The Effect of Letter Translation in Highlighting Acculturation in "Midaq Alley " by Naguib Mahfouz & Its English Translation by Trevor LeGassick

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Abstract

This paper highlights the critical role that letter translation plays in fostering cultural cross-fertilization through the process of acculturation in the novel "Zikaq Almadaq " by Naguib Mahfouz. The concept of letter translation, as developed by French critic Antoine Berman, aims to preserve the original text's identity while avoiding distortion. Since language is an intrinsic aspect of identity and a representative of culture, translating a work from one language into another inevitably involves either emphasizing or distorting its identity and culture. Identity and culture are the broad psychological and intellectual frameworks that society uses to represent its existence. This study explores the potential of letter translation to highlight and create cultural cross-fertilization, as well as its ability to absorb elements of Arabic (Egyptian) culture, integrate them into the translation, and transform them into a different cultural act without distorting or compromising the original principles. We adopted a descriptive, analytical, and comparative approach to selected words and phrases from the novel that encapsulate the Egyptian cultural and identity environment. These elements were translated based on the letter translation approach, including local linguistic expressions, religious and political beliefs, proper and place names, local dress, and popular foods. The study reveals that letter translation fulfils the task of accepting the other and extending hospitality, fostering an atmosphere of cultural cross-fertilization by emphasizing linguistic differences.

Keywords; Cultural cross-fertilization- Highlighting- Impact- Novel- Letter Translation.

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Introduction

An observer of Berman's philosophy and views on translation notes the extensive array of concepts and phrases he introduced and addressed to justify the letter translation approach. These views warrant careful attention and contemplation, as Berman is among the few theorists who have treated translation holistically, beginning with the history of translation, which, in his perspective, cannot be separated from the present. This historical context is where Berman places the greatest emphasis.

What stands out about Berman's philosophy is his openness to the other, his opposition to cultural narcissism, and his positioning of acceptance of the other as the ultimate objective of translation. He integrated this acceptance into the moral activity of translation, making it a central ethical consideration.

Berman founded his notion of translation on literary writings, particularly novels, which is relevant to our study. He posits that "the goal of translating literary works is not to communicate or convey a message, but to convey human experience or existence." The choice of Naguib Mahfouz's Midaq Alley and its translator, Trevor Le Gassick, is particularly apt. Le Gassick himself stated that the novel introduced him to the Arab world, a culture he was previously unaware of in terms of its society and values.

Through this study, we aim to emphasize and develop the letter translation for cultural cross-fertilization. We selected various native Egyptian language expressions, words expressing religious views and politics, phrases reflecting clothing culture, popular Egyptian cuisine, and proper names and places. We examined and contrasted these phrases with their English equivalents to assess how the translation reflected cultural cross-fertilization.

1. Theoretical Framework

Before this analysis, we defined several key terms critical to understanding the process of cultural transfer. To determine whether cultural cross-fertilization occurred, it is essential to understand the meanings of culture, identity, cultural identity, and letter translation, as the latter is pivotal to understanding cultural cross-fertilization.

1.1 Definition of Culture

The search for an accurate definition of culture is a challenging task, as culture emerges from complex societal accumulations over time and varies "according to what we mean by the growth of the individual, the growth of a class, or the growth of an entire society" (Eliot, 2014, p. 27). Eliot (2014) asserts that the culture of society is foundational because an individual's culture depends on the culture of a class, which in turn is constructed on the culture of the entire society, and these three cannot be separated. According to Eliot (2014), culture encompasses "all the activities and interests of a people." Furthermore, Eliot (2014) links culture with religion, noting that there is no culture without religion and no religion without culture.

Koch's (2007) view of culture diverges from Eliot's by associating culture more with everyday life than with religion, defining it as "lifestyles and thought." According to Koch (2014), British anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor was the first to conceptualize culture in an anthropological context. Tylor describes culture as follows: "A culture or civilization, taken in its broadest anthropological sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Koch on Tylor, 2014, p. 31). Tylor's definition is comprehensive, covering practically every aspect of life, and unites the concepts of civilization and culture as two sides of the same coin. It is evident from this description that Tylor views culture as something acquired by individuals as members of society.

Koch (2014) further illustrates that "each culture has a particular style that expresses itself through language, beliefs, customs, and habits" (p. 41). Bennabi defines culture as "a set of

moral qualities and social values, which affect the individual from birth and subconsciously become the relationship that links his behavior to the lifestyle in the environment in which he was born" (Bennabi, 1984, p. 74).

From Bennabi's definition, we discern a predisposition towards the cultural unconscious, that conceptually varies from the views of Tylor and Koch. In his book "Conditions of the Renaissance", Bennabi provides a definition that does not significantly differ from his previous one, except in a few words: "Culture is thus recognized in a practical way as a set of moral traits and social values that the individual receives from birth as primary capital in the environment in which he was born, and culture of this environment in which the individual forms his character and personality" (Bennabi, 1986, p. 83).

1.2 Definition of Identity

Al-Tuwaijri (2004) defines identity as follows: "Our understanding of identity is based on our civilizational heritage; identity in our Arabic Islamic culture is the distinction from the other in all respects" (p. 46). Al-Ali (2016) defines identity as "a composite of material and subjective reference elements aligned that allow for a specific definition of the social actor" (p. 16).

1.3 Definition of Cultural Identity

Al-Tuwaijri (2012) defines cultural identity as "the cultural and civilizational identity of a nation is the fixed, essential, and common amount of general features and characteristics, that make the national or national personality a character that distinguishes it from other national and national figures" (p. 21).

1.4 The Identity & Culture Relationship

Identity and culture are inextricably linked; there is no culture without identity and no identity without culture. According to Al-Saif (2016), no identity is reduced to culture, and a single identity can encompass several cultures, resulting in diversity within the framework of one. Al-Saif (2016) describes the link between identity and culture as the self's relationship to cultural production because identity is regarded as the aware and thinking self, and culture cannot be generated without it.

Al-Tuwaijri (2004) also highlights the close relationship between identity and culture, stating that they are inseparable from their home. He argues that there is no identity without culture, no identity without a cultural perspective, and no identity without a cultural background. Culture is at its core, as is self-contained individuality. A people's identity may be derived from several cultures, with components blended before forming into a singular identity (p. 57).

The term "cultural cross-fertilization" refers to acculturation, as well as the crossing of cultures and civilizations. Its terminology varies by nation and people, but it all refers to the same concept: the overlap, cross-fertilization, and convergence of distinct cultures. A North American anthropologist coined the term "acculturation" in 1880, which signifies convergence. The British prefer the term "cultural exchange," the Spanish prefer "transculturation," and the French prefer "interpénétration des civilisations." However, the word "acculturation" is the most commonly used, and it has established itself in anthropological and cultural research (Universalis, n.d., para. 1). When we talk of cultural cross-fertilization, we think of two distinct entities, often metaphorically referred to as masculine and feminine, which correspond to two different civilizations.

As Tarabishi (1997) puts it: "The process of acculturation, assuming the existence of positive and negative parties, active and passive, inoculated and pollinated, immediately presents itself as a masculine and feminine double-edged process" (p. 11). Acculturation, also known as

cultural cross-fertilization, is a process that has existed between nations and peoples from ancient times, marked by friction, reconciliation, and influence. In the realm of knowledge, the term acculturation refers to the process by which human civilizations become entangled and impacted by one another due to various forms of interaction, regardless of their nature or duration.

It also refers to the processes by which a particular human group's culture is influenced and partially or entirely adapted to elements of another human group's culture with which it comes into contact (Al-Dawai, 2013, p. 36). The Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (2021) define acculturation as "the process of learning to live successfully in a different culture; the process of assisting someone to do so" (para. 1). This definition demonstrates that acculturation is not a hostile process but rather one of reconciliation, attraction, cohabitation, and cultural cross-fertilization among different cultures, as well as learning.

When referring to a learning process, it implies a learned and learnable phenomenon. In their essay, Sam and Berry (2010) quote the most commonly used definition of acculturation: "The most widely used definition of acculturation is those phenomena that result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups… under this definition, acculturation is to be distinguished from… assimilation, which is at times a phase of acculturation" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, as cited in Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 473).

Thus, the most frequent definition of acculturation is the phenomenon that occurs when groups of individuals from different cultures engage directly and continuously, leading to changes in the cultural patterns of one or both groups. Based on this concept, it is important to distinguish between acculturation and assimilation, which can sometimes be a phase of acculturation. It appears that acculturation or cultural cross-fertilization has multiple meanings, and experts in this field have addressed it from various perspectives.

1.5 Translation of the Letter according to Antoine Berman

In his book, Berman (1999) highlights the distinction between words and letters in translation. Translating a letter within a text does not necessarily mean rendering it word-for-word; although there is some overlap between the two approaches, it is not always the case. Berman illustrates this point with the following example: "L'heure du matin a de l'or dans la bouche" (Berman, 1999, p. 14), which translates to "There is gold in the morning hour." This corresponds to the French proverb: "Le monde appartient à ceux qui se lèvent tôt" (Berman, 1999, p. 14), meaning "Those who wake up early own the world."

According to Berman (1999), translators face a choice: either they can render a German proverb using its French equivalent, or they can opt for a more literal translation. However, Berman argues that the literal translation doesn't necessarily mean a word-for-word rendition. Instead, it involves capturing the proverb's rhythm, length, and brevity—a kind of "letter translation."

In the context of the tale, certain terms—such as "gold," "gap," and "early hour"—should be preserved by the translator when rendering them into French. These terms don't directly correspond to the French proverb, leading to tension in the translation. Berman suggests that this tension creates a space where the unfamiliar can find a place in the French language. French society doesn't use these terms in the same way as German culture does, but by translating them, we allow for cross-pollination and interaction between civilizations. Ultimately,

the letter's translation differs from the craft's translation, although there are occasional points of intersection.

1.6 Literary Translation and Acculturation

Berman's concept of the "ethics of translation" underscores the profound connection between translation and cultural exchange. By coining this phrase, he emphasizes that translation is not merely a mechanical process but a dynamic engagement with language, culture, and humanity. Here are some key points to consider:

- **Moral and Poetic Act**

Berman views translation as an ethical action—one that involves choices, responsibilities, and consequences. He feels that "translation is, in essence, a moral and poetic act, and an act of writing that is fully fledged." (Berman as cited in Ghassan, 2019, p10).

The act of translation carries moral weight because it shapes how ideas, stories, and perspectives are transmitted across linguistic boundaries.

The poetic dimension lies in the creative transformation of words, rhythms, and meanings from one language to another.

- **Positive and Negative Ethics**

Berman categorizes translation ethics into positive and negative aspects. (Berman as cited in Ghassan, 2019).

- **Positive Ethics**: This approach aligns with what he terms "letter translation." It seeks to capture the spirit, rhythm, and nuances of the original text. Rather than rigidly adhering to word-for-word equivalence, it prioritizes conveying the essence.
- **Negative Ethics**: This relates to translations that reinforce stereotypes, biases, or discriminatory views. Racially oriented translations fall into this category.

- **The Stranger and the Contract**

Berman's goal is to open up to the "other"—to present the unfamiliar in the target language. When translating, the linguist enters into a moral contract with the text. This contract obliges them to respect the texture, tone, and intent of the original work. Violating this contract would distort the essence of the text and hinder cross-cultural understanding.

Berman's perspective positions translation squarely within the ethical dimension. Its purpose transcends mere linguistic transfer; it is a moral act that opens the stranger to their new linguistic space. Berman eloquently explains this concept:

The possessive and obsessive purpose characteristic of the West often stifles the moral tendency to translate because the logic of the eye of the self (Loque du même) has always been the victor. However, the act of translation is linked to another logic, the logic of morality, which is why we say, borrowing a beautiful phrase of a wandering poet: Translation is in essence the 'place of dimension.'" (Berman as cited in Al-Khattabi, 2010: pp. 13-14)

Berman's literary translations, especially major works, breathe new life into the receiving language. They carry cultural richness, unearthing latent reservoirs of meaning that would remain hidden without the act of translation: "A new life for texts, a resurrection for them, and the realization of reservoirs that were crouching in them and latent that would not have been achieved without translation." (Berman as cited in Ghassan, 2019, p. 10)

Berman argues that the objective of translation is to establish a textual relationship with the other and inoculate the original language through the other's mediation. This is clear in Berman's book The Ordeal of the Stranger, where he states: "The very goal of translation—to open up a certain relationship with the Other at the level of the written word, to nourish the Proper through the mediation of the Stranger—clashes head-on with any culture's ethnocentric structure." (Berman, 1984, p. 16)

In other words, the primary objective of translation is to establish written contact with the other, thereby enriching the specific language through the stranger's mediation. This goal directly

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challenges the ethnocentric tendencies inherent in each culture. Berman contends that the ultimate purpose of translating the letter lies in promoting cultural cross-fertilization and acculturation. This emphasis on the "stranger" within the target language contradicts the logic of self-centeredness and cultural narcissism. Translation becomes a means to establish a dialogue between cultures—an acceptance, interaction, and closeness to the other.

Ezzedine Al-Khattabi, in his introduction to Berman's book "Translation and Letters," reinforces this viewpoint: "Translation requires the establishment of a reciprocal and interactive relationship between the self and the other; otherwise, it loses the basis of its existence. Its moral goal contradicts the reductionist aim of ethnocentric culture." (Al-Khattabi, 2010, p. 14)

2. Cultural Cross-Fertilization in the novel "Midaq Alley " by Naguib Mahfouz
2.1 Local Language Idioms
Example 01:

"باب النجار مخلع " " "bab alnajaar makhlae" (Mahfouz, 2006, p. 29). It corresponds in English: "It's always the carpenter's door that's falling apart."' (LeGassick, 1966, p.19)

This is an Egyptian proverb that refers to persons who repair other people's stuff and tools but do not mend their own, despite having the necessary machinery. In our culture, it relates to the colloquial idiom (فاس الحداد حافي) "fas alhadaad hafi", implying that the axe of grief is never sharpened. The translation retains practically identical terms from the Egyptian proverb: Bab, Najjar, and Mukhla. Berman stated that he intended to display the letter's translation. This is what Berman meant when he said that translation is a place to welcome the stranger, so we can see how the Egyptian proverb, with its cultural and intellectual weight, has entered the English language and become the other. It is worth mentioning that the English do not employ this proverb in their everyday lives with the same terms. This proverb uses Arabic to describe the act of acculturation. The Arabic and English cultures exhibit cultural cross-fertilization. Perhaps LeGassick selected this translation to highlight the differences between Egyptian popular culture and its English equivalent.

Example 02:

"أصوم وأفطر على بصلة؟" " " 'asum wa'uftir ealaa basila "(Mahfouz, 2006, p. 26). "What, 'break a fast by eating an onion'? (LeGassick, 1966, p.17)

It is a popular proverb used by Egyptians to express that whoever is patient with something will receive a lot of the reward of his patience, and not the consequence of patience is satisfaction with a little. It is a proverb that Mrs Sunia Afifi said to Um Hamida when she wanted to marry for a long time and was followed by the talk of Um Hamida and wanted to get married, but she refused to have the suitor be old because she was patient all those years, so she said this proverb. This proverb corresponds in the Algerian dialect to "صام وفطر على جرادة" "" صام وفطر sam wafatr ealaa jarada". It is noticeable that the translator has transferred the same words into English, so he kept the following: fasting, breakfast, and onions. Here it is clear that it is a translation of the letter, because the same words were transmitted without their equivalents, as fasting and breakfast do not exist in English culture. The well-known proverb is used in a different way, as follows: "Long days of pain, all gone in vain." Looking back at the example translated in the novel, we find that LeGassick respected the Arabic words and transmitted them as they are into English, as well as almost the same length as the Arabic proverb.

It also seems that the translator has also respected the rhythm of the Arabic proverb in formulating it in the form of a question. It seems that the act of acculturation became evident in this example, so the two cultures blended and converged through the translation of the letter.

Example 03:

"أهلا.. أهلا.. زارنا النبي يا ست عفيفي." "ahla.. 'ahla.. zarana alnabiu ya situ eafifi"(Mahfouz, 2006, p. 19). It corresponds in English: "Welcome, welcome. Why, it's as though the Prophet himself had come to visit us, Mrs. Afify!" (LeGassick, 1966, p.12)

In this example, Mrs. Um Hamida welcomed Mrs. Sitt Afifi. We notice in this welcome the repetition of the two words: أهلا.. أهلا, which is evidence of Um Hamida's joy at Mrs. Afifi. The words: "زارنا النبي " are also evidence of the great joy of the guest, that is, as if the Prophet Mohamed peace be upon him visited us personally. It is an expression that indicates the religious depth, the status of religion, and the personality of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the hearts of Egyptians. The translator respected this privacy and conveyed it as is. He even respected the repetition and rhythm of the word "hello". Despite the increase of one or two words in the parable, the translator, in general, has maintained almost the same words, rhythm and weight, and transferred religious specificity to the English language, which clearly demonstrates the cultural cross-fertilization and acculturation between the Arabic and English cultures.

2.2 Religious Beliefs

Example 01:

" وكان يحافظ على صلاته وصومه، ولا تفوته صلاة الجمعة في سيدنا الحسين. أجل أهمل الآن بعض الفرائض، لا عن استهتار ولكن عن كسل، ومازال يحافظ على صلاة الجمعة وصوم رمضان ." wakan yuhafiz ealaa salatih wasawmihi, wala tufawath salaat aljumeat fi sayidna alhusayn. 'ajal 'ahmal alan baed alfarayida, la ean aistihtar walakin ean kasal, wamazal yuhafiz ealaa salaat aljumeat wasawm ramadan."(Mahfouz, 2006, p. 36).

He conscientiously performed the prayers and fasted and never missed Friday prayers in the mosque of Hussain. Lately, he had tended to neglect some religious duties, not from indifference, but rather out of laziness. However, he still attended Friday prayers and faithfully fasted during the month of Ramadan. (LeGassick, 1966, p.23)

This speech reflects the religious image of Egyptian society, and it clearly indicates that the Egyptian people are Muslim people who know and perform the pillars of Islam, and love and magnify the family of the house, especially our master Hussein bin Ali, may Allah be pleased with him. It is interesting to note that the translator LeGassick has preserved all those words that carry religious meanings and beliefs, such as prayer, fasting, obligatory prayers, and maintaining Friday prayers. He even kept some of the words as they were, translating them verbatim into رمضان/Ramadan and مسجد الحسين the mosque of Hussain.

LeGassick's translation has opened the relationship with the other, meaning Egyptian culture, and made translation a place to receive the stranger through language, conveyed the Egyptian religious experience, and achieved reservoirs that were crouching in it and latent that would not have been possible without translation. The transfer of all these religious beliefs into English for the English reader to read is proof that translation really contributes to cultural cross-fertilization and cultural rapprochement between cultures, otherwise, how would the Englishman know those different beliefs about his culture?

Example 02:

"وحياة الحسين " "wahayaat alhusayn" (Mahfouz, 2006, p. 47). "I swear by the life of Hussain." (LeGassick, 1966, p.30)

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This example reflects the extent to which the Egyptian popular community adheres to Hussein, may Allah be pleased with him, and even swears by his life. Despite their love for Hussein, a feeling that reflects the sincerity of their intentions towards Islamic religious symbols, it is exaggerated, which is forbidden by Sharia, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever is a sinner should swear by God or be silent." From a moderate religious point of view, it seems that this is ignorance that reflects the nature of the understanding of religion, even partially, among Egyptian popular circles. It is clear that the translator excelled at conveying these deep-rooted religious particularities in popular circles. The translator could have had enough of the verb and the subject: "I swear," but he conveyed that structure as it was, keeping the words. It is a literal translation as well as a translation of the letter, and sometimes there is no contradiction between them. The translator has preserved the wording of the oath, which is weight and rhythm, and the same words. It is a translation of the letter that the translator was able to transfer the Egyptian popular culture, in part, to the English culture through the language to highlight the different and bring it closer to the English culture.

Example 03:
'eqtasad ma yafid ean "اقتصد ما يفيض عن حاجتك من مرتبك، واحذر الإسراف والخمر ولحم الخنزير." " hajatik min murtabika, wahdhar al'iisraf walkhamr walahim alkhinziri." (Mahfouz, 2006, p. 116). "Save what you can from your wages after buying the necessities. Don't be extravagant and keep away from wine and pork." (LeGassick, 1966, p.76)

When Abbas al-Helou wanted to travel, he went to Radwan al-Husayni to bid him farewell, and al-Husayni called him with these words. These phrases reflect the call for the economy, to avoid what is forbidden by the true Sharia from extravagance, drinking alcohol, and eating pork. It clearly reflects the religious culture of Egyptian society, given their affiliation to the Islamic religion, which prohibits such practices and customs. In the words of the Almighty: "Eat and drink and do not waste" (Al-A'raf: 31) is evidence of the prohibition of extravagance and in the words of the Almighty: "But the wine, the facilitator, the monuments and the children are an abomination from the work of the devil, so avoid him" (Al-Ma'idah: 90) as well as evidence of the prohibition of drinking wine, and in the words of the Almighty: "I forbid you the dead, the blood, the pork and what is worthy of anyone other than Allah it" (Al-Ma'idah: 03) is evidence of the prohibition of eating pork. We note that the translator has conveyed a religious culture that prohibits such practices and customs, starting with advising him to be economical, avoid extravagance, eat pork, and drink alcohol. Eating pork and drinking alcohol is not a heresy of the customs and practices carried out by the English, but it has become a routine thing that they do daily, and we have not heard of this prohibition or criminalization. Perhaps the one who is contemplating this translation can almost be sure that the translator has succeeded in transferring that culture to the host language, thus taking place an act of acculturation, or we can say "cultural cross-fertilization".

Example 04:
"غاضًّا بصره، فأقبلت عليه بملاءتها المبرقعة، وسلّمت عليه بيد ملتفّة بطرف الملاءة كيلا تنقض " "وضوءه.""ghaddan bisirhu, fa'aqbalt ealayh bimila'atiha almubarqaeati, wsllmt ealayh biad mltfft bitaraf almula'at kayla tanqad wadaw'ahu."(Mahfouz, 2006, p. 96). It corresponds in English: "His eyes modestly lowered. She came over to him, veiled in her outer gown, and gave him her hand wrapped in one of its corners, in order not to spoil his state of ritual cleanliness." (LeGassick, 1966, p.62)

The Arabic text contains the characteristics of Sayyid Radwan Al-Husseini, from turning a blind eye and being keen not to break his ablution. These are the characteristics of the righteous and pious servants of Allah, and the master was so, according to Naguib Mahfouz's description of him in the novel. With a description of the dress worn by Muaalim Kirsha 's wife, which is "almula'a". We can understand through the text that there are many signs that characterize the Egyptian cultural and religious identity, at least in the forties of the last century, including turning a blind eye, which is what the Sharia commanded in the saying: "Tell the believing men to reduce their vision " (Al-Nur: 30).

The text also reflects the Egyptian environment's adherence to the Shafi'i school of thought, as Imam Shafi'i believes that shaking hands with a foreign woman invalidates ablution. Perhaps the behaviour of Mrs. Um Hussein, the wife of the Muaalim Kirsha, in this way is such as to avoid the abrogation and ablution of Al-Husseini. The wearing of the almula'a by women also reflects women's respect for Islamic principles and teachings, although Sayyida Um Hussein lacks decency and modesty, according to what Naguib Mahfouz mentioned in the novel, she respects and reveres pious and righteous men, otherwise she would not have come wearing almula'a, and would not have greeted Al-Husseini in this way.

It is noticeable in the English text that the translator has transferred these cultural particularities into the English language. He translated "His eyes modestly lowered." If we had a reverse translation, it would have been as follows: "وكانت عيناه منخفضتان بشكل متواضع ", wakanat eaynah munkhafidatan bishakl mutawadie, a translation that contains many suggestions that the master was turning a blind eye. He translated (فأقبلت عليه بملاءتها المبرقعة) with: (She came over to him, veiled in her outer gown), i.e.: (She came to him veiled with her outer sheet). This translation is a bit far from what Naguib Mahfouz precisely intended, but the translator was able, from our point of view, to express the description of the religious culture of the Egyptian environment. Perhaps the translator succeeded in conveying how she greeted him by placing a barrier on her hand so that his ablution would not be violated. He translated this cultural and religious load as follows:"and gave him her hand wrapped in one of its corners, in order not to spoil his state of ritual cleanliness." (LeGassick, 1966, p.62)

LeGassick has clearly preserved the keywords to preserve the underlying constituents in those phrases. Thus, the English language has become a place to receive the stranger. The act of acculturation is evident in these phrases, creating a mixed atmosphere between an English incubator and an Egyptian religious culture.

2.3 Political Beliefs

Example 01:

"بشوات " bashawāt (Mahfouz, 2006: p. 70). Translated by LeGassick as: "Pashas" (LeGassick, 1966, p. 45).

We note that the translator has quoted these words as they are. This word is military and civilian rank, and its origin is Turkish. These names in Egyptian society reflect that the Egyptian state was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire in the past, and this in itself is a cultural cross-fertilization between the Egyptian and Turkish cultures, and by time it has become used in Egyptian society to denote the lofty people and their notables. In Turkish culture, the Pasha means "the king or the shah" and is then used as a title for the rulers of the states, as well as this term was given to multiple military and civilian ranks, as well as military personnel with a high rank as the prince of a brigade, lieutenant general and marshal." (Amer, 2013, p.368). The translator kept the word as it was and translated it as "Pashas", and transmitted it even in its sound. He could transfer it with an equivalent rank in English culture,

such as the Lord, but he changed that, transferred the physical and literal word, and became the stranger in the receiving language, thus the cultural cross-fertilization and rapprochement between the two cultures took place.

Example 02:
"بكوات" "Bakawat" (Mahfouz, 2006: p. 70). Translated by LeGassick as: "Pashas" (LeGassick, 1966, p. 45).

The singular of this word is بك Bek, a Turkish term that also entered Egypt during Ottoman rule. Bek "is a Turkish term given to senior leaders and الكاف here is pronounced ياء and was adopted by the Ottomans as a title for the ruler of the state or province and this term became popular only after the Turks took control of the Arabic countries." (Amer, 2013, p. 369). The translator transferred it as follows: (Beys), which is a translation of the physical and literal word, and he placed it with the Capital letter (B), which indicates that it is an unusual name. The use of this rank in the novel, as already mentioned, reflects a political and social reality inherited by Egyptian society from the Turks. It appears through translation that it is a translation of the letter of the word so that the Arabic and English cultures cross-fertilize.

Example 03:
"إني كما تعلمون مستقل، ولكني أستظلّ بمبادئ سعد الحقيقية." iiniy kama taelamun mustaqila, walakiniy astzl bimabadi saed alhaqiqia (Mahfouz, 2006, p. 162). As for the English translation, LeGassick translated it into English as follows: "I am, as you know, independent, but I will keep to the true principles of Saad Zaghlul." (LeGassick, 1966, p.105)

These words reflect the political situation in Egypt at that time. Here Naguib Mahfouz talks about the campaign period. The candidate here is an independent candidate who follows Saad Zaghloul's true principles. Saad Zaghloul was the leader of the Wafd Party and led the Egyptian Revolution of 1919, a revolt carried out by Egyptians for independence from British colonialism that occupied Egypt. Egypt gained independence, which was not complete, until the fifties. The translator has conveyed this situation almost as it is, a translation of the letter, considering the retention of the same words, especially in مستقل independent, and مبادئ سعد الحقيقية the true principles of Saad Zaghlul. The translator added the word Zaghloul, and perhaps he wanted to show the Egyptian reader that what is meant is the leader Saad Zaghloul and not any other Saad. In our view, the translator has succeeded in transmitting that political situation, to a large extent, into English culture through language.

2.4 Dress Names
Example 01:
" وكان السيد يرتدي جلبابًا رماديًا فضفاضًا وطاقيةً صوفيةً سوداء يضيء تحتها وجهه الأبيض المشرب بالحمرة كالبدر المنير." wakan alsayid yartadi jlbaban rmadyan fdfadan wtaqytan swfytan sawda' yudi' tahtaha wajhuh al'abyad almusharab bialhumrat kalbadr almunir.".(Mahfouz, 2006, p. 96)

The English version is as follows: "He was dressed in a flowing grey gown and a black woollen skullcap, beneath which his white face, flecked with red, shone forth like a brilliant full moon. " (LeGassick, 1966, p.62)

Le Jasek translated جلبابًا رماديًا فضفاضًا as: "A flowing grey gown." It is the dress of men in popular neighbourhoods and in Upper Egypt. Wearing loose robes and black wool caps is their habit in dress, especially among clerics, jurists, and righteous men, of which Al-Hussein was

one, according to Naguib Mahfouz. In the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, we have found several meanings of the word "gown", and among its meanings is the long dress that women wear on occasion. It also means loose clothing worn over another garment to indicate a profession or social status. Hornby, 1998, p.515) Perhaps the translator intended this meaning since Al-Husseini is one of the righteous men, notables, and those whose word is heard in the Midaq Alley. The translator transferred the word (طاقيةً صوفيةً) into English as (a black woollen skullcap), i.e (A black woollen hoodie), which is the same as what is found in the original text. It is noticeable that the translator has preserved the names of these clothes as they are, and perhaps by doing so, he will transfer the culture of dress to the English so that acculturation and intellectual cross-fertilization occur.

Example 02:

"فسقط طربوشه، وسال الدم من أنفه." fasaqat tarbushihu, wasal aldam min 'anfiha." (Mahfouz, 2006, p. 106) and translated by LeGassick as follows: "His tarboosh fell off and blood flowed from his nose." (LeGassick, 1966, p.69)

These words reflect the type of fabrics and clothing that Egyptians wore in villages and rural areas, such as hats made of wool. LeGassick translated it as: (tarboosh), which is an acoustic transliteration, but in English letters, and this is also considered a linguistic cultural cross-fertilization between Arabic and English, including the introduction of the word to the culture of the target language literally, and making noise to its readers after it caused violence on their language, generating and highlighting cultural cross-fertilization and acculturation between the two cultures.

2.5 Names of Popular Foods

Example 01:

"طبق المدمس والبصل الأخضر والخيار المخلل." tabaq almudamas walbasal al'akhdar walkhiar almukhalal." (Mahfouz, 2006, p. 33) The translation was as follows: "plates of cooked beans, onion salad, and pickled gherkins. " (LeGassick, 1966, p.21)

This dish is one of the most famous Egyptian dishes and the most widespread in popular circles, and it is "a food prepared from boiled beans mixed with spices of vinegar, oil and salt in a closed saucepan" (Dictionary of Al Maany, n.d.: the word فول مدمس). We will try to reverse translate what the translator stated as follows: (أطباق الفول المطبوخ، وسلطة البصل، والخيار المخلل). In general, the translator has preserved almost all the components of this popular dish and transferred them as theyare to the target culture, in order to create a kind of interaction and cultural rapprochement, that contributes to familiarize the English with this popular dish.

Example 02:

" هي صينية فريك محشو بالحمام، ومخلوط بقدر من مسحوق جوزة الطيب" hi siniat farik mahshuun bialhamami, wamakhlut biqadr min mashuq juzat altayib"(Mahfouz, 2006, p. 73) and translated by LeGassick as follows: "It consisted of a bowl of cooked green wheat, mixed with pieces of pigeon meat and ground nutmeg.. " (LeGassick, 1966, p.47)

The translator did the same with the second example, transferring the ingredients of that dish as they are to the receiving culture. We don't think English culture has this popular type of food. The translation is considered a translation of the letter because the translator has preserved the same ingredients that express Egyptian culture in eating. Thus, he introduced the English reader to what he did not know, so this food entered the English language into English culture, which brought the two cultures closer together.

The Effect of Letter Translation in Highlighting Acculturation in "Midaq Alley " by Naguib Mahfouz & Its English Translation by Trevor LeGassick

Ahmed ANAD & Mohammed CHOUCHANI ABIDI

2.6 Proper Names (Names of People & Places)

Table 1: List of Selected Proper Names

Names of People	Translation	Names of Places	Translation
كرشة (ص: 05) Kirsha	Kirsha(p. 01)	زقاق المدق(ص:05) Ziqaq Almudaq	Midak Alley(p. 01)
العم كامل(ص: 06) Aleamu Kamil	Uncle Kamil (p. 01)	الصنادقية(ص: 05) Alsanadiqia	Sanadiqiya(p. 01)
سنقر(ص: 06) Sangar	Sanker(p. 01)	الفاطمية(ص: 05) Alfatimia	Fatimids(p. 01)
جعدة(ص: 06) Jaada	Jaada(p. 01)	الغورية(ص:07) Alghuria	Ghouriya(p. 03)
بوشي(ص: 06) Boushi	Booshy(p. 01)	الحلمية(ص:07) Alhilmia	Hilmiya(p. 03)
الشيخ درويش(ص:11) alshaykh darwish	Sheikh Darwish(p:06)	المرج(ص:12) Almarj	Marj(p: 07)

Source: Midaq Alley " by Naguib Mahfouz & Its English Translation by Trevor LeGassick

The translator seems to have translated the majority of the names of people and places in the novel exactly as they are, all of which are proper names. LeGassick started it with a capital letter to appear like a well-known proper name. Interestingly, the translator translated it verbatim, which is a transfer of the physical and literal word, as well as the phonetic structure of the word, highlighting the phonetic strangeness in the other language. The English language has been able to host such a large number of strange words for the English reader to accept as is, enter his culture, and violently disrupt it, allowing the different to develop and cultural cross-fertilization to occur.

Conclusion

To conclude, our research revealed that cultural cross-fertilization, or acculturation, does not occur between similar entities; rather, it thrives on the interplay of distinct elements. Tarabishi's insights underscore this point, as he acknowledges that true cross-fertilization necessitates the presence of two contrasting parties: positive and negative, active and passive—akin to a dance where pollinators meet pollinators. This dynamic mirrors a masculine and feminine binomial process. Also, the current paper showed that letter translation emerges as a central player in cultural cross-fertilization. It transcends mere mechanical transfer; it becomes the projection of the stranger—a moral value—onto the canvas of language. By emphasizing the stranger, we celebrate differences and invite dialogue.

Consider the incubator—the vessel that nurtures this cross-cultural exchange. Language, like an incubator or uterus, facilitates the mating of ideas. English culture, distinct from the original, becomes the conduit. Egyptian popular culture, too, contributes to this vibrant exchange. Without these linguistic incubators, cultural cross-fertilization would remain elusive. Although the translator endeavours to preserve the features of the original material in all its dimensions, in an attempt to achieve a faithful letter translation as per Berman's principles, complete success remains elusive. Certain expressions are inevitably omitted or altered to suit the reader's context, highlighting that translation is ultimately an art form aimed at making meaning accessible in the target language. This process underscores the inherent challenges and compromises in translation, reflecting the balance between fidelity to the source and readability for the audience.

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