fear‖[7]. As a matter of fact, the interaction between Arabic and European literatures, which were produced first in Latin and later in its various vernaculars, reached its zenith in the 12th and 13th centuries, with Spain, for more than nine centuries, and Sicily, for

almost four centuries, meditating and disseminating the Arabic and Islamic influences throughout Europe.

Summing up the outcome of this enduring interaction, Peter N. Stearns adds:

The Muslim period in Spain and Portugal had vital consequences. Muslim rulers developed an elaborate political and cultural framework while largely tolerating Christian subjects….

Muslim artistic styles long influenced Spanish architecture and decoration, even after Islam itself had been pushed out. Music, including the guitar, an Arab instrument, merged traditions as well—and from Spain the new styles would later spread to the Americas. Centers of learning, like Toledo, drew scholars from all over Europe, eager to take advantage of Muslim and Jewish science and philosophy; the result helped spur change and development in European intellectual life[8].

In addition, the experience of the Crusaders in the Levant, which lasted nearly two centuries, and which had left a profound influence on those who survived it and were fortunate enough to return safely to their home countries, consolidated further this process, and transformed almost everything in Europe in the following centuries.

As for the Sub-Saharan Africa, the interactions —occurred during the postclassical period… and by the late twentieth century about 40 percent of all sub-Saharan Africans were Muslim‖. Thus, while initial contacts in West Africa focused on the Sudanic kingdoms, headed at first by Ghana, these contacts had some distinctive features:

((Trade with Muslim North Africa developed quickly, across the Sahara Desert by camel and horseback. The trade was vital to Ghana for tax revenues and supply of horses. The king of Ghana also hired Arab Muslims to keep records, because they had writing and bureaucratic experience. But contacts also facilitated raids by Muslims from the north, often encouraged by local Islamic groups. The kingdom of Mali, which flourished after Ghana collapsed in about 1200, regularized interactions with Muslims. Rulers like Sundiata more systematically utilized Muslim bureaucrats and converted to Islam as a gesture of goodwill toward the North African trading partners. A king of Mali, Mansa Musa, made a famous pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324, dazzling Arabs with his lavish supply of gold. Mansa Musa also organized a center of Muslim scholarship in the city of Timbuktu, and Muslim architecture spread widely.))

As for the East African coast, Arab traders and missionaries in the Indian Ocean worked directly from Egypt, southward, and beginning with the elite, widespread conversions occurred.

((Farther south, Swahili merchants—the word in Arabic means ―coasters or people who work along the coasts— established a lively commerce between Indian Ocean ports and interior villages. In the process they also brought Arabic language and Muslim religion and political ideas. Many traders intermarried with the African elite, as Islam began to provide cultural unity for upper classes all along the coast. Conversions were voluntary, but Islam represented high social status and the kind of generalized religion useful to far flung trade—a religion that local African cultures did not provide. Mosques and other literary and artistic expressions of Islam followed the shift in beliefs, and a mixed Arabic-African language, Swahili, emerged as well, ultimately providing a system of writing as well as facilitating oral communication. The intrusion of Portuguese power in this region in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries limited further growth, but when Portugal was expelled shortly before 1700 conversions resumed along the trade routes inland)).

The spread of Islam on the eastern front covered central Asia, India and, at later stage, the south-eastern areas of the continent. As a matter of fact, Islam was the first outside religion to penetrate the region of central Asia, which had, as a whole, remained, up to the beginning of the eighth century, untouched by the surrounding civilizations. The systematic spread of Islam in central Asia, involving both of the

dominant patterns of Muslim contact: force and persuasion, was most effective, resulting in the majority of its population becoming Muslim today.

Arab conquest pressed into Iran and Azerbaijan in the seventh century, and further conquests occurred in Tranoxania, the most settled part of the region, during the eighth century. But there the conquest stopped, and raids between Arabs and Turks ensued. In the ninth century, Muslim traders and then Sufi missionaries began to move out from scattered towns to the nomadic steppes, spreading Islam among the tribal groups. Turkish migrations from central Asia into the Middle East, beginning in the tenth century, further introduced Turks to Islam. A final stage occurred during the Mongol invasions of central Asia and the Middle East in the thirteenth century. The Mongols were not Muslim, but their conquests brought new contacts between central Asia and the Middle East that in turn completed the conversion of the territory to Islam. In east central Asia, Muslim traders and Sufis made further contacts and conversions, bringing Islam to parts of present-day China such as East Turkmenistan. As is common with intercultural contact, Islam did not totally alter the established cultures, which continued distinctive forms of art and music, a devotion to imaginative horsemanship, and a relatively high status for women. But conversion did bring change. A key question at the end of the twentieth century involves what kind of Islamic future this region, now free again, will decide to establish[11].

Due to the big difference between Islam and Hinduism, the initial trading contacts and even successful Arab raids on Indian territories had little cultural impact. A few pockets of Muslims developed, but as small minorities. Hindus largely tolerated these groups. Changes in Hinduism, including more emotional rituals and use of popular languages rather than the scholarly Sanskrit, bolstered this religion‘s position. As is common when two major cultures encounter each other, influences moved in both directions. Muslims learned about Indian science and mathematics, including the numbering system that passed to the Middle East, where it was later adopted by Europeans.

The situation changed in the eleventh century, with wider and more durable Muslim conquests in India....The stage was set for wider confrontation and contact. Conversions to Islam were encouraged by the presence of a Muslim ruling class, but devout Sufi also poured in, hoping to convert the infidels and winning followers by personal example and merit. Muslim religious leaders also adapted to the cultural setting, using Hindu stories but with Muslim characters and building shrines on the sites of Hindu temples and thus appropriating existing sacred territory. Islam specifically attracted warriors and also people from the lowest Castes, drawn by the promise of spiritual equality rather than the Hindu ideas of successive reincarnations. At the same time, a syncretic movement arose within Hinduism, the bhatki cult, that accepted monotheism and spiritual equality—which

helped keep some of the lower castes away from Islam proper. Later, in the sixteenth century, when another Muslim empire formed, other Hindu groups developed a new religion from a mixture of Hindu and Muslim principles, notably the Sikhs, who kept many Hindu beliefs but added greater militance.

Overall, however, the main impact of Islam on India was the creation of an important religious minority, in the northwest — closest to the Islamic heartland— but also in the northeast. Most Indians remained satisfied with their own religious culture, and there was no massive immigration of Muslims from other areas. Suspicion of Hindus by Muslim rulers such as those of the Delhi sultanate— who objected to Hindu sensuality and representations of women, which one Muslim writer claimed showed an ―essential foulness‖ in the religion—actually increased loyalty to Hinduism in opposition. Hindu rebellions against Muslim rule, sometimes led by converts to Islam who then changed their minds, also occurred. The difficult relationship between Hinduism and Islam in India—sometimes exhibiting mutual tolerance, sometimes great hostility—continued into modern times, when it was exploited by British colonial rulers, and into the later twentieth century, when it generated tensions between Muslim Pakistan and predominantly Hindu India[12].

Unlike other areas in the three continents, where both force and persuasion were used to spread the message of Islam, the final divine message was introduced into

south-east Asia during the late fourteenth century entirely by persuasion. The honest conducts of Muslim merchants, who came from Arabia and the Indian Sub-continent, attracted the people of the Malay Peninsula to the message of Islam. While the merchants worked on establishing social and commercial contacts with the elites of the coastal towns and centres of the peninsula, the Sufis operated among the inland people, and soon the entire area was dominated by the followers of the new faith. Peter N. Stearns, again, relates the last chapter of the story of the spread of Islam in the pre- modern era:

Muslim trading ships from Arabia and particularly from India brought both Muslim merchants and Sufis to the Malay Peninsula and the islands that now form Indonesia. Merchants established crucial contacts in the coastal towns, where they influenced the ruling classes. By the fifteenth century, most elites in these cities had been converted. From the coastal towns, Sufis traveled inland, setting up schools and preaching in each village. Islam appealed to inland peoples as a way of integrating with the coastal populations, in a period of expanding trade. By the sixteenth century Islam had become a dominant religion in the Indonesian islands, save for pockets of Hinduism and for isolated, polytheistic peoples in remote parts of the interior. It had won powerful influence on the Malay Peninsula and in the southern part of the Philippines. Its spread was stopped only by the arrival of

European naval and commercial superiority during the sixteenth century. Even so, it was not pushed back; Indonesia is the largest Muslim nation in the world today.

Islam in Southeast Asia inevitably merged with regional cultural influences, including popular costumes, dances, and festivals — including brilliant shadow plays and other pre- Islamic staples based on Hindu epics. The Sufis tolerated large

remnants of animist, Hindu, and Buddhist beliefs and rituals— many of which orthodox scholars would have found contrary to Islamic doctrine. Social relations were governed by pre- Islamic law, and religious law was applied to very specific types of ex c h a n g e s. Women retained a stronger position than in the Islamic Middle East, often participating actively in market activities. Islam added, in sum, to the mixed, creative culture that predominated in Southeast Asia[13].

When one turns to the modern era of interaction between the Arab World and the rest of the globe, one can easily notice that the era of colonizing by Western powers of most of the Muslim and Arab worlds, brought the process of interaction between Arabic and other literatures into a new phase. The presence of the European missionaries, traders, travelers, diplomats, writers, administrators and soldiers throughout the Arab world, started late in the eighteenth century, provided an ample space of encounter that engulfed almost all aspects of life in the Arab world and later in Europe and the Americas. Furthermore, the movement of Arab

immigration, started in the mid-nineteenth century to the new world as well as to Western Africa and Australia, and to all parts of Europe in the second half of the twentieth century, had also created more diverse opportunities for interactions, which produced a distinct brand of Arabic literature, namely the early Mahjar (Diaspora) literature, written mostly in Arabic, and the new Mahjar literature, written in other languages such as French, English, Spanish, German, Portuguese, and Italian. In fact, there is hardly any aspect of modern Arabic writings which has not been touched by this encounter, and it is impossible to study these writings without taking into consideration the impact of the interaction, between the Arab world and the rest of the globe, particularly the Western world, on such writings.

In short, every point of contact between Arabic literature and other world literatures is a space of interaction between the two literatures involved in the process, and every space needs a thorough investigation. In order to carry out such an investigation properly and productively, a collaborative work is required on the part of the scholars involved in the comparative study of these literatures, and this would, no doubt, produce a better class of scholarship, urgently needed for the development of the field.

While classical Arabic literature is the outcome of the most fruitful partnership among various nations, peoples, and traditions, Modern Arabic Literature, produced in the Arab world by both native Arabs and Arabic-speaking writers

from other ethnicities living there, and in their chosen or enforced exiles all over the world, is the outcome of an all- embracing interaction between its centuries-long tradition and the various cultural and literary traditions of the rest of the world. In other words, viewed as one of the most important aspects of the Arab-Muslim contribution to world civilization, Arabic literature has a unique experience of encounter with the literatures of the world in both Medieval and modern times, in East and West, South and North. Yet, this long, extensive, diverse and rich experience of cross-cultural encounter is, most regrettably, either neglected or ignored by comparatists from both East and West[14]. Although comparative literature is meant to be ―a discipline of tolerance‖[15], scholars on both sides of the divide tend to stubbornly deny the importance of this interaction in bringing about the changes we witnessed in the histories of Arabic and other world literatures. Ethnocentricity and Euro-centricity seemed to have affected the attitudes of both Arab scholars and their European counterparts, who tend to play down the role played by national literary traditions in inspiring any changes that had taken place on both sides of the divide between Europe and the Islamic and Arab worlds.

To cite one example of this intolerance, one may refer to the role played by the Anadalucian literary heritage, particularly the Muwashshahs (the Hispano-Arabic strophic poetry composed in classical Arabic) and Zajals (the Hispano-Arabic

strophic poetry composed in vernacular Arabic) in the emergence of the ‗courtly love' phenomenon inEurope in the late middle Ages. Writing on the so called ‗courtly love', in his monumental masterpiece, *The Allegory of Love*, C. S. Lewis sees this phenomenon as ―a revolution‖, to which the Renaissance itself, when compared with it, ―is mere ripple on the surface of literature[16].‖

Everyone has heard of courtly love, Lewis adds, and everyone knows that it appears **quite suddenly at the end of the eleventh century**[17] in Languedoc. The characteristics of the Troubadour poetry have been repeatedly described. With the form, which is lyrical, and the style, which is sophisticated and often ‗aureate' or deliberately enigmatic, we need not concern ourselves. The sentiment, of course, is love, but love of a highly specialized sort, whose characteristics may be enumerated as Humility, Courtesy, Adultery, and the Religion of Love. The lover is always abject. Obedience to his lady's lightest wish, however whimsical, and silent acquiescence in her rebukes, however unjust, are the only virtues he dares to claim. There is a service of love closely modelled on the service which a feudal vassal owes to his lord. The lover is the lady's ‗man'. He addresses her as *midons*, which etymologically represents not

‗my lady' but ‗my lord'. The whole attitude has been rightly described as ‗a feudalisation of love'. This solemn amatory ritual is felt to be part and parcel of the courtly life. It is possible only to those who are, in the old sense of the word, polite.

It thus becomes, from one point of view the flower, from another the seed, of all those noble usages which distinguish the gentle from the villain: only the courteous can love, but it is love that makes them courteous.

Yet this sudden emergence of courtly love, with its distinctive characteristics, and —the abrupt appearance of complex Occitanian lyric in the early years of the twelfth century‖[19] which points to a possible connection with an earlier literary phenomenon in the neighbouring Andalucía, namely the two newly invented poetic genres of the Muwashshahs and Zajals, is viewed as a sort of transmutation that could be easily attributed to the genius Troubadours, but never to any external, non-Western element. Although —the court culture of the eleventh-century Arabic Spain was by all accounts brilliant, sophisticated, and particularly interested in artistic creation‖, and despite the fact that —secular as well as mystical love was a frequent topic of both lyric and didactic works; theories of profane love had been well worked out before 1100‖, and that

—motifs (such as the need for secrecy), styles (such as difficult composition), and concepts (such as raqib or —guard‖) similar or identical to those of the troubadour poetry appear in the amorous verse of Muslim Spain‖[20], all these parallels were not seen as enough proof of any connection between the troubadour lyric and the Muwashshahs and Zajals of Andalucía. Furthermore, what is really missing of all the arguments against the so-called Arabic theory is the fact that in both

phenomena of the Muwashshahs and Zajals on the one hand, and the Troubadours' songs on the other, the music reigns supreme, and this dominance of music points strongly to the originally Arabic ―roots‖ of a significant part of the three lyrical genres, ―given the predominance of Anadalucian musical instruments, many of whose names are still distinguishably Arabic‖[21]. Nevertheless, Meg Bogin, in her ‗Historical Background' to *The Women Troubadours***,** quotes René Nelli's assertion that the poems of the troubadour Guilhem IX

contain the basic canon of ideas –homage to the lady, true love as endless suffering, chastity as the highest expression of true love –that Arab poets had already codified in works such as The (p.45) Dove's Neck Ring, a mid-eleventh-century treatise by the Cordoban Ali ibn-Hazm, which contained a chapter on ―The Submissiveness the Lover Owes His Lady[22].

Then she adds:

Guilhem by all accounts did not begin to write until 1102 just after his return from the Crusades. He had spent a year semi- imprisoned at the court of Tancred, where, presumably, he would have been exposed to Arab poetry. Not only the Crusades but the Reconquista –the continuing effort to re-conquer Spain from Islam –had created an important network of connections between Occitania and the resplendent courts of Christian Spain, where Moorish poets and performers were in

residence. Spain was Occitania‘s closest neighbor, and there was a constant flow of people back and forth across the Pyrennees...

The influence of Arab culture was so pervasive that it was hardly necessary to leave Occitania to hear the melodies of Andalusia and Arabia. Much of southern France had been conquered by Moslem invaders in the mid-eighth century. Although the Saracens, as they were called, did not maintain their hold for long, they left their mark in place names and, undoubtedly, in the folk imagination. Toward the end of the eleventh century refugees from southern Spain began to settle in the area of Nimes and Montpellier, brining Arabic and Arab culture once again to Occitania. In Montpellier a colony of Moslem refugees gave lessons in Moorish song and music; in Narbonne, Béziers, Montpellier, Lunel and Vauvert, colonies of Jewish translators and scholars, who were also Andalusian refugees, taught Islamic and Hispano-Arab culture, including poetry and music. A slave trade in Moorish men and women based in Narbonne began in 1149. Inspired by their northern counterparts, many Occitanian nobles kept troupes of Moorish singers at their courts as a sign of status. Guilhem de Poitou had himself grown up in the presence of hundreds of Moorish joglaresas (femal joglars) who were part of his father‘s court retinue: the elder count had won them in reward for helping Aragon campaign against the Moors in 1064.23

Yet, we still hear some voices in the West, which continue to deny any role, played by the Muwashshahs and Zajals in the emergence in the twelve-century Troubadours‘ songs. In fact, the role of the Arabs in medieval literary history of Europe is overlooked and the Arabs themselves are always excluded entirely from the historical scene- an exclusion which made Professor Maria Rosa Menocal writes in her book, with its telling title:

This academic conceptual banishment of the Arab from medieval Europe was to have extraordinary power. While versions of the Arabist theory were to be brought up again and again, it would not be reinstituted as part of the mainstream of philological thought. The sporadic suggestions of Arabic influence on this or that aspect of medieval European literature or on salient features of its lexicon, such as trobar, were largely ignored, were dismissed as unworthy of serious consideration, or at best were subjected to unusually heated and vitriolic criticism. The proponents of such ideas predominantly Arabists, were dismissed as individuals who simply had as ax to grind rather than a conceivably legitimate contribution to make and who, in any case, were not knowledgeable in the field of European literature[24].

However, there are some exceptions to this unfair dismissal of the Arabs from the realm of verbal Arts of medieval Europe. These include in particular three major masterpieces produced by oriental peoples, which had been appropriated and freely

used by Western writers, namely Ibn al- Muqaffa‘s translation of *Kalilah wa Dimnah*, Ibn Tufayl‘s *Hayy Bin Yaqzan* and *Alf Laylah wa Layla*, all of which have been, to use Sandra Naddaff‘s words, emblematic works of world literature, that have

―circulated far beyond their linguistic and cultural points of origin‖ adopting, as they travel, ―to various media, genres, and contexts‖. *Alf Layla*, for example, has been an intertext in so many literary and artistic works to the extent that:

One might productively develop a literary history of nineteenth and twentieth century European and American literature using *Alf Layla wa Layla* as the generative source text. Innumerable Western writers – Beckford, Coleridge, Dickens, Mallarme, Stevenson, Proust, Yeats, von Hofmannsthal, Twain, Borges, among many others – testify to the influence and importance of this work in the development of their own literary imagination. The short story form and the *conte fantasique* in particular, were responsive to the intertextual possibilities of the *1001 Nights*. Two examples suffice: Théophile Gautier‘s ―La Mille et deuxième nuit‖ (1842) and Edgar Allan Poe‘s ―The Thousand-and-Second Tale of Scheherazade‖ (1845) represent a general fascination with Scheherazade‘s fate once she moved beyond the narrative time of 1001 nights into real time as the wife of Sultan Shahriyar[25].

It seems that, when acknowledging the impact of the Arabian Nights and other works for that matter, Western scholars do so only as a way of emphasising their contribution to the disseminations of these works throughout the globe, ignoring, on the whole, the other most interesting, even exciting, spaces of interaction between Arabic, Western and other literatures of the world such as those of Iberian space and its extension in Latin America.

By the same token, we still witness several Arab scholars strongly object to the idea that modern literary genres such as the novel, short story and drama, were all inspired by the Arabs‘ encounter with Europe from the late eighteenth century onward, claiming that they were merely developments of Arabic literary traditions in narrative, such as the

maqamah and dramatic performances[26].

In short, the interaction between Arabic literature and other literatures of the world has continued, expanded, and deepened, so that by the coming of the new millennia, it has involved almost all the literatures of the world worthy of such a term, being old, medieval, or modern, and covering both East and West, North and South. In fact, among other great literatures, Arabic literature is almost unique in three aspects that cannot be claimed by other literatures: its long, continued, and living presence in the world of verbal art. In fact, this interaction dictates that

Arabic literature should be studied from a comparative perspective, and such a study promises to yield many benefits, the most obvious of which are the followings:

To begin with, the study of the relationships between Arabic and other World Literatures, as well as of their impact on the developments of these literatures, is certainly an impossible mission to be accomplished by one scholar, or even by a big team of scholars from one nation. This is all the more obvious in view of the fact that the circle of the contact and interaction between Arabic and other World literatures has expanded over the centuries so much, engulfing virtually not only the literatures of the old world but also those of the Americas, South Africa, Australia, and the Far East. A call for the study of Arabic literature comparatively, therefore, entails, though implicitly, a call for a partnership among all scholars involved in its study, be they Arabs or non-Arabs, from East or West, from South or North. In fact, this partnership would offer a unique opportunity of co-operation between the insiders and outsiders, each of whom would bring his/her own vision and insights into the study of every space of interaction between the literatures involved, gaining, as a result of this complementation, a more rounded and inter-subjective picture of the studied literatures. There are, of course, some excellent comparative works on Arabic literature and its encounter with the _other‘, written by gifted scholars from both sides. However, none of these works could claim the

perfect status of combining the dual perspective of both the insiders and the outsiders. This could only be accomplished by joint work, which affords the necessary knowledge, of languages and literary and cultural backgrounds, for dealing effectively with every case of interaction.

Studying Arabic literature comparatively, on this large scale, and by specialists in the various literatures involved, would certainly enrich the theoretical foundations of comparative approach to literature in general. There is, in fact, a widely spread feeling among the comparatists all over the world, that this approach suffers from its Western-centrism[27], due simply to the circumstances surrounding its birth and development over the last two centuries. Tapping the contributions of scholars from the rest of the world and drawing on a much expanded circle of materials of interactions between world literatures, would, no doubt, rectify the unhappy present state of the art. To give just a brief example of the potentials of this expansion in perspective and studied materials, one can easily refer to Michael Crichton‘s interaction with *Ibn Fadlan’s Journey to Russia*[28], as embodied in his novel *Eaters of the Dead.*

In his ‗A Factual Note on *Eaters of the Dead*‘, the ―Afterword‖ he added to the 1993 edition, Crichton acknowledges his debt to *Ibn Fadlan’s Journey to Russia*, stating that:

In the tenth century, an Arab named Ibn Fadlan had travelled north from Baghdad into what is now Russia, where he came in contact with the Vikings. His manuscript, well-known to scholars, provides one of the earliest eyewitness accounts of Viking life and culture. As a college undergraduate, I had read portions of the manuscripts. Ibn Fadlan had a distinct voice and style. He was imitable. He was believable. He was unexpected. And after a thousand years, I felt that Ibn Fadlan would not mind being revived in a new role, as a witness to the events that led to the epic poem of Beowulf.

Although the full manuscript of Ibn Fadlan has been translated into Russian, German, French, and many other languages, only portions have been translated into English. I obtained the existing manuscript fragments and combined them, with only slight modifications, into the first three chapters of Eater of the Dead. I then wrote the rest of the novel in the style of the manuscript to carry Ibn Fadlan on the rest of his now-fictional journey. I also added commentary and some extremely pedantic footnote[29].

He also stresses that all references in his afterword are genuine, while the novel, including its introduction, text, footnotes and bibliography, should properly be viewed as fiction[30].

The student of this space of interaction comparatively would certainly feel comfortable with applying all the three conditions of the so called _the French School‘, i.e., that the comparative study should be confined to the question of influence between different literatures, that the difference between literature should be based on difference in languages, and that the relationship between the two works is real. He would also be happy to consider the various relations between the Ibn Fadlan‘s text and all other forms of knowledge, required to reach a better understanding of the text, including geography, medieval Muslim and European history, anthropology, ethnology, sociology, psychology, etc. as it is suggested by the so called of _the American School‘, particularly in its Henry Remak‘s version[31]. In addition, there is also a unique opportunity to conduct a case study in translation, as well as in comparative stylistics, proposed by Rene Etiemble in his *Crisis of Comparative Literature*[32]**.** Furthermore, the two texts involved in this comparative study could be considered from the receptionist‘s point of view, exploring all forms of passive and positive reception, including what I called somewhere else [33] the critical and inspirational forms of reception, a practice which would meet the requirements of the so called

_the school of reception‘ in comparative study of literature. As for those Comparatists interested in imagological studies, they could find in the image of the Arab/Muslim Ibn Fadlan, as reflected in Crichton‘s novel, an appropriate example

to consider in detail. Finally, as the novel was made into a successful film entitled **—The 13th Warrior**‖, directed by John McTiernan[34] (**Touchstone Pictures**, 1999), with Antonio Banderas (98 mins), comparatists could explore the transformations undergone by the narrative of both Ibn Fadlan and Crichton when they are produced in the movie. Nonetheless, we should not forget that the postcolonial contrapuntal reading is also tenable, particularly in view of the fact that some scholars would see Crichton‘s novel and the subsequent making of the novel into a film as an appropriation of the Arabic text on a large scale in both Western literature and cinema. In short, expanding our perspective in our comparative study of literature, would certainly lead to an expansion of the Western/World literary canon, and would enrich no doubt the theory of the comparative study at large.

Studying Arabic literature comparatively, as stated earlier, would help in a way or another in undermining any sort of self-centrism, be it national, racial, continental, or even cultural, prevailing currently in the comparative study of literature, thus allowing a more humanistic perspective to dominate the field, and this, no doubt, would shake the hierarchical tendency that is permeating many comparative studies of influence published nowadays.

The domination of the humanistic perspective in the comparative study of literature, would ease the existing tension between Islam and the West, and would

replace the spirit of confrontation adapted by both sides by a spirit of collaboration and cooperation in order to produce a better class of comparative study of literature free from any form of power- a virus that has contaminated Western scholarship for centuries.

Studying Arabic literature comparatively is, finally, compatible with the many recent academic calls for the study of regional and continental literatures comparatively, and even globally. Here one can refer in particular to *the Comparative History of Literatures in European Language* **,** published by **The International Comparative Literature Association (ICLA)**, in cooperation with **the Hungarian Academy of Science,** to *Latin American Literature: Comparative History of Cultural Formations,* published by Oxford University Press[35], and the current program **—Travelling Traditions: Comparative Perspectives on Near Eastern Literatures"**, directors: Friederike Pannewick (Centrum für Nah- und Mittelostudien/Arabistik, Philipps-Universität Marburg), Samah Selim (Rutgers University, New Jersey), and sponsored by the project **Europe in the Middle East—the Middle East in Europe (EUME)**.

The call for a comparative approach to Arabic literature is, in fact, a methodological necessity, dictated by the very nature of this literature: its medium, the Arabic language, which interacted openly with all living languages since pre-Islamic time; its complex network of relations with other literatures and cultures

throughout its long and continuous history; the ethnic diversity of its producers, and, finally, the hyphenated nature of the new Mahjar literature, or rather literatures, produced by Arab writers all over the world and in Arabic and other living languages. Thus the growing feeling among Arab comparatists that such an experience of encounter, between Arabic and other literature of the world, deserves a comprehensive assessment is quite justified. Studying Arabic literature comparatively is urgently needed not only for its vital importance to our understanding of a fascinating and complex chapter in the history of interaction among World literatures, but also for the promising contribution it will make to the theories of comparative literature, which have been dominated by the Western perspective.

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