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An-Najah National University

Faculty of Graduate Studies

Department of English.

M.A program in Applied Linguistics and Translation.

**Rendering Lexical Repetition in Arabic Fictional Discourse into
English.**

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies at An-Najah
National University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics and
Translation**

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Abstract

The Rendering of Lexical Repetition in Arabic Fictional Discourse into English.

This is a study on how lexical repetition is managed by professional translators when translating a piece of Arabic fictional narrative discourse into English. Particularly, it is a study of the various types of lexical repetition in Arabic fictional narrative discourse and the strategies employed by professional translators to render lexical repetition into English.

Through an examination of lexical repetition in excerpts from three Arabic literary works, different types of lexical repetition are found: complete lexical repetition, partial lexical repetition, repetition of special structures and repetition of idiomatic expressions. On examining the translated texts, it is found that formal equivalence is possible only with the first occurrence of a repeated lexical item. Instead, other several strategies are used to handle lexical repetition and to make the translation sound native, thereby meeting the Target Language (TL, henceforth) norms and expectation of text cohesion.

These strategies are synonymy and near-synonymy, deletion, ellipsis, pronominalisation and paraphrase. It can be argued that the

use of such strategies is generally motivated by the need to rid the English version of the high frequency of certain words in the Source Language (SL, henceforth) text and create variation in the English text. Recommendations are given to novice Arab translators on how to manage lexical repetition when translating a piece of fictional narrative from Arabic into English.

This study falls into four chapters. Chapters one and two are theoretical, while chapters three and four practical. In chapter one, a general introduction to the topic is outlined, highlighting the problem of lexical repetition and the need for translation strategies to manage this repetition into English.

Chapter two gives a theoretical review of repetition. Repetition is defined from different perspectives. This study adopts a concise definition. Other aspects of repetition, especially in Arabic, such as the functions and types of repetition are examined.

In chapter three, a textual analysis of repetition in excerpts from three Arabic stories and their professional translation is attempted, paying special attention to the different types of repetition and translation strategies employed to render lexical repetition into English.

In chapter four, the conclusion and recommendations are given. Finally, some recommendations on how to handle lexical repetition in Arabic-English translation are put forward to novice translators.

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Transliteration Notes

1- Arabic consonants are transliterated as follows:

b	ب	T	ط
t	ت	Th	ظ
θ	ث	ʔ	ع
j	ج	Y	غ
H	ح	f	ف
x	خ	q	ق
d	د	k	ك
th	ذ	l	ل
r	ر	m	م
z	ز	n	ن
s	س	h	ه
š	ش	w	و
S	ص	y	ي
D	ض		

2- Arabic vowels are transliterated as follows:

Long Vowels	Short Vowels
ā (فتحة طويلة (أ))	a فتحة
ū (ضممة طويلة (و))	u ضمة
ī (كسرة طويلة (ي))	i كسرة
، همزة	

Chapter One

General Introduction

The greater the linguistic and cultural distances between two languages are, the greater the number of serious translation problems becomes. In this respect, Nida (1964: 160) states “where the linguistic and cultural distances between source and receptor codes are least, one should expect to encounter the least number of serious problems”.

In other words, there is an increased possibility for certain translation problems to surface. Such problems are likely to cause miscommunication and misunderstanding or, rather, what Uno (in Suzuki, 1988:2) calls “intercultural refraction”. However despite the cultural and linguistic differences between SL and TL, adequate translation is still manageable (McGuire, 1980:36; Catford, 1965).

This situation applies to translation between Arabic and English which are distant, both linguistically and culturally. They belong to unrelated families: while English belongs to the Indo-European origin, Arabic is a Semitic language (Beeston, 1970: 12). This is perhaps why the linguistic differences between Arabic and English are pervasive; this might also explain why the loss of many of the fine nuances of

meaning in translation between them is relatively great. A translator often needs to depart from literal rendition of the SL text. Jakobson (1971: 64) argues that decisions taken by a translator to deviate from the literal translation of the ST (source text) are attributable to the big gap that exists between languages, priorities and preferences.

It, therefore, becomes urgent to identify those translation problems, study them and attempt to devise specific principles to solve them.

One of the potential sources of difficulty in translation from Arabic to English is the pervasiveness of repetition in Arabic discourse, most particularly in narrative discourse. In the present study, we address the phenomenon of repetition in Arabic narrative discourse and how it is handled in professional Arabic-English translation.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The study has the following aims:

1. To investigate the various types of lexical repetition used in Arabic fictional narrative,
2. To study the various strategies employed in translating Arabic repetition into English, and

3. To make recommendations to students of translation about ways of rendering Arabic lexical repetition into English.

Particularly, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the various types of lexical repetition in Arabic fictional narrative discourse?
- 2- What are the different strategies that professional translators employ to handle lexical repetition when translating a piece of fictional narrative discourse from Arabic into English?
- 3- Is formal equivalence adequate in translating every lexical repetition in fictional narrative discourse from Arabic into English?
- 4- What should a novice Arab translator do in order to attain the best rendition of root repetition?

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Arabic fictional narrative discourse is a difficult genre to translate into English. This may partly be due to the fact that Arabic and English employ different lexical cohesive devices. Lexical repetition is abundant in Arabic narrative discourse making it difficult to translate into English. Most often literal translation is very unlikely to yield an idiomatic and acceptable English text. As a

result, professional translators resort to a variety of strategies to avoid direct lexical translation in English. On the other hand, student translators tend to use literal translation (or formal equivalence). I present in the following section examples of an expert translation contrasted with those of a novice translation to illustrate the problem:

افترس السبع مدير التنظيم النقابي ومن ثم افترس مدير الدائرة العربية
فظل السبع يمرح مطمئنا ويفترس مريئنا(إميل حبيبي: الحياة السرية لسعيد أبو
النحس المتشائل).

The lion *ate* the director of the union and then it *ate* the director of the Arab department. The lion then kept moving and *eating* happily. (Novice translation).

It *ate* the director of union organization...It *devoured* the director of Arab Affairs...The lion went on roving happily about, *munching*...(an Expert's translation.).

In this example, the word افترس occurs three times, and is rendered by the novice translator as **ate** in all three instances. This rendition is a literal translation of this word and shows the translator's lack of translation strategies as well. The translation, consequently, sounds redundant, and presents a good proof that literal translation is not the ideal strategy to handle repetition when translating fictional narrative into English.

On the other hand, a quick examination of the professional translation shows that two different strategies are used to handle the SL repetition. The first occurrence of افترس is rendered literally as **ate**, while the second and third occurrences are translated by the synonyms **devour** and **munch**, respectively. The avoidance of repetition helps the translation sound English.

Therefore, novice translators need to be equipped with all the possible strategies to handle lexical repetition when rendering a piece of fictional narrative discourse from Arabic into English in order to meet the target language norms and expectations. In this respect, Maynard (1999: 138) maintains that “The translated English text is created with the English-reading audience in mind and the translators are tasked to produce meaningful texts for the intended English-speaking audience”.

This issue is of vital significance. Yet novice translators are most likely not sensitive enough to the norms, expectations, and preferences of the TL. Student translators most often lack the repertoire of strategies utilized by expert translators in handling repetition. More importantly, they may not be aware of repetition in SL text.

Hence, there is a need to explore the types of repetition in Arabic and the different strategies employed by expert translators to

manage lexical repetition when translating a piece of fictional narrative discourse from Arabic into English.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it touches upon the following points:

- A- It is a contribution to the theory and practice of translation as it explores a serious problematic aspect in Arabic-English translation, namely how lexical repetition is handled in translation.
- B- It is a serious attempt to investigate the different translation strategies used by professional translators in rendering lexical repetition in fictional narrative discourse.
- C- It may be seen as helpful and insightful to novice Arab translators as it sets ideas and insights for handling lexical repetition from Arabic into English.

1.4 Limitations of the study

Lexical repetition is a cohesive device found in most text types and genres in Arabic. Yet, the present study proposes to investigate lexical repetition in only one genre; namely, fictional discourse. Further studies are needed to explore this phenomenon in other literary and non-literary genres. Other studies are also needed to investigate other types of repetition.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

This chapter sets out to review the related literature on the phenomenon of repetition in narrative discourse, with special emphasis on Arabic. The intended Arabic repetitions are underlined and their English glosses are italicized. The examples in the text are typed in bold.

2.1 Repetition in Cohesion

Before discussing repetition in English, I would like to give a general idea on the place of repetition in the cohesion system of the English language.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), there are two forms of cohesion: grammatical and lexical. Grammatical cohesion is achieved by reference, substitution and ellipsis. On the other hand, lexical cohesion can be achieved by the selection of vocabulary (Halliday and Hassan, 1976:274). It occurs across clause and sentence boundaries in written texts and is a major characteristic of coherent discourse. It subsumes two main subcategories: reiteration and collocation (Brown and Yule, 1983:193; Halliday and Hasan, 1976:284). Both subcategories achieve cohesion through connectivity between one lexical item and another related one.

Reiteration, however, involves either restating an item in a later part of the discourse by direct repetition (which is the main focus of this study) or reasserting its meaning by exploiting different lexical relations including the use of a synonym, near-synonym, superordinate, direct repetition or general word. The following examples illustrate reiteration (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:278):

1- Direct repetition:

There was a large mushroom...

She peeped over the edge of the mushroom...

2- Synonym:

I turned to the ascent of the peak.

The climb is perfectly easy.

3- Near-synonym:

And clutch'd the sword

and lightly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand...

4- Superordinate:

Henry bought himself a new Jaguar.

He practically lives in the car.

5- General word:

I saw a big monster. The thing was horrible.

2.2 Repetition Defined

In the following section I shall discuss the concept of repetition.

Haiman (1997) states that in order to determine whether a sequence {...A.... B...} involves a repetition of an 'X,' we need to compare them and then agree that 'A' and 'B' are two 'X's'. By this Haiman means sameness in root of both entities. That is, the two items must be identical or similar. In contrast, De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981:55-57) identify two kinds of lexical repetition:

1-Complete lexical repetition: which is the recurrence of the same lexical item without any change in word class, as in the following example:

- (1) Marlow: What, my good friend, if you gave us a glass of punch
in the mean time?
Hardcastle: Punch, sir!
Marlow: Yes, sir, punch.

2-Partial lexical repetition (or root repetition): which involves the repetition of the root, but with a different word class, as illustrated by the following example:

- (2) Governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Here, the noun **government** is repeated partially as a participial adjective **governed**, both being derived from the root **govern**.

De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981:49) and Hatim and Mason (1990:199) use the term recurrence to refer to root repetition.

However, the term lexical repetition will continue to be used in this study.

2.3 Repetition in English:

Repetition in discourse is evaluated negatively in the English culture. Haiman (1997: 65-66) argues that English favors economically motivated non-repetition i.e., the use of pronouns instead of repeating the same word and the use of phrases such as 'etecetra', and so forth', 'blah, blah, blah'. Haiman (1995: 337-343) also claims that repeating one's words is disparaging as illustrated by a group of grammaticalised cliches such as 'at the risk of repeating my self...,' which shows that repetition is not desirable in English discourse.

This is not to say that repetition does not exist in English. On the contrary, several studies, such as (Weir, 1962; Goffman, 1974; Redfern, 1985; Tannen, 1989; and Coates, 1995) have suggested that repetition is omnipresent in all western languages.

According to Gutwinski (1976:80), repetition of the same lexical item in English can be cohesive if it occurs in an adjacent environment, with the same sense as in the following example:

Tomorrow would be the *party*.

She had dreamed of that *party* for weeks.

So, here the two occurrences of the word **party** refer to the same entity, thus achieving connectivity. However, repetition in the following example, Gutwinski remarks, does not contribute to connectivity because both occurrences of the word **party** do not refer to the same entity:

She danced all night at a *party* and came home so tired.

That was unfortunate because she had promised to

spend the next morning electioneering for her *party*.

Repetition in a text can help the reader remember a lexical item and associate it with another repetition of the same item, which in turn creates cohesion, (Gutwinski, 1976:80).

Furthermore, different conjugations of the same root in English create repetition of a different word class, as in the following example:

Marry (v.)

Marriage (n.)

Married (adj.)

De Saussure (1915:123) calls the relationships between such words “associative relations” because they belong to the same root.

The use of lexical repetition in English novels can vary from one writer to another, as it is a stylistic or idiosyncratic feature of a writer's style.

Gutwinski's analysis of two different novels by James and Hemingway proves this idea. While in James instances of repetition are rare and very infrequent, Hemingway displays greater dependence on lexical repetition. Gutwinski states that the difference in repetition frequency "reflects the different choices made by each author...and a difference in style."(Gutwinski: 144).

This also proves that the use of lexical repetition in English literature exhibits much freedom and subjectivity, distinguishing the style of one writer from that of another. In addition to that, form is secondary to purpose of the writer. That is repetition is employed by writers to achieve their rhetorical purposes.

However, it is worth pointing out that although English makes use of different kinds of repetition, this phenomenon is not as pervasive as it is in the Arabic language (Farghal and Shunnaq, 1999).

2.4 Repetition in Arabic

In this section, I will examine the phenomenon of repetition and its functions in Arabic.

According to Koch (1981:70), repetition in Arabic involves repetition of morphological patterning and repetition of roots.

2.4.1 Repetition of Morphological Patterning

This type of repetition is defined as the use of morphologically parallel lexical couplets. The following is an example:

- (3) al-Thawāhiru wa-al-Hawādithu.
Phenomena and events.

So **al-Thawāhiru** and **al-Hawādithu** are plural nouns belonging to the pattern or prosodic template **fawāṣilu**. Morphologically parallel items can occur within syntactically parallel phrases as in the following example:

- (4) ta'yīdan li-al-'ummati al-θā'irati wa
aiding to the nation the revolting and
taṣDīdan li-al-dawlati al-Hākimati
assisting to the state the governing
(*aiding* the nation in revolt or *assisting* the
governing state).

Here **ta'yīdan** and **taṣDīdan** are both verbal nouns of the pattern **taṣīlun** used adverbially in parallel phrases. Other examples are given in (Koch, 1981:76-80). However this type will not be examined because it is beyond the scope of this study.

2.4.2 Repetition of Roots

Koch defines repetition of roots (consonantal root, in particular) as “the multiple use of the same root”. When root-meaning modification cannot be achieved morphologically, other structures are used and their ‘adverbial’ function is marked with the accusative case. One of these structures is called **cognate accusative** (Koch, 1981:81). Other repetition types are stylistic tendencies. The cognate accusative, as noted by Koch, is a linguistic device that exists in Arabic to ‘a far greater degree than it does in English.’ (Koch: 81)

In the cognate accusative structure, a verb, a participle, or a verbal noun is accompanied by a verbal noun from the same root, that is both the verb and its verbal noun share the same root but are of different prosodic templates. The verbal noun is usually created from the same verb, and modified by an adjective, or else it could be modified by being made the second term of an addition (iDāfa) structure. The following are examples on cognate accusatives:

- (5) qaDāyā al-qawmiyyāti allatī kānat axathat tajrifu al-
 affairs the nationalities which were began sweep over the
 kaθira min al- bilādi al-’urubbiyyati jarfan šadīdan.
 many of the countries the European a-sweeping strong
 (The affairs of nationalism, which had begun to *sweep*
strongly over many of the European countries).

So here **tajrifu** is the verb, while **jarfan** is its verbal noun, and **šadīdan** is a modifier of **jarfan**. Here are more examples:

- (6) ummatun sūriyyatun taxtalifu ṣan sā'iri al-umami
 nation Syrian differs from rest the-nations
ixtilafan 'asāsiyyan.
 differing (accu.) basic.

(The Syrian nation *differs drastically* from the
 rest of the nations).

Again here **taxtalifu** is the finite verb, which is repeated in a form of verbal noun **ixtilāfan**, modified by **'asāsiyyan**.

The cognate accusative together with the adjective fulfills an adverbial function.

In the following example, the main verb is “a participle”:

- (7) inna Hudūda al-duwali fī urubba Thallat muxtalifatan
 ('inna) boundaries the states in Europe remained different
 ṣan Hudūdi al-qawmiyyati, ixtilafan kabīran jiddan.
 From boundaries the nationalities differing (accu.) big very
 (The boundaries of the states in Europe *remained very*
different from...)

So **muxtalifatan** is a participle, while **ixtilāfan** is the verbal noun or “al-mafṣūl al-muṭlaq”, which is modified by the phrase **kabīran jiddan**.

In the third type of cognate accusative, which is a common form of repetition in Arabic, the cognate verbal noun is the second term of an (IDāfa) construction, as illustrated by the following example:

- (8) 'allathina kānū iltazamū mabda'a Huqūqi
 who were adhered-to principle rights
 al-qawmiyyāti ašadda al-iltizāmi
 the nationalities strongest the adhering
 (Who had *strongly adhered to* the principles of the
 rights of nationalities).

Lexical repetition, as Koch remarks, may involve other types of root repetition; this may consist of a verb with its corresponding noun of place. Here is an example from Koch (86)

- (9) qāmat maqāma al-duwali wa al-duwailāt..
 took place the states and the states (dimin.)
 (Which *took the place of* many states and small
 countries).

This example illustrates two kinds of root repetition; first, there is the verb-noun of place **qāmat maqām**; second a diminutive form of repetition: **duwaylāti** is the diminutive form of **dawla**. It is worth mentioning here that the diminutive construction in Arabic has no one-to-one correspondence in English.

Further root repetition may involve verb-adverb repetition, as in this example:

- (10) lam yaxrujū bi- arā'ihim fī thālika
 not go-out in opinions-their in that
xārija niTāqi al-urubbiyyina.
 outside range the Europeans
 (They did not *have* an opinion *different*
from that of the Europeans).

Note the example **yaxrujū** and **xārija** are very much similar in Arabic, i.e. belong to the same root. This matter clearly indicates and further demonstrates that the Arabic morphology system is a flexible one whereby many lexical forms can be derived from the same consonantal root.

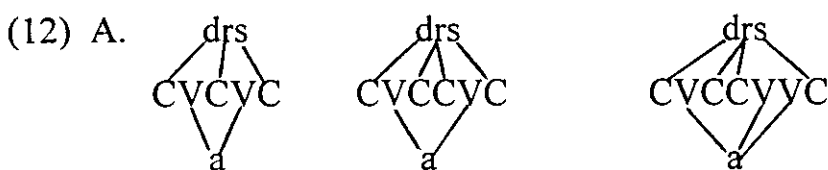
Morphological variation in Arabic is a result of the complex verbal morphology, (Bulos, 1965: 3). The Arabic morphology system is apparently repetitious while actually it is not. It is by far a more complex system based on the root and pattern morphology. In other words the derivation of words in Arabic is based on the prosodic templates like CVCVC, consonantal roots and vowel patterns, as in the following examples: (Kenstowicz, 1994:396)

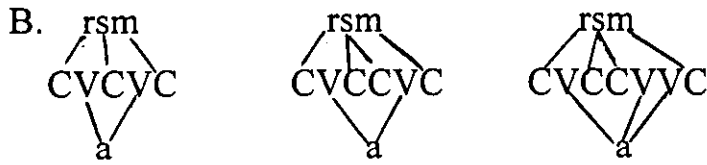
- | | | | |
|--------|------------|--------------|------------|
| (11) a | dars-un | rasm-un | CVCC-VC |
| | 'a lesson' | 'a drawing' | |
| b | darraas-un | rassaam-un | CVCCVVC-VC |
| | 'student' | 'draftsman' | |
| c | diraas-ah | risaam-ah | CVCVVC-VC |
| | 'studies' | 'ordination' | |

d	madras-ah	marsam-un	CVCCVC-VC
	'school'	'studio'	
e	daaris	raasim	CVVCVC
	'student'	'one who draws'	

The above examples, from a through g, reflect striking regularity in word derivation through the association between vowels and templates. The examples which are based on the trilateral roots [drs] and [rsm] respectively are linked with the vowels in a way that reflects great regularity. As we can see, all the words in the (a) category have the template CVCVC; a C slot here is filled by a radical consonant, while the first and second slots of V are occupied by the vowel [a]. In the (g) category, for instance, which marks the gerund form, the template is CVVCVC. Here the first long vowel is [a] while the second short one is [i]. The resultative nominals in (c) have the template CVCC. So it is obvious that each group of words, belonging to one morphological category, such as resultative nominal, agentive nominal, and others possess the same prosodic template, with a regular relationship between consonants and vowels.

Basically, **daras** and **rasam**, along with their causative and agentive forms are represented as follows:





In brief, the distribution of consonants and vowels is determined by the CV template that marks the morphological category to which a certain word belongs, (Kenstowicz, 1994).

In addition, tense and voice in verbs are marked by vowel melodies as in the following examples:

(13) active

passive

A. katab-a 'he wrote'

kutib-a 'it was written'

B. kattab-a 'he made write'

kuttib-a 'he was made to write'

C. kaatab-a 'he corresponded'

kuutib-a 'he was corresponded with'

As the examples show the [u-i] melody forms the passive forms while the [a] melody shows the active. So here it is the vowel melody, which marks the difference between the passive and active forms, and the template itself decides the vowel pattern. For an alternative treatment of this topic see Finegan, 1992.

The overall discussion in the previous paragraphs shows that while English uses too formally different words such as **studied** and **school**, Arabic has two formally similar words, which are **darasa** and **madrasa**. This is due, as earlier said, to the powerful morphological

system of Arabic building up a large number of nominal and verbal forms out of the shared number of radicals.

Koch (1981) states that root repetition is a main text-building device in Arabic:

as this study has borne out, repetition and balance and paradigms, are essentially and authentically Arabic. They are at the heart of the language, the discourse and the rhetoric in a way, which can not simply be disposed of. (p.197)

In brief, Koch's taxonomy of repetition can be summarized in the following types:

- 1- Root Repetition (the main focus of this study) which can be divided into the following:
 - a- Cognate accusative
 - b- Verb-noun repetition
 - c- Verb-adverb repetition
 - d- The diminutive form
- 2- Morphological parallelism

It is important to mention that only lexical repetition forms as discussed by Koch and complete lexical repetition will be the target of the textual analysis in this study. Other types of repetition, which are not derived from the same root, will be left out. For example, lexical

couplets, such as (al-damār wa al-xarāb), will not be examined in this study.

Farghal and Shunnaq (1999) investigate repetition and redundancy in Arabic-English translation. They define repetition as “a semantic phenomenon which refers to using more words than necessary to express a concept” (Farghal and Shunnaq: 136).

They believe that repetition in Arabic can be divided into:

A- Repetition forced by the linguistic system

B- Functional repetition

C- Non-functional repetition

These three subtypes will be examined below.

1- Repetition forced by the linguistic system:

This kind of repetition is imposed by the Arabic linguistic system and “the language user has no choice”. Farghal and Shunnaq (1999: 136) argue that this type of repetition is a characteristic of Arabic. They further classify this kind of repetition into repetition forced by morphology and repetition forced by syntax.

An example of repetition forced by the Arabic morphology system is the cognate accusative, which has already been discussed.

An illustration of repetition by syntax is found in Farghal and Shunnaq (p.137):

- (14) 'awaddu bi-ismi jam ʕiyyati al-mutarjimīna al-
 wish-I in name society the translators the
 urdiniyīna 'an 'aškurakum wa 'aškura al-ʕāmilīna
 Jordanians to thank-I-you and thank the workers
 Fi wizāratikum.
 in ministry your.
 (I wish, on behalf of the Jordanian Translators'
 Association, to *thank* you and *thank* the staff of your
 ministry).

This example, Farghal and Shunnaq claim, reflects repetition forced by syntax. They think that the first **'aškurakum** was used to address the audience; then the speaker felt the need to repeat **'aškura** to deliver his own thanks to the absent ministry workers. However, I believe that the justification given by Farghal and Shunnaq does not seem to be based on any solid or logical ground because the speaker can say **'an 'aškurakum 'antum wa al-ʕāmilīna fi wizāratikum**. So the repetition of **'aškura** is not actually forced by the Arabic linguistic system because the speaker has other alternatives to express the same meaning without resorting to any kind of repetition. But we

can say that the repetition of 'aškura here is highly functional because the speaker wants to emphasize his gratitude to the workers.

2- Functional repetition:

This type of repetition is communicative, i.e., purposeful (Farghal and Shunnaq: 137). Functional repetition includes root repetition, repetition of pattern, and repetition created through semantic elaboration. The following example from Farghal and Shunnaq illustrates root repetition:

- (15) yaqifu minna mawqifa al-ʕidā'i.
 take-up from-us position the hostility
 (To *take up* a hostile *position* against us).

The following example explains repetition of pattern:

- (16) tanfīth wa taTbīq al-xuTaT
Implementation and *application* of the plans

So in this example the two verbal nouns **tanfīth** and **taTbīq** belong to the same pattern **tafʕ il**.

As for repetition created through semantic elaboration, the following example from Farghal and Shunnaq illustrates this point:

- (17) al-Hurūbu wa al-munāzaʕātu

Wars and disputes

So the word string **Hurūb** versus **munāzaʿāt** carry almost the same meaning as **Hurūb** is a type of **munāzaʿāt**. Farghal and Shunnaq (1999: 138) comment on this type of repetition with reference to translation: “to render both into English therefore makes the translation tautological. So it is better to eliminate one of them.” However Farghal and Shunnaq seem to contradict themselves when they recommend deletion of what they call functional repetition. Functional repetition, if eliminated in translation, part of the meaning is lost.

3- Non-functional repetition:

This repetition is defined as unnecessary wordiness; it poses a problem for the translator when translating from Arabic into English. Farghal and Shunnaq (138) elaborate on the issue of unnecessary repetition:

What can be considered as a semantically redundant expression in English may not be so in Arabic and vice versa. The translator, therefore, should be aware of this phenomenon. And he should eliminate any semantic redundancy in his translation.

I think that Farghal and Shunnaq’s treatment of repetition in Arabic is not satisfactory because they do not give enough examples and even some of the examples do not illustrate what they are supposed to illustrate.

2.5 Functions of repetition

Direct lexical repetition can be used to serve different functions in Arabic. It can be used to express surprise for things that seem to be conflicting with one's viewpoint as in the following example: (De Beaugrande et al. 1992)

- (18) Hasan: anta sāxiTun.
 Hasan: you are *angry*.
 Khmour: sāxiTun?
 Khmour: *angry*?
 Hassan: naʕam. Lā budda an takūna sāxiTun.
 Hassan: Yes. You must be *angry*.

So Khmour expressed his surprise by repeating the word sāxiT when the intelligence man asked him about his anger.

Halliday and Hasan (1976:242) indicate that repetition can also be used to express denial, i.e., to reject something mentioned as in the following example:

- (19) Ibn Hamdoun: Ismī Ibn Hamdoun yā sayyidi.
 name my Ibn Hamdoun (voc. Part.) sir my
 Ibn Hamdoun: My name is Ibn Hamdoun, sir.
 Taymorlank: wa- lima ghayyarta ismaka
 and why changed name your
 yā rajul? 'alasta 'anta Ibn Khaldoun?
 (voc. Part.) man? Aren't you Ibn Khaldoun?
 Taymourlank: And why have you *changed your*

name, man? Aren't you Ibn Khaldoun?

Ibn Hamdoun: 'anā Ibn Hamdoun yā sayyidi

I Ibn-Hamdoun (voc. Part.) sir my
wa lam ughayyir ismī.

and not change-I name-my

Ibn Hamdoun: I am Ibn Hamdoun, sir, and I haven't

changed my name.

So Ibn Hamdoun repeats the expression **lam 'ughayyir ismī** (haven't changed my name) to reject Taymourlank's accusations to him, and deny that he changed his name. It is not only the repetition, which expresses the denial, but the use of (lam) as well.

Here is another contextual factor that may lead to lexical repetition as De Beaugrande, et al (1992:83) claim: the attempt to avoid any interruption:

(20) Azzawja: 'anʕiṣ fu'ādaka....

refresh heart your...

Wife: *enjoy your time*....

Azzawj: lan yakfī al-iḤtiyātī kullahu libinā'i

won't suffice the resave all to building

dawrin wāḤidin jadīdin.

Floor one new

Husband: all the resave will not suffice to build a
single new floor.

Azzawja: 'anʕiʃ fu'ādaka yā ʕazīzī....

refresh heart your (voc. Part.) dear my

Wife: *enjoy your time* dear....

Azzawj: wa māthā yaʕni dawrun jadīdun wāHid fī

and what means floor new one in

funduqin qadīmin?

hotel old?

Husband: And what does a new floor in an old hotel
mean?

Azzawja: 'anʕiʃ fu'ādaka; 'alā tasmaʕunī?

refresh heart your; don't hear-you-me

Wife: *enjoy your time*, don't you hear me?

So the recurrences in the above example refer to the same expression. Nevertheless, the given example does not seem to support the idea that the woman is repeating her utterance because her husband is interrupting her.

De Beaugrande, et al (1992: 80) point out that lexical repetition, partial or complete, is used to denote any direct repetition of lexical elements. They believe that repetition is mostly a characteristic of unplanned spoken discourse (p. 81). Here is an example:

- (21) Ahmad: inna zawjaki... inna zawjaki al'āna....
 ('inna) husband your....('inna) husband your now...
 mallathī yumkinunī an aqūla-hu lakum.... inna
 what can-I to say-it to you....('inna)
zawjaki fī ašaddi al-Hājati ilaykum. innahu
 husband your in strongest the-need to you ('inna) he
yaHtāju ilaykum akθara min ayyi waqtin...
 needs-he to you more than any time...
 Ahmad: *your husband...your husband now...what can I*
say...
your husband badly needs you. He needs you
more than ever.

So cases of lexical repetition dominate this extract: **inna zawjaki** recurs three times and **yaHtāju** is repeated twice, reflecting a confused mind on the part of the speaker.

De Beaugrande et al (1992:82) believe that recurrence can reduce informativity like the repetition in the following example:

- (22) thahabnā ilā al-bayti wa thahabnā ilā al-bayti
We went to our home and we went to our home.

Nevertheless, Koch (1981:179) argues that repetition in Arabic is an important aspect of Arabic argumentative discourse, which is motivated by the need to achieve persuasion and cohesion in argumentative discourse. In a later study, Koch (1983) investigates the

Arabic mode of persuasion by 'presentation' versus 'proof'. Koch (1983: 55) states:

Arabic argumentation is clearly argumentation by presentation. An arguer presents his truths by making them present in discourse, by repeating them, paraphrasing them, doubling them, calling attention to them with external particles.

Therefore, the mode of argumentation in Arabic, according to Koch, is heavily dependent on repetition, which is another function of repetition.

Hatim (1997: 165) touches upon the phenomenon of repetition from the functionality or non-functionality perspective. He argues that there are two types of repetition, which seem to be bound by genre and text type. The first is non-functional repetition, while the other is functional. Non-functional repetition in Arabic is forced by the linguistic system (langue), thus not necessarily serving a particular rhetorical purpose. Functional repetition, on the other hand, could involve forms of non-functional repetition but "extends the repertoire to include a variety of forms that are essentially non-systemic (parole)"; in this case repetition has a rhetorical purpose. Hatim (1997) illustrates the difference between functional and non-functional repetition by citing examples from Koch (1983):

(23) wa nafā wazīru al-xārijīyyati al-sūri nafyan

and denied minister the-foreign the-Syrian denial

qāTiʕan an takūna li-suuriyā 'ayyata ʕalāqatin

categorical to be for Syria any relationship

bi... (from a news report)

with...

The Syrian Foreign Minister *categorically denied* that

Syria had anything to do with...

(24) innanā narfuDu rafDan qāTiʕan rabTa mas'alati al-

('inna) we deny denying categorical linking issue the-

kuwayti bil- Halli al-silmī...(from a political speech).

Kuwait with the-solution the-peaceful...

We absolutely reject any linkage between...

Hatim (1997:165) notes that the root repetition involved in the first example is non-functional because it is a feature of the Arabic linguistic system “whose role is merely to relay the grammatical function adverbially”. Furthermore, the first example belongs to the news report, “the discourse of detachment”.

The second example, on the other hand, belongs to a different genre, namely political speech, where the speech is one of commitment, unlike the news report or the narrative genre; hence,

repetition in this genre is highly functional, as noted by Hatim. However, Hatim's explanation is too awkward and not clearly justified. Therefore, according to Hatim, a crucial point to be raised here is that text type is an important determiner of the functionality or non-functionality of repetition.

Traditional Arab linguists have dealt with the idea of repetition with special reference to the Holy Quran. Al-Hashimy (p.229); and Al-Jarim & Amin (p.249) point out that repetition in the Quran is highly functional and serves a variety of functions. The most important functions are:

1-Assertion:

- (25) kallā sawfa taʿlamūn ʾumma kallā sawfa taʿlamūn
 nay will(fut.) know you then nay will(fut.) know you
kallā law taʿlamūna ʿilma al-yaqīn.
 nay if know you knowledge the-sure
Nay, you shall come to know! Nay! If you
know with a sure knowledge. (al-takāθur: 2+ 3+ 4)

In the example above, the first **kallā sawfa taʿlamūn** is used to express a warning, while the second **kallā sawfa taʿlamūn** asserts this warning.

2-Repetition of the same lexical item may be used, according to Al-Hashimy, as an appeal for the addressee to accept the advice, as illustrated by the example below:

- (26) wa qāla allathi āmana yā _____ qawmī
 and said-he who believed (voc. Part.) people
 ittabiṣūni 'ahdikum sabīla al-rašād
 follow-me lead-I-you way the-right
 wa yā _____ qawmī innama hathihi al-Hayātu
 and (voc. Part.) people my ('inna) this the-life
 (The believer said oh *my people* follow me, I will lead
 you to the right way. Oh *my people* this worldly life
 is...) (Yāfer: 38+39).

So the repetition of **yā qawmy** is a tender appeal to the hearts of the non-believers. Undoubtedly, repetition can serve many other functions; however, a study of all possible functions lies outside the purpose of the present study.

It is worth mentioning that lexical repetition can sometimes be used to achieve a comic effect, particularly as a result of play on words, i.e., when the forms are similar but the meanings are different, as in the following example:

- (27) qāla lahu: qad kunta ṣinda al-'amīri,
 said he to him: perfect part. were you at the-prince,

fa 'ayyu šay'in wallāk?

So which thing gave-he-you?

He told him: you have been to the prince, what office

did he *appoint you?*

qal: wallānī qafāh.

said-he: turned-he-me back- his.

He said: He *gave me the cold shoulder.*

2.6 Repetition in this study

For the purpose of this study, repetition is defined as the recurrence of the different forms of the same consonantal root in the same context two or more times. All the occurrences must share the same root, formally and semantically. Context is limited here by thirty content words exclusive between any two occurrences.

In the following chapter, I present, and discuss, the types of lexical repetition found in the three literary works.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the phenomenon of lexical repetition in English, but most importantly in Arabic. Thus, the definitions of repetition are presented from different perspectives and an operational definition of repetition is adopted. The different functions of repetition in Arabic are examined, as well.

Chapter Three

Textual Analysis

3.1 Types of Repetition

In this chapter, I will trace instances of lexical repetition in the selected Arabic literary works. The repetitions are categorized according to their types. Then I am going to compare the repetitions with their English translation. A discussion of the different strategies for handling repetition will be attempted in the second part of this chapter. The following are the three literary works chosen for the analysis:

1. الحياة السرية لسعيد أبو النحس المتشائل. لأميل حبيبي. في الأعمال الأدبية

الكاملة. (الناصر: بيسان، 1997، 3-7).

The Secret Life of Saeed, the Ill-Fated Pessoptimist. By Emil Habibi. Translated by Salma al-Jayyusi & Trevor Le Gassic. (New York: Vantage Press Inc., 1982, 165-170).

2. مذكرات امرأة غير واقعية. لسحر خليفة. في موسوعة الأدب الفلسطيني

المعاصر. تحرير سلمى الجيوسي. (بيروت: المؤسسة العربية للدراسات و النشر،

.(1997

Memoirs of an Unrealistic Woman. By Sahar Khalifa. In Anthology of Modern Palestinian Literature. Translated by Salwa Jabsheh & Christopher Tingley. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

نفايات. لمحمود سيف الدين الأيراني. في موسوعة الأدب الفلسطيني المعاصر.

تحرير سلمى الجبوسى. (بيروت: المؤسسة العربية للدراسات و النشر، 1997).

Garbage. By Mahmoud Sayf Al-Din Al-Irani. In Anthology of Modern Palestinian Literature. Translated by Salwa Jabsheh & Jermy Reed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992)

My selection of these three literary works is based on one criterion: these works were professionally translated. By “professional” I mean a translation that appears as a published work by a well-known publishing house.

3.1 Types of Repetition

In the following section, I present the various types of lexical repetition found in the three literary works and their translations are listed and analyzed. In each example cited, the intended lexical repetitions are underlined and their English translations are italicized. In the body text, the intended lexical repetitions are printed in bold type.

In this section, I am going to examine the different types of lexical repetition found in the three literary works. These types include the following:

1. *Complete lexical repetition*: which involves noun, verb, adjective and phrase repetition.
2. *Partial or root repetition*: which involves verb-noun, and adjective- noun repetition.
3. *Special structure repetition*: which includes cognate accusative, repetition of the pattern $N_1 + \text{Prep.} + N_1$, N_1 (singular)+ $\text{min} + N_1$ (plural) and $N_1 + \text{relative} + N_1$.
4. *Repetition of an idiomatic expression*. Each type is given with several illustrative examples.

3.1.1 Complete Lexical Repetition

This type of repetition involves verb, noun, adjective and phrase repetition.

3.1.1.1 Verb Repetition

This type includes two subtypes: a. Complete verb repetition (repeating the exact verb without any change in tense, speaker, number...etc).

b. Incomplete verb repetition (repeating the same verb with slight change like inflection for tense, number, gender...etc).

The following instance of repetition illustrates both subtypes:

(1) iftarasa mudīra al-tanThīmi al-niqābī (M1:166)

preyed director the-organisation the-union

(It *ate* the director of union organization)

iftarasa mudīra al-dā'irati al-ʕarabiyyati

preyed director the department the-Arab

(It *devoured* the director of Arab Affairs).

fa-Thalla al-sabʕu yamraHu muTma'innan wa

so-remained the-lion roving assured and

yaftarisu marī'an.

preying happily.

(The lion went on roving happily about, *munching*...)

In this excerpt, **iftarasa** is repeated twice. This example contains complete repetition as illustrated in **iftarasa**, which belongs to the pattern **iftaʕala**. The second subtype of verb repetition is manifested in **iftarasa** and **yaftarisu**, both being of the patterns **iftaʕala** and **yaftaʕilu**. While **iftarasa** is third person perfect, **yaftarisu** is third person imperfect.

The following example illustrates complete verb repetition:

(2) ʕummā inHanā qalīlan, wa inHanā kathīran. (N1: 18)

then bent-he a little, and bent-he much

(He then *bent down*).

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Here the verb **inHanā** is mentioned twice in its full form with almost the same meaning. **inHanā** is a third person perfect verb.

Likewise the following example contains complete verb repetition:

(3) mā ra'aytu miθlahumā ʕaynāni taltahimāni (N2:17)

never saw-I like-them eyes devouring
omitted.

taltahimāni xubzatan ta'kuluha
devouring-they bread eating-it
(*devouring* the bread you eat)

taltahimāni al-wujūha
devouring the-faces
(*swallow* faces)

In these examples, there are two cases of lexical repetition. **taltahimān** is repeated as a verb. In other words, we have complete verb repetition. The verb pattern here is **taftaʿilān**.

The following examples now show complete verb repetition with slight changes, i.e., inflection for tense, gender, person...etc.

(4) laqad aSbaHtu 'aʿlamu mā lā taʿlamūn (M2: 167)
perfect part. became-I know what not know you
(I now *know* what you *don't*.)

This example clearly involves verb repetition. The first occurrence **aʿlam** represents a first person singular imperfect verb. The second **taʿlamūn** is a second person plural imperfect verb. While **aʿlam** belongs to the pattern **afʿal**, **taʿlamūn** belongs to the pattern **tafʿalūn**. The following is another example of verb repetition:

(5) lam yunabbih fī Hayātihi fa-kayfa
didn't draw attention-he in life his so-how
nunabbihu lahū? (M3:165)
give attention-we to him?

(He *drew no attention* throughout his life, why should we give him *any*).

Fa-lam yantabeh zumalā'uhu.

then didn't notice colleagues his.

(not one of his colleagues *noticed*).

fa-kayfa lam tantabihū ʕalā ixtifā'ī

then how didn't notice you on disappearance-my

(why didn't you *notice* I'd gone?)

This excerpt involves three instances of incomplete repetition of the verb **yantabeh**. Further, while **yunabbih** is a transitive verb, **yantabih** is intransitive. All of the repetitions of this verb are imperfect.

(6) 'alam taqra' ʕan al-mi'āti allathīna Habasathum

didn't read-you about the-hundreds whom imprisoned-them

šurTatu Haifa. fī sāHati al-Hanātīri yawma infijāri al-

police Haifa in yard the-Hanātīr on day explosion

baTTīxa? Kullu Arabiyin sāba fī Haifa al-suflā

the-melon? every Arab toured in Haifa the-lower

Habasūhu (M4 170)

imprisoned they him.

(Didn't you read of the hundreds *imprisoned* by Haifa

police when that melon exploded in Hanatir Square?

Afterwards every Arab they found in Lower Haifa they
put in jail).

In this example, the verb **Habasa** that is derived from the root **Hbs** is repeated once as a verb. Therefore, this example illustrates third person perfect verb repetition, of the pattern **faʕala**.

- (7) kāna qad nabaša al-nifāyāt (N3:17)
was-he perfect part. searched the-garbage
He had *searched* through the garbage
yanbišu al-nifāyāti wa al-faDalāti wa qišri
searching the-garbage and the-leftover and layers of
al-xuDāri
the vegetables
searching through the remains of fruit.

This example involves a verb repetition. While the first **nabaša** is a third person perfect verb, **yanbiš** is a third person imperfect verb. Also, the first occurrence belongs to the pattern **faʕala**, while the second occurrence, to the pattern **yafʕal**.

- (8) jurʕatimtumiddunī bi- al-quwwa..... fa-
a-dose..... providing-me with-the- strength.....so
'astamiddu al-quwwata θāniyatan. (W1: 230)
take-I the-strength again.
This would *provide* me with the *strength...giving* me
new *strength*.

This example involves two different kinds of repetition: the first involves verb repetition, i.e, **tamu**ddu is a third person imperfect verb and **'astam**iddu is a first person imperfect verb of the pattern *astafʕilu*.

- (9) wa 'aqūlu: law 'i'tamantumūnī mā 'afšaytu, ammā al'āna
and say-I: if trusted-you-me wouldn'tsay-I, but now
fa-sa-'ufšī wa 'ufšī wa 'axalli al-dunyā titfarraj.
(W2:233)

will say-I and say-I and let-I the-world see

“If you'd trusted me,” I'd retort, “I *wouldn't have said* anything. But I will now, I'll let the world know”.

Here, **'ufšī** is completely repeated twice. The repetition in this case involves three occurrences of the root **fšy**. The first is first person perfect verb, while the other two are first person imperfect verbs **'ufšī**.

3.1.1.2 Noun Repetition

This type of repetition also involves either two exact occurrences of the same noun (complete noun repetition), or repetition of a noun with slight changes in number, gender or case (incomplete noun repetition).

The following example illustrates both types of noun repetition:

- (10) waqaʕat al-ʕajībatu yā muʕallim (M5:166)
happened the-miracle (voc. part.) sir
(The *miracle* did occur).

wa qawluka inna ʕaʕra al-ʕajā'ibi
and saying-your ('inna) age the-miracles

qad wallā.
perfect part. passed.

(The Age of *Miracles* is past).

illa 'annanā 'alifnā hāthihi al-ṣajā'ib
but we got used to these the-miracles
(We are used to the *wonders*)

sallamtum bi-kulli hāthihi al-ṣajā'ib fa-kayfa
accepted-you in-all these the-miracles so-how
tunkirūna ṣalayya ṣajībatī.
deny-you for-me miracle-my?

(You accept all these *wonders*-why not *mine* too?)

The above examples involve repetition of the noun **ṣajībatī**, which is derived from the root **ṣjb**. This example illustrates both types, complete and incomplete noun.

The following example involves complete noun repetition:

- (11) wa lā mihnata lī 'illā hāthihi al-mihnata.
and no profession for-me except this the-profession.
Hattā hāthihi al-mihnata lam 'ujid-hā. (W3: 233)
even this the-profession didn't master-I-it
(Without having any other *profession*...and even *this* I
haven't mastered).

As this example shows, there is a complete lexical repetition of the word **mihna**. This exact noun is **mihna** repeated twice without any slight change.

- (12) Fa-l-'ahammu 'anna ixtifā'ī jā'a fī
the-most important that disappearance-my came in

'amrin ṣajīb.(M6:166)

matter weird.

What matters is that my *disappearance*

fa-kayfa lam tantabihū ṣalā ixtifā'ī

so-how didn't notice you on disappearance-my?

Why didn't you notice *I'd gone*.

As we can see, 'ixtifā'' is the noun which is repeated in its exact form.

(13) tijāratun sahlātun, wa ribHun, ribHun...ribH. (N4: 19)

trade easy, and profit, profit.....profit

It seemed an easy and *profitable* trade.

The Arabic quotation involves a lexical repetition of the noun **ribH**. This repetition is complete. This word is repeated twice in full.

This full noun repetition has the function of intensifying the meaning.

The following is another example illustrating noun repetition:

(14) 'abda'u bitajmīli al-bayti wa tajmīli

start-I in-beautifying the-house and beautifying

nafsī (W4:230)

self-my

I'd begin to *make* the home and my self *more*

attractive.

In this example, the lexical item **tajmīl** is repeated in full. This example involves verbal noun repetition of the pattern tafṣīl.

Here are other examples:

- (15) 'adaṣuḥu wa ša'nahu maṣa Sundūqi al-nifāyāt
(N5:17)

leave-I-him alone with can the-garbage

Leaving him alone with the *garbage* can.

yaDaṣu fī jaybihi šay'an mā yajiduhu bayna al-
put-he in pocket-his something finds-he-it between the-
nifāyāt.

Garbage.

through the *garbage* until he found something ...

In the above examples, the lexical item **nifāyāt** is repeated. The repetition here is complete as the exact noun is repeated without any change. In the following example the word **Hulm** is repeated twice:

- (16) wa 'aDHat mujarrada Hulmin baṣīdin lakinnahu
and-became a mere dream remote but-it
Hulmun wa wahmun la 'akṯar. wa Hīna yasHabunī
dream and illusion not more. and when drives-me
al-Hulm. (W5: 230)

the dream

It was no more than a remote *dream*, a mere illusion.

'Whenever that *dream* drove me...

The following example illustrates complete noun repetition:

- (17) 'izdattu xunūṣan wa ittasama al-
increased-I submissiveness and was-characterized the-
xunūṣu bi-malāmiHi al-riDa. (W6: 229)

submissiveness with features the-contentment

The more *submissive* I'd become. Then my
submissiveness would lead on to *contentment*.

This quotation involves a complete lexical repetition of the word **xunūṣ**, which is a noun. The repetition of this noun is complete, as it involves no change.

In the following example, there is noun repetition with slight change in number:

- (18) ‘innanī lastu za’ṣīman fa-yuHissu bi
 (’inna) I not leader to-feel me
al-zuṣamā’(M7:165)
 the-leaders

I am not one of your so-called *leaders*, someone thought worthy of notice by the *elite*.

This example involves noun repetition. The first occurrence **za’ṣīman** is singular, while the repetition is plural **al-zuṣamā’**. So the repetition is not totally complete.

In the next example, the second occurrence of muṣallim carries the possessive enclitic-ī:

- (19) waqaṣat al-ṣajībatu yā muṣallim (M8:166)
 happened the-miracle (vocative particle, ya) sir.
 The miracle did occur, fine *sir*.
 fama dahāka ya muṣallimī?
 What happened-you (voc. Part.) sir-my
 What makes you always get things up side down?

The following example illustrates a repetition of the noun al-ṣajībatu:

- (20) yaduqqu al-bāba bi-qabDatihī (N6:17)
 knock-he the-door with-fist-his

knocks on the door with *his fist*

hākatha bi-qabDatī yadihi

like-this with fist hand-his

omitted

yaDaʿu waqāHatahu kulla-hā fī qabDatīhi

put-he impudence-his all-it in fist-his

He impacts his impudence into *his fist*.

This lexical item **qabDatīhi** has two repetitions. The first and last occurrences are inflected for third person singular possessive, while the second is not inflected. So the noun repetition is not totally complete.

The following example has a repetition of the noun mizāju:

- (21) zawjatu axī imra'atun Hāddatu al-Tabʿi
 wife brother-my woman sharp the-temperment
 ʿaSabīyyatu al-mizāji bi-faDli mizāju axī. wa
 nervous the-temper due-to temper brother-my. and
amzijatu baqīyyatu ixwatī wa kathālika amzijatu
 tempers rest brothers-my and also tempers
 zawjātihim. (W7: 234)
 wives their.

My sister-in-law was *hot-tempered* and irritable as a reaction to my own brother's *temper*. My other brothers were no better nor were their wives.

In this excerpt, the lexical repetition of **mizāj** has a high number of repetitions; i.e., three repetitions of the same item. The four items

are nouns. Nevertheless, the repetition is not exact because **mizāj** is singular while **amzijatu** is plural. Here is another example:

(22) *yuSawwibu ilayya naThratan jāmidatan.* (N7: 17)

direct-he to-me a-look strong
they completely overpowered one's defenses.

naThratun turīdu dā'iman šay'an mā

a-look wants-it always something

It was as if those *eyes* always demanded...

wa baṣdahā izdādat naTharātuhu ilHāHan

and after that increased looks-his insistence

His *gaze* thereafter grew more insolent.

rubbamā udriku annanī la uTīqu naTharātihi

perhaps know-I that-I not tolerate looks-his

He knew that I could not withstand his *stare*.

ataharrabu min naTharātihi.

escape-I from looks-his

avoiding any *eye-to-eye contact*.

Again this lexical repetition **nThr** illustrates noun repetition with slight change. The first **naThra** is singular, and **naTharāt** is plural.

3.1.1.3 Adjective Repetition:

This type of repetition involves repetition with slight change, as illustrated in the following examples:

(23) 'inna ixtifā'ī jā'a fī amrin ṣajīb. (M9: 166)

('inna) disappearance-my came in matter weird

for all its *weirdness*.

fa-inna ṣaṣranā hātha la-huwa min 'aṣjabī al-ṣuSūri

(fa-'inna) age-our this it from strangest the-ages

This age has got to be the *strangest*.

wa 'anā 'aktubu ilayka bi-sirrī al-ṣajīb.

And I write-I to-you with secret-my the-weird

As I write to you of my *fantastic* mystery.

In this example, the adjective **al-ṣajīb** is repeated twice, the first repetition is a superlative adjective. These adjectives are derived from the root **ṣjb**.

Here is another example of adjective repetition and its translation:

(24) wa lakinna ṣaynayhi al-multahimatayni

and but eyes-his the-devouring

al-Tammā ṣatayni(N8:18)

the-greedy

his *greedy* eyes

innahū Tammāṣ. Tammāṣun kabīrun.

('inna) he greedy. greedy big

omitted

This example involves full repetition of the adjective **Tammāṣ**. This repetition is not totally complete because the first adjective is inflected for the dual while the repetition is not. The repetition of this adjective in a successive manner is highly functional.

3.1.1.4 Phrase Repetition

This type of repetition involves repetition of two or more consecutive words. The following example illustrates phrase repetition:

(25) ibtaṣadat ṣan nāThirī malāmihu al-rujūṣu ilā

went-away from sight-my possibility the-return to
nuqTat al- bad'....nuqTatu al-bad' Yāmat wa
 point-the starting....point the-starting blurred and
 Yābat. (W8: 230)
 vanished-
 ...the less possible it became to return to my *starting*
point....Indeed *it* had vanished.

In this example **nuqTatu al-bad'** is repeated in full without any change.

Another example of phrase repetition is given here:

(26) wa kāna zawjī yuHissu bi-alnaqSi lada
 and was husband-my feeling with inferiority when
thikri 'abī wa xuSūSan Hīna yajī'u thikru 'abīh.
 (W9:230)

mention father-my especially when comes mention father-my.
 My husband used to feel inferior when my *father* was
mentioned, especially when *his own* was *mentioned*
 too.

The phrase **thikri 'abī** is repeated here. The following example has a repetition of the phrase 'akθar min:

(27) wa hākathā kāna lihāthihi al-kalimatu 'akθara min
 and so was to-this the-word more than
 maʿnā wa 'akθara min naYama wa 'akθara min
 meaning and more than melody and more than
 θawāb. (W10:232)
 reward.

So there was *more than* one meaning and tune to the same word. And *more than* one heavenly reward.

In this quotation the phrase 'akḥar min is repeated twice in a successive manner. Again the following example shows a repetition of la saʿīda:

- (28) innanī Yayr rāDiya wa Yayr saʿīda la saʿīda bi-
 ('inna) I not content and not happy. not happy in
 taʿāsati wa la saʿīda bi-ithlāli
 wretchedness-my and not happy in humiliation
 zawjī lī wa ithlālihi li- nafsih
 husband-my to-me and humiliation- to- self
 wa la saʿīda bi-HāDirī wa lasaʿīda bi
 and not happy with present-my and not happy with
 mustaqbalī(W10:233)
 future-my.

I was *not* in the least *happy*. I was *not happy* in my wretchedness, or in my husband's humiliation of me or in his own self-reproach. I was *not happy* in my present state or *happy* contemplating the future.

In this quotation, there are three repetitions of the phrase **la saʿīda**. Here we have complete lexical repetition.

The following example shows a repetition of Yayr wāqiʿiyya:

- (29) yakfīnī min hāthā al-Hadīḥi šujūnun
 enough-me from this the-talk sad feelings
wāqiʿiyyatun wa Yayru wāqiʿiyyatun. Wāqiʿiyyatun
 realistic and unrealistic. realistic

li-'annī 'aʕrifu 'anna al-Talāqa...wa Yayru
 because-I know that the-divorce...and
wāqiʕiyyatun li- annahu yurāwidunī.....wāqiʕiyyatun
 unrealistic because-it haunts-me....realistic
 wa 'anā ubqī baytī ka-'alfull...wa Yayru
wāqiʕiyyatun.. (W11: 234)
 and I keep house-my like-flower....and unrealistic...
 I ended up being realistic and *unrealistic*. Realistic
 because I knew divorce... and *unrealistic* because the
 thought... Realistic because I kept my house
 spotless...and *unrealistic*....

This excerpt contains repetition of the phrase **Yayr wāqiʕiyyat**, which is repeated twice in full without any change. This phrase is an adjective.

3.1.2 Partial Lexical Repetition

This type involves only verb-noun and adjective-noun repetition. This type of repetition involves two or more words, which share the same root meaning. In my corpus, only limited instances of this type were found.

3.1.2.1 Verb-Noun Repetition

Now, let's see the following example:

- (30) 'alam taDHak mina al-'uDHūka al-'isrā'īliyya (M10:165)
 didn't laugh you from the-laughing the-Israeli
 Didn't you *break up* at the Israeli *joke*.

This example involves an instance of partial repetition. The verb **taDHak** and **'uDHuka** are derived from the trilateral root **DHk**. This instance of repetition involves verb-noun repetition (Koch, 1981). The two words are derived from the same root, which is **DHk**. Where **taDHak** is a verb, **'uDHuka** is a noun. This would inevitably render a different translation.

The following is another example of repetition of the same pattern:

- (31) li-nabda' mina al-bidāya (M11:169)
 let's start-we from the-beginning
 Let's *start* from the *beginning*.
 fa-matā kanat al-bidāya
 when was the-beginning
 So when did it all *begin*
 kānat al-bidāyatu Hīna wulidtu awwala marratin.
 was the-beginning when was born-I first time
 When I was born...

In this example, there are three repetitions of the verb **nabda'**. However the three repetitions are nouns **bidāya**, derived from the trilateral root **bd'**. Therefore, this example illustrates partial repetition.

- (32) wa tanṣitu zawjahā bi-wābili al-nuṣūt. (W12:230)
 and describe-she husband-her with hail the-terms
describe her husband in the ugliest *terms*.

This example illustrates the same pattern of repetition with slight modification. The verb **tanʕit** and noun **nuʕūt** are derived from the radical **nʕt**.

3.1.2.2 Adjective-Noun Repetition:

(33) kuntu 'aʕrifu 'annahū Tammā ʕun (N9:17)

was-I know-I that-he greedy

(I knew he was *greedy*).

kuntu 'arā Tamaʕahu fī ʕaynayhi

was-I see-I greed-his in eyes-his

(*It* was reflected in his eyes).

As the above examples show, the lexical item **tammāʕ** is repeated once. The first occurrence **tammāʕ** is an adjective, while the repetition **Tamaʕahu** is a noun.

The following example shows noun-adjective repetition:

(34) wa ittasma al-xunūʕu bi-malāmiHi

and featured the-submissiveness in-features

al-riDa, fa-bittu rāDiyatan. (W13: 229)

the-satisfaction so-became-I satisfied

Then my *submissiveness* would lead on to *contentment*

and I'd pray to God to send me more occasions for *it*

If we look at this quotation, we find a partial repetition of the word **riDā**. This word is derived from the root **rDy**. The first item **riDā** is a noun, while the second one **rāDiyat** is an adjective.

3.1.3 Repetition of Special Structures

This type of repetition involves special patterns of structure. These patterns of repetition include cognate accusative, repetition of the pattern N₁+Prep. +N₁, N₁ (singular)+min+N₁ (plural) and N₁+relative+N₁.

3.1.3.1 Cognate Accusative Repetition:

The following example shows cognate accusative repetition:

- (35) sa- 'arkulu hu raklan (N10:18)
 sa(fut.) kick-I-him kicking (acc.)
 (I'll *boot* him out).

In this example **'arkulu** is a first person imperfect verb, **raklan** is the cognate accusative. Both the verb and the cognate accusative are derived from the triliteral root **rkl**.

- (36) bi-qabDati yadihi dā'iman yaduqqu al-bāba daqqan (N11:17)
 in -fist hand-his always knock the-door knocking (accu.)
 omitted
 wa yaduqqu Hatta 'axruja 'ilayhi
 and knock until go-out to him
 (and *thumps* on the door.)

In the above examples the lexical item **yaduqqu** occurs three times. The first example involves a finite verb and a cognate accusative. **Yaduqqu** is a third person imperfect verb, while **daqqan** is the cognate accusative modified by the phrase **bi-qabDati yadihi**.

- (37) li-annī 'aṣīṣu 'aHsana ṣīṣa (W14:230)
 because-I live best life(accu.)

(because I *live* the best of *lives*).

This example involves a different type of cognate structure. The cognate object **ʔāṣa** occurs as the second element of iDafa following the relative **aHsan**.

3.1.3.2 Repetition of the Pattern N₁+prep. +N₁

This pattern of structure involves two occurrences of the same noun separated by a preposition. Here is an example:

(38) izdadtu farāYan ʔalā farāYin.(W15:229)

increased-I emptiness on emptiness

(As the *emptiness* grew deeper, so would my sense of inner *void*).

In this example, the word **farāY** is repeated twice in the same sentence. This word is essentially derived from the root **frY**. N₁ here is **farāY** and the preposition **ʔalā** and N₁ is **farāY**. This repetition is typically Arabic.

The following is another example illustrating successive repetition in a special way that is chiefly Arabic:

(39) xuthī wa 'uskutī wa 'axuthu

take-you and keep silent and take-I

wa 'askut wa 'azdādu

and keep silent-I and increase-I

sukūtanʔalā sukūtin. (W16:230)

silence on silence

(‘Take this..and *be quiet*’ So I’d take it and *be quiet*
and day by day I’d grow *quieter* still).

This quotation clearly reflects lexical repetition in a successive manner. Here N₁ is **sukūt** while the preposition is *ʿalā* and again N₁ is **sukūt**.

3.1.3.3 N₁ (singular)+ *min*+ N₁ (plural)

Here is an example illustrating this kind of repetition:

(40) qad lā ’akūnu al-wahīda allathī ixtārūhu.

may not be-I the-only one whom chose-they-him

wa lakinni wa Haqqika muxtārun mina al-maxātīri wa

and but-I by God was chosen from the-chosen and

’anta ’ayDan yā mu’allim ’aSbaHta muxtāran.

you too (voc. Part) sir-my became chosen

fa-’anā ixtartuka li-tarwī... (M12:168)

(fa) I chose -you to narrate....

(So, although I might not be the only one, I most certainly have been *chosen* by them. And you too, my fine friend, are *chosen* as well. I have *selected* you to relate...)

If we look at the Arabic excerpt, we discover that the lexical item **muxtār** is repeated in a special structure. The first **muxtār** is singular, **min** is a preposition and **maxātīri** is plural.

3.1.3.4 Repetition of the pattern N₁ +Elicative + N₁

This type of repetition includes a first mention of a noun which is followed by a superlative structure and then a repetition of the first noun. The following example illustrates this type:

- (41) fa-'inna ʕaʕSranā hātha la-huwa min aʕjabi al-ʕuSūr.
 (M13:166)
 (fa-'inna) age-our this (la)-it from strangest the-ages
 (This age has got to be the *strangest*).

This example illustrates noun repetition. However, the first noun ʕaʕSr is singular while the repeated item takes the plural form ʕuSūr. Again the following example illustrates repetition with a superlative structure:

- (42) baytuka 'anThafu wa 'aHlā min kulli al-buyūti (W17:230)
 house-your cleanest and nicest from all the-houses
 (Your *house* is the cleanest and brightest....)

This example illustrates noun repetition. The first noun **bait** is singular while the repetition is plural **buyūt** and **'anThafu wa 'aHlā** is the elative structure.

The following is another example on the same pattern of repetition:

- (43) Tabīxu zawjatika 'azkā Tabīx (W18:230)
 cooking wife-your most delicious cooking
 (Your wife's *cooking* is the best).

This example also includes repetition of special structure (the elative). That is, **Tabīx** is N₁, **'azkā** is the elative and **Tabīx** is a full repetition of the noun **Tabīx**.

3.1.4 Repetition of Pre-fabricated or Idiomatic Expressions

This type of repetition includes certain expressions or idioms which are basically Arabic. The following is an example:

- (44) Hīna samiṣa bi-qiSSati al-mirāθI junna
 When heard of- story the-inheritance drew mad
junūnuh(W19:232)
 madness-his
 (But when he heard the story of the inheritance, he
 was *furious*).

The word **junna** which is a perfect, passive third person singular masculine verb of the pattern **fuṣila** was partially repeated as a noun **junūnuh**. The following is another example:

- (45) wa 'uttuhimtu fimā 'uttuhimtu bi-hi
 and was accused I from-which was accused I in-it
 bi-annī mina al-nawṣ al-namrūd. (W20:232)
 that- I from the-sort the-rebellious
 (I was *accused*, among other things, of being
 rebellious).

In this example, the word **'uttuhimtu** is repeated in full. This is a passive perfect verb.

The following example illustrates an idiomatic repetition:

- (46) lākinniki habla, habla wa sittīn habla. (W21: 233)
 but-you imbecile, imbecile and sixty imbecile
 (But you're an *imbecile* a million times over).

Again the repetition of **habla** in this example reflects Arabic-specific repetition. This example represents an idiomatic pattern commonly used in Arabic: N₁ +number+ N₁ to express intensification of meaning.

- (47) 'ay naṣam yashar wa yadūr ṣalā ra'sihi
 of course spend night and roves on head-his
 _wa al-kullu yaṣrif, 'ammā 'anā fa-man yaṣrif
 and the-all know, but I who knows
yaṣrif, wa man la yaṣrif la yaṣrif. (W22: 233)
 knows and who doesn't know (neg.)know
 (Every one *knows* your husband spends long evenings
 out and goes in for certain things, but mine? No one
knows about my suffering).

In this specific context there are five occurrences of the verb **yaṣrif**. This example also reflects a language-specific pattern.

3.2 Conclusion

Part one of chapter three has analyzed different types of repetition in the three Arabic literary works. The following types of lexical repetition have been found in the corpus: complete lexical repetition, partial lexical repetition, repetition of special structure and repetition of pre-fabricated or idiomatic expressions. Part two of this chapter will investigate the different translation strategies employed by professional translators to render lexical repetition into English.

3.2 Translation Strategies

The previous part has examined the different types of lexical repetitions in the three Arabic literary works. This section will discuss the different translation strategies utilized by professional translators to handle lexical repetition. So this part sets out to answer the following two research questions:

- 1- What are the different strategies employed by professional translators to translate lexical repetition from Arabic into English?
- 2- Is formal or direct translation adequate for the translation of lexical repetition in fictional narrative discourse from Arabic into English?

3.2.1 Strategies Used by Professional Translators to Manage Lexical Repetition from Arabic into English

The following are the strategies used by professional translators to manage lexical repetition in translated Arabic fictional narrative discourse, as found in the analysis of this study. These strategies are illustrated by examples from the three literary works. The translation strategies are ordered according to their frequency.

3.2.1.1 Synonymy and Near-Synonymy: Translators resort to a strategy for handling lexical repetition, namely synonymy. Synonymy refers to sameness in meaning (Farghal and Shunnaq, 1999:133). This strategy can be illustrated by the following examples:

- (1) taltahimāni xubzatan ta'kuluha (W1:17)

devouring-they bread eating
 (*devouring* the bread you eat)
taltahimāni al-wujūh
 devouring-they the faces
 (*swallow* faces)

In this example, the first occurrence of **taltahimān** is rendered by **devour**, while the second (the repetition) is rendered by the use of the synonym **swallow**. Of course the use of synonymy here introduces variation into the translated text. The following is another example illustrating the use of synonymy to handle repetition:

- (2) jurṣatintumiddun-ī bi-al-quwwa.....fa-astamiddu
 a-dose.....providing-me with the strength..so-I-get
 al-quwata ṭaniyatan. (W2:230)
 the-strength again
 (This would *provide* me with the strength.....*giving* me
 new strength).

This example involves a complete verb repetition. The rendering of the verb **tamuddu** clearly shows the use of synonymy, i.e., **give** is a synonym of **provide**. Again synonymy is rightly used in this context, making the translation sound English.

The following repetition of the noun tanThur is translated using a number of synonyms:

- (3) naThratun turīdu dā'imān šay'an mā (N1:17)
 a-look wants always thing some
 (It was as if those *eyes* always demanded...)

wa baḥda-hā izdādat naThārātu-hu 'ilHāHan
 and after that increased looks-his insistance
 (His *gaze* thereafter grew more insolent)
 rubbamā udriku anna-nī la uTīqu naTharāt-ih
 perhaps know that-I (neg.) tolerate looks-his
 (He knew that I could not withstand his *stare*).

Again this lexical repetition **nThr** is handled using synonymy. The first and second repetitions of this lexical item are translated into **gaze** and **stare**, respectively. Actually **gaze** and **stare** are two synonyms of the word **look**. However, I believe that there is a slight difference between the word **look** and **stare**, because the latter is stronger than the former. The following example also manifests the use of synonymy:

- (4) li-nabda' mina al-bidāya (M1:169)
 let-we start from the-beginning
 (Let's *start* at the *beginning*).
 fa-matā kanat al-bidāya
 (fa) when was the-beginning
 (So when did it all *begin*)

The translators render the first and second repetitions as **beginning** and **begin** which are synonyms of the word **start**. The elimination of repetition here via the use of synonymy makes the translation more appropriate because **begin** and **start** are complete synonyms.

- (5) wa 'anta 'ayDan yā mu'allim 'aSbaHta.

and you too (vocative part.) sir became

muxtāran'anā ixtartu-ka li-tarwī... (M2:168)

chosen I chose-you to-narrate

(And you too, my fine friend, are *chosen* as well. I

have *selected* you to relate...)

In this example, the first occurrence of **ixtartuka** is rendered by the formal equivalent **chosen**. And the repetition (the second occurrence) is rendered as **selected** which is a synonym of **choose**. I think that **choose** and **select** are interchangeable in this context as they convey the same meaning.

According to Newmark (1988:103), the use of synonymy introduces variation into the translated text.

A related strategy that professional translators were found to use in rendering lexical repetition is the use of near-synonymy. A near-synonym is not a complete synonym but it shares some of the semantic properties of the other lexical item; however, I prefer to subsume this strategy under the general heading 'synonymy'. Here is an example from the textual analysis:

(6) inna ʕaṣra al-ʕajā'ibi qad wallā

(ʕinna) age the-miracles (qad) passed

(The Age of *Miracles* is past). (M3: 166)

ila annanā alifnā hāthihi al ʕajā'ib

(We are used to the *wonders*).

al-ʿajība is translated as **miracles** and **wonders** which are near-synonyms; **miracles** and **wonders**, I think, are not completely synonymous, but share some of the semantic properties, i.e., the idea of strangeness and weirdness. The following example also illustrates the use of near-synonymy:

- (7) 'innanī lastu za'ʿīman fa-yuHissu- bi
 ('inna) I (neg.) leader to-feel-me
al-zuʿamā' (M4:165)
 the-leaders.

(I am not one of your so-called *leaders*, someone thought worthy of notice by the *elite*).

Again, in this example the first occurrence **zaʿīman** is rendered as **leaders**, while the repetition is translated by a near-synonym **elite**. So the translators opt for avoidance of repeating the same translation using a near-synonym of the first translation. Yet the translation of **zuʿamā'** into **elite** is not accurate.

However, synonymy may be dangerous to use in certain cases because absolute 100 per cent synonymy is very rare. Even very close synonyms might not be interchangeable in certain contexts (Roger, 1991: 92). One word might not involve all the semantic properties of its synonymous word. Zgusta (1971) in (Baker, 1992:13) warns against the use of synonyms because “every word has something that is individual, that makes it different from any other word”. Baker

(1992: 14) shows that words differ in their evaluativeness and forcefulness, i.e., synonyms might share the propositional meaning, but differ in their expressive meaning. Therefore, there is a danger that if a word that is too strong is used in place of another word that is too weak, then the meaning is distorted. (Duff, 1981:18).

3.2.1.2 Deletion: is another strategy for handling lexical repetition when translating Arabic fictional narrative into English. It is simply defined as the omission of words (Baker, 1992). This means avoiding translating certain words for one reason or another. It is applied in cases when the omission of the lexical item does not hinder the progression or development of the text. To illustrate the use of this strategy, let us see the following examples from the textual analysis:

- (8) waqaʿat al-ʿajība yā muʿallim (M5:166)
 happened the-miracle (voc.part.) sir
 (The miracle did occur, fine *sir*).
 fama dahāka ya muʿallimī?
 What happened (voc. Part.) sir-my
 (What makes you always get things up side down?)

In this example we clearly see that the translators have omitted the repetition of **muʿallimī**. This deletion is justified, as it does not affect the development of the text, as Baker (1992) suggests. Nevertheless, the translation of **fama dahāka ya muʿallimī?** into **What makes**

you always get things up side down? is wrong because there is a lot of management in translation.

In my corpus, deletion was often used in contexts involving language-specific phrases or idiomatic expressions, as in the following example

(9) kullamā ištadda al-farāY izdattu

whenever increased the-emptiness increased

farāYan ṣalā farāY.(W3:229)

emptiness on emptiness

(As the *emptiness* grew deeper, so would my sense of inner *void*).

In this example, the word **farāY** is repeated three times in the same sentence. A look at the translation of this item shows that the second repetition of this lexical item is deleted simply because of the successive repetition this quotation has. Therefore, **farāY ṣala farāY** can not be literally translated into **emptiness on emptiness**. So I believe that the deletion is adequate here, because literal rendition of this idiomatic expression would create a funny translation.

The following is another example illustrating successive repetition in a special way that is chiefly Arabic

(10) xuthī wa 'uskutī wa 'āxuthu wa 'askut

take-you and keep silent and take and keep silent

wa azdādu sukūtan ṣalā sukūt. (W4:230)

and increase silence on silence

(‘Take this..and *be quiet*’ So I’d take it and *be quiet*
and day by day I’d grow *quieter* still).

By examining the corresponding translation, I can say the third repetition ’izdadtu sukūtan ʕalā sukūt is deleted simply because it cannot be translated as I’d grow quieter on quietness because this is chiefly Arabic. Therefore, a good way to render it is to delete the fourth item and translate it just as the two translators did: I’d grow quieter.

- (11) lākinnaki habla, habla wa sittīn habla. (W5: 233)
but-you imbecile, imbecile and sixty imbecile
(But you’re an *imbecile* a million times over).

Again the repetition of **habla** in this example reflects Arabic-specific repetition, which can not be literally translated into English. Therefore, in translation the first occurrence of **habla** is rendered into its formal equivalent **imbecile**. The second and third repetitions are deleted; instead the translators use **a million times over** which really conveys the intended meaning and at the same time sounds English. So it can be said the intensification expressed by repetition is replaced by the expression **a million times over**, thus eliminating repetition from the translated text and meeting the norms of the TL.

- (12) Hīna samīʕa bi-qiSSati al-mīrāθi
When heard with-story the-inheritance

junna junūnuh(W6:232)

drew-mad madness-his

(But when he heard the story of the inheritance, he was
furious).

Both words **junna junūnuh** are collapsed into the expression **be furious**. This expression **junna junūnuh** is used idiomatically in Arabic to denote an extreme state of anger. So the translators can not literally translate each item. Therefore, the translators rightly opt for communicative translation to convey the meaning of this expression in English.

The following is another example illustrating the use of deletion to handle repetition:

(13) 'abda'u bi-tajmīli al-bayti wa
start in-beautifying the home and

tajmīli nafsī (W7:230)

beautifying self-my

(I'd begin to *make* the home and my self *more attractive*).

The translation collapses the two occurrences into one. That is instead of saying make the house more attractive and make myself more attractive, the translators render it into make the house and myself more attractive. Nevertheless, the translation is to some extent unfaithful because the correct translation should be **I'd begin to beautify the house and my self**. Here is another example

- (14) wa 'aDHat mujarrada Hulmin baṣīdin
 and became a mere dream remote
 lakinna-hu Hulmun wa wahmun la 'akṯar.
 but-it dream and illusion (neg.) more.
 Wa Hīna yasHabunī al-Hulm. (W8: 230)
 And when drive-me the dream
 (It was no more than a remote *dream*, a mere illusion.
 Whenever that *dream* drove me...)

The first and last occurrences are rendered directly as **dream**. This lexical repetition of the same item is repeated in the same sentence in a successive fashion. So the first and third occurrences are rendered directly as dream; whereas the second occurrence is deleted in preference for mentioning the near-synonym **wahm** "illusion" which follows.

- (15) wa 'uttuhimtu fimā 'uttuhimtu bi-hi
 and was-accused in-what was-I accused with-it
 bi-'annī mina al-nawṣ al-namrūd. (W9:232)
 that-I from the sort the-rebellious
 (I was *accused*, among other things, of being
 rebellious).

There is a complete lexical repetition of 'uttuhimtu. In this translation, the first item is translated into its formal equivalent **accused**. However, the second occurrence is deleted simply because 'uttuhimtu fimā 'uttuhimtu bihi can not be literally translated into

English as I was accused among what I was accused... So the translators rightly opt for communicative translation here because this expression is chiefly Arabic and can not be literally translated into English.

Baker (1992: 40) believes that a translator can delete a word, which does not carry great significance for the meaning of the text. However, there is a danger of careless deletion, which may cause a loss of meaning and, therefore, unfaithful translation. The following example illustrates this kind of careless deletion:

(16) bi-qabDati yadihi da'imān yaduqqu al-bāba daqqan (N2: 17).

With-fist hand-his always knock the-door knocking

Here yaduqqu is deleted. Nevertheless, this deletion is not justified and causes a loss of meaning because the cognate accusative has an adverbial function here. So the deletion in this specific context distorts the intended meaning. The following is another example illustrating careless deletion:

(17) wa lakinna ʿaynayhi al-multahimatayni al

and but eyes-his the-devouring the-

Tammāʿatayni tuHamliqāni fī kulli šay'in Hattā fī

greedy stare in every thing even in

Hijāratī al-Tarīq. inna-hū Tammāʿ. Tammāʿun kabīr. (N3: 18)

stones the-road.(ʿinna) he greedy. greedy big.

(his greedy eyes researching each detail of the road).

This example contains a direct repetition of the word Tammāṣ.

This repetition is highly functional because the writer wants to emphasize the greed of the sanitation worker. Yet the translators deleted the two repetitions. This deletion distorts the intended meaning and does not convey the emphasis and effect the Arabic utterance has. Here is another example:

- (18) Ṯumma inHanā qalīlan, wa inHanā kathīran. (N4: 18)
 then bent-down a little, and bent-down much.
 (He then *bent down*).

Here the verb **inHanā** is mentioned twice in its full form with almost the same meaning. In translation, only the first item is translated into its formal equivalent **bend down**. The first repetition is deleted. Again, the avoidance of repetition here is at the expense of the intended meaning.

The following example similarly shows the wrong use of deletion:

- (19) tijāratun sahlātun, wa ribHun, ribHun...ribH. (N5: 19)
 trade easy, and profit, profit...profit.
 (It seemed an easy and *profitable* trade).

The translators here use the word **profitable** to replace the three occurrences of this word **ribH**. However, if we consider the augmentative function of the successive repetition of the word **ribH**, we will realize that deletion causes a defect in translation. This translation is overlooking too much of the intended meaning, and does

not convey the cumulative effect that the SL example has on the reader.

Further, in some cases deletion of certain words may leave room for two different interpretations as (Duff, 1981:34) holds. This is coupled with the fact that the translator's judgement and decision to delete a certain word may not be based on any solid ground.

3.2.1.3 Ellipsis: another important strategy used in curbing lexical repetition when translating fictional narrative discourse from Arabic into English is ellipsis. Ellipsis is defined as "the omission of elements normally required by the grammar which the speaker/writer assumes are obvious from the context and, therefore, there is no need to be raised" (McCarthy, 1991: 43). Here are examples of how this strategy is used to avoid lexical repetition:

(20) laqad aSbaHtu aṣlam ma la taṣlamūn (M6: 167)

perfect part. I became know what (neg.) know-you.

(I now *know* what you *don't* [know]).

This example clearly involves repetition of the verb **aṣlam**.

As the translation shows, the translators resort to the use of verbal ellipsis to avoid the repetition of the verb. Thus the auxiliary **don't** is used to replace the verb **taṣlamūn**. The use of ellipsis in this context makes the translation sound English. The following is another example:

- (21) 'inna ṣaṣrana hāthā la-huwa min aṣjab al- ṣuSūr (M7:166)
 ('inna) age-our this (la)it from strangest the-ages
 (This age has got to be the strangest).

In this example, the repetition **al- ṣuSūr** is ellipted because it can be easily recovered from the translation. Hence a reader can assume that the intended meaning of this sentence is “this age has got to be the strangest age”. Thus ellipsis is appropriate here. The following example involves verbal ellipsis:

- (22) wa aqūlu: law i'tamantumūnī mā 'afṣaytu,'ammā
 and say: if trusted-you-I (neg.) said, but
 al'āna fa-sa-'ufṣī wa 'ufṣī wa 'axalli al-dunyā
 now (fut.) say and say and let the-world
 titfarraj.(W10:233).
 see.

(“If you'd trusted me,” I'd retort, “I *wouldn't have said* anything. But I *will* now, I'll let the world know”).

The repetition of this lexical item 'ufṣī' is rendered using ellipsis. The ellipsis here is called verbal ellipsis as it involves an omission in the verbal group (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). This is to say that English avoids repetition by using ellipsis. Again the use of this strategy in this context makes the translated version compact and effective.

Al-Jabr (1987: 92) argues that Arabic makes restricted use of ellipsis, compared to English which uses ellipsis extensively. Further,

ellipsis does not seem to be used even by proficient learners in situations where native speakers naturally resort to it, as Scarcella and Brunak (1981) suggest.

Ellipsis is motivated by the need to achieve economy in the text (De Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981: 66). This is especially important in handling lexical repetition when translating from Arabic into English. However, there is a danger of ambiguity if ellipsis is not properly used. According to Hatim (1997:114) ellipsis, if used, must be easily recovered by the reader. So the translator has to be careful and avoid any possible ambiguity (Hatim and Mason, 1990: 202).

3.2.1.4 Pronominalisation: this strategy refers to the use of a pronoun or what De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) call pro-form in place of a full lexical item. It is used by translators to avoid direct repetition of the same lexical item, especially when the two items are repeated in an adjacent environment. The following are examples from the textual analysis

(23) *ibtaʕadat ʕan nāThirī malāmiH al-rujūʕ*

became-far from sight-my possibility the-return

ila nuqTat al-bad'. NuqTatu al-bad' Yāmat

to point starting. Point starting blurred

wa Yābat.(W11:230)

and vanished

(...the less possible it became to return to my starting point. Indeed it had vanished).

In the above example the expression **nuqTatu al-bad'** is repeated twice in an adjacent environment. Therefore, the translators translated the first occurrence into its formal equivalent **starting point** and rendered the repetition as an anaphoric pronoun **it**. The rendition of the repetition **NuqTatu al-bad'** as a pronoun **it** is more appropriate than repeating the full form.

Another example showing the use of pronoun to handle lexical repetition is given here

(24) kuntu aʕrifu anna-hū Tammāʕ (N6:17)

was-I know that-he greedy

(I knew he was *greedy*).

kuntu 'arā Tamaʕahu fī ʕaynayhi

was-I see greed-his in eyes-his

(*It* was reflected in his eyes).

As the above examples show, the first occurrence of **Tammāʕ** is translated into **greedy**, while the repetition **Tamaʕahu** (his greed) is translated into **It**. The use of a pronominal reference to translate **Tamaʕahu** is relevant here because the referent can be easily recovered. Thus the lexical item is replaced by a pronoun.

(25) Sallamtum bi-kulli hāthihi al-ʕajā'ib fa-kayfa

Accepted-you in-all this the-miracles so-how

tunkirūna ṣalayya ṣajībatī. (M8: 167)

deny-you for-me miracle-my

(You accept all these *wonders*-why not *mine* too?)

Similarly in this example the first occurrence is translated into **wonders** while the repetition is rendered by the pronominal reference **mine**. Such a reference functions as a head possessive (Halliday and Hassan, 1976:333). Again the use of the reference **mine** is suitable in this context because its referent is understood.

(26) kuntu 'akrahu 'an taltaqī ṣaynayya bi-ṣaynayhi...

was hate-I to meet eye-my with eyes-his

yuSawwib'īlayya naThratan jāmidatan.(N7:17)

direct to-me a-look strong

(I disliked making contact with his eyes...*they*

completely overpowered one's defenses).

Likewise in this example the word **ṣaynayhi** is translated by the pronoun **they**. However, the translation of **yuSawwib ilayya naThratan jāmidatan** into **they completely overpowered one's defenses** is wrong because the translators are managing the translation.

(27) wa lā mihnata lī 'illā hāthihi al-mihnata

and (neg.) profession for-me except this the-profession

Hattā hāthihi al-mihnata lam 'ujidhā. (W12: 233)

Even this the-profession (neg.) master it.

(Without having any other *profession...*and even *this* I haven't mastered).

As this example shows, the second repetition is replaced by demonstrative reference **this**. The demonstrative reference is easily understood in this context and so it is rightly used.

3.2.1.5 Paraphrase: This is a marginal strategy. De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981: 58) define this strategy as "the recurrence of content with a change of expression". According to Baker (1992:37), paraphrase can be employed if an SL word is repeated too often, or else is lexicalized differently in the TL. The following example from the analysis illustrates the use of this strategy:

(28) wa maṣa thālik baqītu 'ataharrab min naTharātih.(N8:17)
and despite that kept-I escape from looks-his
(I took to avoiding any *eye-to-eye contact*).

So here **naTharātih** is translated into **eye-to-eye contact**. Therefore, **eye-to-eye contact** is a paraphrase of **look** or **gaze**. The paraphrase is acceptable here although the translation of **baqītu ataharrab** as **I took to avoiding** is wrong; the correct translation should be **continued to escape**.

Another example is the rendering of the verb Habasa into put in jail in the following example:

(29) 'alam taqra' ṣan al-mi'āt al-lathīna
didn't read-you about the-hundreds who

Habasathum šurTat Haifa. fī sāHat al-Hanātīr
 Imprisoned-them police Haifa in yard al- Hanātīr
 yawma infijār al-baTTīxa? Kullu ʕarabiy sāba
 on-day explosion the-melon? Every Arab roved
 fī Haifa al-Suflā Habasūh (M9:170)
 in Haifa al-Sufla imprisoned they-him
 (Didn't you read of the hundreds *imprisoned*
 by Haifa police when that melon exploded
 in Hanatir Square? Afterwards every Arab
 they found in Lower Haifa they *put in jail*).

In this example, the verb **Habasa** is repeated once as a verb, and we clearly see that the translators render the repetition of **Habasa** as **put in jail**, which is a paraphrase of **imprison**. The translation of **Habasa** as **imprison** and **put in jail** respectively is quite legitimate here because the meaning is not affected.

However, this strategy is not frequently used as the textual analysis shows.

3.2.2 Is Formal Equivalence Adequate for the Translation Of Lexical Repetition from Arabic into English?

The answer to this question can be easily supplied by the textual analysis of the three literary works. First, I start by giving a definition of formal equivalence. According to Nida (1964), formal equivalence refers to “the closest possible match of form and content between ST and TT”.

It is evident that direct translation or the equivalent of a repeated lexical item is only one out of a number of strategies used to handle repetition in the translation of fictional narrative discourse. Here are some examples from the textual analysis that support this point:

(30) 'adaṣuhu wa ša'nahu maṣa Sundūq al-nifāyāt (N9:17)

leave-him and alone with can the-garbage

Leaving him alone with the *garbage* can.

yaDaṣu fī jaybihi šay'an mā yajiduhū

put in pocket-his thing-some find-it

bayna al-nifāyāt.

among the-garbage

(through the *garbage* until he found something ...)

In the above examples, the lexical item **nifāyāt** is repeated. In the story “al-nifāyāt”, The formal equivalent **garbage** is used to render all occurrences of this noun. One might wonder why this item was translated formally and directly into English?

To answer this question, I say that the title of this piece of fictional narrative is “al-nifāyāt” (Garbage) which is a thematic key word in this story; so the translators opt for the formal equivalent of this recurrent lexical item due to its thematic significance in the story.

However, in most of the cases direct translation or formal equivalence is applied to the first occurrence of a repeated lexical item; the following occurrences are usually translated by one of the strategies discussed in the chapter. However, in very few cases formal

equivalence was applied to the second occurrence as in the following example:

- (31) jurʕatintumidduni bi-al-quwa.....fa-ʾastamiddu
 a-dose.....provides-me with-the-strength..so-get-I
al-quwata θaniyatan. (W13: 230)
 the-strength again
 (This would provide me with the *strength*...giving me
 new *strength*.)

This example involves repetition of the noun **al-quwwa**. The translation of this noun into **strength** clearly illustrates the use of formal equivalence. Formal equivalence is used in the three translated literary works. Yet translators seem to avoid it beyond the first occurrence and in few cases beyond the first repetition, lest the translation sounds redundant, hence non-English. So formal equivalence is certainly not the only strategy for translating lexical repetition in fictional narrative from Arabic into English. Other translation strategies, which have already been listed and exemplified, are used to manage lexical repetition in translated Arabic fictional narrative discourse.

Chapter Four

Conclusions & Recommendations

4.1 Summary and Conclusions

This study was conducted with the aim of exploring a problematic area in Arabic-English translation, namely, how lexical repetition is rendered from Arabic into English. The following points were examined:

1. The different types of lexical repetition in Arabic fictional narrative discourse.
2. The different translation strategies utilized by professional translators to render lexical repetition from Arabic into English.
3. The adequacy of formal equivalence to render each lexical repetition from Arabic into English.

The textual analysis was conducted on three literary works. In part one of the textual analysis, the different types of lexical repetition found in the three literary works were listed and analyzed. These types involve:

- (1) Complete lexical repetition, which includes verb, noun and adjective repetition.
- (2) Partial lexical repetition which includes verb-noun and noun-adjective repetition.

- (3) Special structures repetition: which includes cognate accusative, repetition of the pattern $N_1 + \text{Prep.} + N_1$, N_1 (singular) + $\text{min} + N_1$ (plural) and $N_1 + \text{relative} + N_1$.
- (4) Repetition of pre-fabricated or idiomatic expressions.

The second part of the textual analysis investigated the translation strategies utilized by professional translators to handle lexical repetition. These strategies are listed here according to their frequency of use: synonymy and near-synonymy, deletion, ellipsis, pronominalisation and paraphrase. The employment of these five translation strategies to handle lexical repetition highlights the fact that formal equivalence is not adequate to handle each repetition because the translation would sound repetitious. It was found that translators avoid using formal equivalence beyond the first occurrence in most cases.

4.2 What should a Translator do to Attain the Best Translation of Lexical Repetition?

Now we come to the last question of this study: what can a translator of Arabic fictional narrative discourse do in order to attain the best translation of lexical repetition acknowledging that perfect translation does not exist?

The translator should first approach his task with the English reading audience in mind. So s/he has to produce meaningful texts for

the intended English-speaking audience; hence the translated text must be endorsed by English people whose culture is distant from the Arabic culture.

In order to achieve the best translation of lexical repetition from Arabic into English it is important for novice translators to pay special attention to repetition because this, if literally translated, can render a redundant text. Donnalén (1978: 58) says that “in some of the cases repetition of information makes the discourse sound like the awkward language of a child’s first reader”.

Yet we should acknowledge that it is not possible to relate each type of repetition to specific translation strategies, although in some cases certain translation strategies are inevitable and recommended. For example, when there is any language-specific expression, deletion is inevitable because if the translator translates each repetition of that idiomatic expression, then the translation will sound funny to an English ear. Also the following pattern of repetition, if found, the strategy of ellipsis is recommended: $N_1 + \text{relative} + N_1$. Beyond these two types, it is not possible to relate strategies to types of repetitions. But, generally speaking, in order to attain the best translation of lexical repetition into English, novice translators are advised to follow the following steps: first to identify lexical repetition, acquire translation strategies and use them properly and edit the translation.

First, translators are advised to become sensitized to repetition, i.e., they should be able to correctly identify all cases of repetition in Arabic texts before embarking on the process of translation. These types of repetition include complete lexical repetition with its subtypes, partial lexical repetition, repetition of special structure and repetition of pre-fabricated or idiomatic expressions. Further, these translators are advised to know when repetition is strong, i.e., the nearer the lexical repetition from its preceding occurrence, the stronger the repetition is. Identifying repetition requires wide reading and so translators must be good readers, as Baker (1992) and Newmark (1982, 1988) suggest.

Second novice translators should become aware of different translation strategies utilized by professional translators to render lexical repetition from Arabic into English. It would be better if they investigate and study these strategies through picking lexical repetition from Arabic novels and comparing the repetition with the corresponding professional translation. This observation is likely to make novice translators aware and actually acquire the translation strategies used by professional translators to handle repetition. These strategies are synonymy and near-synonymy, deletion, ellipsis, pronominalisation and paraphrase.

Third, because decisions to delete certain words or use synonyms or even any strategy are left to the judgement and evaluation of the translators (Hatim and Mason, 1990), novice translators are advised to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of each translation strategy in order to use them properly and accurately. Translators' judgements and decisions to resort to any translation strategy should be clearly justified. For example, they cannot resort to deletion haphazardly because deletion of functional repetitions is likely to distort the intended meaning. The following example clarifies this point:

(1) *tijāra sahla, wa ribH, ribH.....ribH.* (N1: 19)

It seemed an easy and *profitable* trade.

The word **ribH** has an augmentative function; it emphasizes the greed of this sanitation worker who always demands more and more. In fact, this meaning is lost in the translation. Therefore, translators, novice and professional as well, are recommended to avoid any kind of arbitrary deletion. If the repetition is functional, a translator should translate it. But if it does not affect the development of the text, it can be deleted. So if a novice translator wants to delete any lexical repetition, the deletion should be justified, i.e., the deleted word does not carry great significance to

the meaning of the text (Baker, 1992). There are other cases of wrong deletion in the textual analysis.

Also, novice translators can use pronominalisation to handle repetition. However, substituting a pronoun for a full word may have the potential danger of ambiguity. The reader might misinterpret the intended meaning of the pronoun. This might especially happen when there are many subjects and objects. The reader might not properly recover the pronoun reference. So if the use of a pronoun is likely to cause ambiguity, then repetition is preferred. So the reader must not be left puzzled to work out or recover what a pronoun refers to. In such a case, Duff (1981:34) comments, “ugly repetition should not be avoided for aesthetic reasons. Clarity is essential”.

4.3 Recommendations for Future Research

This study is concerned with lexical repetition in translated Arabic fictional narrative discourse. It can not undertake to study all kinds of repetitions in different text types. Therefore, the findings of this study may not be valid for the rendering of lexical repetition in other genres.

And so future studies are needed to examine this phenomenon of lexical repetition in other text types such as argumentative or

journalistic discourse to see how this repetition is rendered into English.

Further studies are also needed to study other types of repetition such as lexical couplets and how they are rendered into English. Such researches are of paramount importance because this linguistic phenomenon is totally neglected. Such researches are likely to inspire translators particularly trainees, whose rendition of repetition into English tends to be literal.

Appendix (1)

مذكرات امرأة غير واقعية

كلما اشتد الفراغ ، ازدادت فراغاً على فراغ . ما عاد رأسي يدور إلا داخل ثقب إبرة . وكلما أمعنت الأيام في سحقي ازددت خنوعاً . وآتسم الخنوع بلامح الرضى ، فبت راضية ولا أطلب من الله إلا المزيد . وباتت محاسن زوجي تتكشف ، فلمت نفسي على قصر النظر . فإذا أحضر شيئاً جديداً للدار حمدت الله أنه ليس بخيلاً . وإذا توقف عن السهر بضع ليال متتاليات حمدت الله أن باتت حياتنا مستقرة . وإذا أمرني أن أقوم بعمل سخيف ، حمدت الله أنه بات يعتمد علي في كل صغيرة وكبيرة . وتقر أيام وأنا في أجمل حال وأهدأ بال . وتسمح من ذاكرتي كل المساوي وتصبح مجرد شبح أطرده بإصرار وهمة . فإذا ما عاد زوجي إلى

طريقته ، أصابتي صدمة فادحة وحملت نفسي مسؤولية الانحراف . وأقول لنفسي : لو لم تكوني يا عفاف عقيماً لامتلأ البيت صحباً ولشده الأولاد إليك . لو لم تكوني يا عفاف سقيمة لما سعم أجواءك المملة . لو لم تكوني يا عفاف قبيحة لما هفت نفسه لفيرك . وفي محاولة يائسة لإصلاح ما أفسده الدهر، أبدأ بتجميل البيت وتجميل نفسي . أقلب البيت عاليه سافلاً فأغسل الزجاج بالليف والصابون حتى يصبح كالأماس ، وأنحت البلاط حتى يصبح كالمرآة ، وأملأ النوافذ وحفاف البلكون باللحف والبطانيات ومخدات الإسفنج ، ومخدات القطن وأتمس بدلانه حتى يتصاعد منها البخار . وأنزل للسوق وأشتري اللحم والخضار وأتقن في انتقاء الأكبر ، والأنضر والأطرج . هذا خيار ما زال يحتفظ بمساماته الناعمة ، وتلك بندورة نصفها أحمر والنصف الثاني ما زال أخضر ، وبطاطا رائحة كالبدر في يوم اكتماله ، وبابية وفاصوليا وقرنبيط وفجل . وأعود إلى الدار مزدهية بخضرتي وثلاجاتي المليئة بالخيرات وأحمد الله لأنني أعيش أحسن عيشة .

ثم أقوم بترميم نفسي . وأقف أمام المرآة أستعرض ما لدي من ملابس . فهذا فستان غامق سأستبدله بفاغ ، وهذا فاغ سأستبدله بغامق . وهذا فستان قصير لا بد من تطويله . وهذا طويل أستبدله بقصير أو أقصر من طوله . وأقضي أياماً أخرى وأنا أطول وأقصر وأشتري وأتفرج . وأقوم بمسح شامل لكل واجهات السوق وكل « أو كازيونات » المدينة . وأقضي على ما لدي من نقود، فأتمن فرصة هبوط التورم في عيني لأقول له بدلال سقيم وأنا ألبس أفضل ما عندي : « أعطني يا محمود فقد فلست » . وباندفاع أفتح التلاجة وأستعرض الخيرات أمامه وأصف الملابس الجديدة على السرير حتى يختفي الفراش ، وأدور حولها بفرح عساه يفرح ، فينسم بغيظ ويقول : هذا ما تفلحين فيه . فأقول له بحماس : وماذا ينقصنا ؟ إحمد ربك يا محمود ولا تكفر بالنعمة . بيتك أنظف وأحلى من كل البيوت ، وطبيخ زوجتك أركي طبيخ، وأنا وأنت أحسن الناس جميعاً . فيمد يده إلى جيبه ويناولني العشرات وهو بهمهم : خذي واسكتي . وآخذ وأسكت . وأزداد سكوتاً على سكوت ، حتى أنفجر يوماً فأبكي وأهدم وأعود إلى شحوبي وأدوي وتدوي التلاجة ويمتلئ البيت بالغبار ، ويهب الطيور فيتسخ الزجاج ويصبح مثل ورق البردخ وأنام كثيراً . وفي ظلام الليل أرجو أن يمن علي بضوء جديد يدد عمتي ولو لأيام حتى أتبلغ بما يكفيني لأواصل المسير في صحراء التيه . ويستجيب الله لدعائي فتحسن الأحوال ويتسم زوجي فتفرج السماء عن ليلة القدر . وأرى النور مصدراً عظيماً للفيض فأشربه بنهم التائه في صحراء . جرعات أشربها تمدني بالقوة للسير في الصهد خطوات أبعد . وحين أرتمي ثانية ينطلق « فلاش » لضوء آخر . فأستمد القوة ثانية وأمشي خطوات أبعد، وهكذا إلى ما لا نهاية .

وكلما توغلت في السير ، ابتعدت عن ناظري ملامح الرجوع إلي نقطة البدء ، حين كنت ما أزال صبية تلعب بالألوان وتقرأ المنشور وتستفز الأهل . نقطة البدء غامت وغابت وضاعت في مناهات الذاكرة المهزوزة وأضحت مجرد حلم بعيد ، لكنه حلم ووهم لا أكثر .

وحين يسبحني الحلم إلى تلافيفه أردع نفسي وأزجرها قائلة : كوني واقعية يا عفاف ، كوني واقعية .

كلمات طالما سمعتها من والدي رحمه الله ، وما زلت أسمعها من أُمي كلما التقيت بها وشكوت همّي ، وترددها النسوة في مجالسهن حين يجتمعن حول فناجين القهوة وتبصير الفنجان . وكانت كلمة « النصيب » هي القرار لأغنية جماعية خشنة يطلقها جنس لطيف . تبدأ الواحدة بنعف حطامها الداخلي في جلسة حميمة ، وتفرغ محتويات قلبها وأحشائها وكشكول أحزانها وتذرف الدموع وتحشش السجائر وتعفر الدخان ، وتتمتع زوجها بوابل النعوت والألقاب وتستنزل اللعنات والأمنيات ، وحين تسمع بوق سيارته يزمر في الخارج - ، تلملم شتاتها وتمسح وجهها وتلمس شعرها وأطراف ثوبها وتنظر في العيون المسبلة بمشاركة وجدانية ونهمس بحكمة « نصيينا » . وتتردد الكلمة في أفواه جافة تدخن بشرافة وتموج كصدى جماعي للكلمة « آمين » في صلاة مترامية الأطراف منقولة على الهواء والبث المباشر . في البداية ما كنت أقول « آمين » ، لكنني كلما أوغلت في صحراء التيه والعطش والظلمة ، وغابت عن ذاكرتي ملامح نقطة البدء الخضراء وأصبحت حُلماً أكثر منه حقيقة ، بتّ أؤمن أن ما عليّ تدريب النفس عليه هو « الواقعية » التي طالما نمت بعكسها . والواقعية تعني الرضى بالواقع والتأقلم معه وفيه ، والإنخراط في مسالكه لدرجة الاستشهاد في سبيله . وأعود أذكر القصص الصغيرة والكبيرة التي رسخت في ذهني الصورة بكل أبعادها . نسوة سمعتن في المجالس البعيدة يستنزلن اللعنات ويتمنين لأزواجهن الموت والأذى والمعاهات المستديمة . فإذا حدث وتطلّقت إحداهن ، أو ترمّلت أو تزوّج الزوج عليها ، صاحت وناحت وملأت الدنيا بكاء وعويلاً . ومرة رفعت سماعة التليفون أهنيء إحداهن على الطلاق فلعتنتي وصكّت السماعة فانقطع الخط . وقفت كالمذهولة غير مصدقة لما سمعت حتى أقنعت نفسي أنني غلظت بالنمرة أو بالفهم . فعدت أطلبها من جديد وبدأت الحديث بحذر أكبر فتأوّهت ثم انفجرت : « هنيئاً لك بقلبك يا عفاف ، هنيئاً لك بخيبتك . خلصت من همّه ؟ أي خلاص يا مجنونة ؟ يطلّقني وأخلص ؟ والأولاد من يربّهم ؟ أنا أم هو ؟ وأدور وراءه في المحاكم أطالبه بالنفقة وأرجوه أن يترك لي هذا الولد أو ذاك سنة أخرى أو أشهراً أخرى ؟ وإذا نسينا فهل ينسأه الأولاد ؟ وإذا أخذهم وحرّق قلبي فلمن أعيش وأين ؟ عند الإخوة وتحت أرجل نسوان الإخوة ؟

وعند هذه الجملة انقشع الضباب عني فجأة وسألت نفسي السؤال ذاته : وأنت يا عفاف إذا تطلّقت أين تعيشين ؟ تحت أرجل نسوان الإخوة ؟

وكان لي إخوة أشاوس يعرفون من أين وكيف تفري مرارة المرأة . لكنهم للحق والحقيقة رجال محترمون ولو أنهم حين مات الوالد تخاطفوا ميراثه قبل أن يرد حمام دفته . ولم يقموا لنا نحن البنات من الميراث إلا اسم العيلة ووجاهة الأصل الطيب . فقلت لأخواتي أستحثهن : ونصيينا ؟ فرددن معاً وبصوت واحد : « نصيينا » . وهكذا كان لهذه الكلمة أكثر

من معنى وأكثر من نعمة وأكثر من ثواب . ومنذ ذلك الحين تعلمت كيف أرددها بإيمان أكبر، وبدأت أفهم معناها الواقعي بوضوح لا يعلوه غبار . ومنذ ذلك الحين وزوجي لا ينفك يقتنص الفرص ليعيد ذكر القصة حتى لا أتباهى بعائلتي واسمها الرنآن وأبي المفتش الذي سبق الجميع بعلمه . فقي وقت كانت تعتبر البصمة فيه توقيعا ، كان أبي يكتب التقارير ويقرأ القاموس ويسألني بتنقيب المنجد والبحث عن أصول الأفعال والمشتقات وكل الكلمات الصعبة . وكان زوجي يحس بالنقص لدى ذكر أبي وخصوصاً حين يجيء ذكر أبيه . فقد كان أبوه شبه أمي ومتزوج من إثنين وله ستة أولاد معظمهم إناث تزوجن من رجال لا مال ولا جاه لهم . بعكس أخواتي المتزوجات من موظفين محترمين ولهم في المجتمع باع وذراع . فهذا وكيل وزارة وهذا مدير بنك وذلك سفير . أما إخوتي فطبيب ومهندس ومحام . وعليه فقد كنت سلبية حسب ونسب وأصل طيب ، وكان زوجي يعتبر هذه الميزة أعظم مواصفاتي . لكنه حين سمع بقصة الميراث جن جنونه وبات يعيرني بأصلي ، فلم يبق لي في هذه الدنيا شيء أفاخر به . وفي محاولة يائسة لاستعادة قيمتي هرعت إلى البلد وقطعت الجسر والنهر والصحارى وقلت لأخواتي : هيا بنا . فقلن : إلى أين ؟ قلت بإصرار : اتبعنني ترين . وتبعنني من باب الفضول وربما بفعل حلاوة الروح ، فاستشرنا كبار العائلة ، فنصحونا بغض النظر . وقالوا : عيب عليكين ، زوج الواحدة منكن يساوي قطار ذهب . قلت مجادلة : لكن إذا تطلقنا أو ... وسمعت صرخة موحدة تنطلق من أفواه الجميع بما فيهن أخواتي : « فالله ولا فالك ، فالله ولا فالك » . ونظر الجميع في عيون أخواتي ، ثم نظرت أخواتي في عيون بعضهن ، ثم نظر الجميع إلي أنا . واتهمت فيما اتهمت به بأنني من النوع النمرود ولو أشعلت له الدنيا العشرة ، وأني منذ الطفولة وأنا كذلك . وتساءلت عما يقصدونه بكلمة كذلك ؟ فاستخسروا الرد في استداروا نحو أخواتي وأهملوني . وكانت أخواتي أسرع مني خاطراً فالتقطن الجو وعدن يرددن وهن يتفتنن في أعجابهن : فالله ولا فالها .

وخرجنا من المكان بعد أن لُفنت درساً في « القسمة » حتى حفظته عن ظهر قلب . وأخذت أردد الكلمة في ذاكرتي يوماً حتى لا أنساها ، فكل يوم أبدأ النهار بكلمة « قسمة » وأختمه بالكلمة « قسمة » . بدأت بترديدها همساً ، ثم بصوت مرتفع ، ومع الأيام اقتنعت بها وعملت بحكمتها . وبالصدفة وقع بين يدي مقال سياسي مفحم فقلت : فعلاً ، أنا من الساحقين لا المسحوقين . وهكذا راحت علي .

و ذات يوم أصابني هبة مفاجئة من هبات الصحو فصرخت في وجه أخت من أخواتي فقالت : عيب علينا يا عفاف أن نقاصر الإخوة ، أبناء والدنا أولى بميراثه من الأصهار الأغرأب . قلت : ونحن ؟ قالت : نحن زوجات الأغرأب . قلت : وإذا طلقنا الأغرأب ؟ فصاحت : يا عفاف يا عفاف ا صرت على أبواب الثلاثين ا إعقلي ، كوني واقعية ا وصحت أنا : أتظنين أنه احتمال بعيد ؟ من يضمن لي ؟

لا أحد يضمن إلا أنت . أفهميها . الرجال بدتهم صبر . ماذا أقول لك ؟ أحكي لك

عن نكده وهمه والقيامه التي تقوم لأنفه الأسباب؟ لكنها مستورة والحمد لله . أما زوجك ، أي نعم يسهر ويدور على رأسه والكل يعرف ، أما أنا فمن يعرف يعرف ، ومن لا يعرف لا يعرف !

تشبث بذراعها وتوسلت :

- دعيني أعرف ، دعيني أعرف .

سكنت عن الكلام فجأة وقد اكتشفت أنها وقعت وزلّ اللسان . ورمتي بإحدى نظرات الشك فأخذت أفهقه . تذكرت أن أمي وأخواتي وإخوتي وجميع أفراد العيلة لا يأتمنونني على سرّ أبداً ، وكانوا يحذرون بعضهم مني ويقولون « لا تقولوا لأم لسان » . وكان التحذير بمثابة دعوة لخياشيمي المتعطشة للقصص بالإنفتاح على مصاريعها . وأبدأ بالشّم وبالتنقيب ، وأقرأ شرلوك هولمز وأرسين لوين فأزداد اجتهادا حتى أجدها . وأقف على كرسي أو سرير أو حافة نافذة وأصيح : وجدتها ، وجدتها ، وافرحناه ! فتصيح أمي : خذها يا رب وربحني منها . وأقول : لو أتممتوني ما أنشيت ، أما الآن ، فسأفشي وأفشي وأخلي الدنيا تنفرج . ولكني لا أخلي الدنيا تنفرج ، فقد كنت على استعداد دائم للبرطيل . أستبدل السر بسر والقصة بقصة ، وهكذا احتوت جمعتي مئات القصص وآلافها .

ورمعتني أختي بنظرات الشك فأشرت لأنفي وقلت : أبدأ بالشّم ؟ قالت بياس : أسكتي يا شبيخة ، ألا ينقصيني إلا أنت ؟ خذبيها مني يا عفاف ، بعضهم جوز بقشر وبعضهم منزوع القشر وبعضهم حبة في التبن . صرخت بذهول : أمان يا ربي أمان ! وشمّت في جوابي رائحة السخرية فصاحت : والله لو كان زوجي مثل زوجك لنت كل ما أتمنى وأريد . لكنك هبلة ، هبلة وستين هبلة . غمزت بعيني : ابتزاز ؟! هزت كتفيها ومشت وهي تدمدم : ابتزاز أو غير ابتزاز ، وما نحن فيه ماذا يسمى ؟

هجمت عليها وقبّلتها وأنا أضحك . كنت قد بدأت أضحك حين أرى ردات فعل الآخرين تكشف عن خباياهم الأصلية . بعكس الماضي حين كنت بعد صغيرة ، وبعد نقيّة ، وبعد متزمنة حيال الزيف وحيال الأصالة . حينذاك ، كنت أفقد عقلي وأبدأ بالصراخ فتتهتف أمي : خذها يا رب وربحني منها ! والآن ، وأنا أرى أختي تكشف عن مفاهيم شربتها على قارعة إسفلت الحياة حيث وجدنا لأنفسنا موطئاً ، لم أستطع منع نفسي عن الضحك . وبقيت أضحك حتى غرقت عيناها بالدموع ، وقلبي .

وهكذا ، بت أقرب للواقعية ، فما عدت أفكر بالطلاق كحلّ لمشكلتي ، أصبح يتهددني بخوف لا يجاربه إلا خوفاً من الزواج نفسه . فماذا أفعل بدون زواج ؟ سنوات من عمري مرت ولا مهنة لي إلا هذه المهنة . حتى هذه المهنة لم أجدها حسب مواصفات الزواج الناجح . فلا أنا امرأة ولادة ، ولا أنا الجارية المطيعة ، ولا أنا ذات الحسن والمال والذلال . كما أنني غير راضية وغير سعيدة ، لا سعيدة بتعاستي ، ولا سعيدة بإذلال الزواج لي وإذلاله لنفسه أثناء عمليات التكفير . ولا سعيدة بحاضري ولا سعيدة بمستقبلي . الحاضر استمرار للماضي ،

والمستقبل استمرار للحاضر ، وربما كان المستقبل أسوأ من الإثنين معاً ، الماضي والحاضر . فماذا أفعل لو تطلّقت ؟ أين أعيش وكيف ؟ الوالد مات ، الأم وقد كبرت تمشي مع أخي الأكبر ، وزوجة أخي امرأة حادة الطبع عصية المزاج بفضل مزاج أخي . وأمزجه بقية إخوتي لم تكن أفضل حالاً ، وكذلك أمزجة زوجاتهم . وباختصار ، كان لكل واحد منهم مسؤولياته وأعبأه ، كما كانت لكل واحد منهم نظراته الثابتة الحصيفة في أمور كنت أعتبرها سخيفة . وكانت أنظارهم مسلّطة ومثبّنة على هذه الأمور بحيث لم يتيق لديهم متسع من الوقت للتفكير بغيرها ، وكان الواحد منهم يراني أحمل صحيفة أو كتاباً فينسى ويعلق : « راحت الفيلسوفة وجاءت الفيلسوفة » . وفي المقابل كنت أقول : « راح الطبل وجاء الطبل » . وكنت أقولها داخل شفّتي وباطن عيني . وبما أن لغة العيون مفهومة معلومة ، فقد كان للحديث شجون .

يكفييني من هذا الحديث شجون واقعية وغير واقعية . واقعية لأنني أعرف أن الطلاق لن يأتي بالحلّ . وغير واقعية لأنه يرادني في المنام والأحلام ودعاء الصباح . واقعية وأنا أبقى بيتي كالفلّ ولا أمنحه عذراً واحداً لحسم الموقف . وغير واقعية حين أدحض شكوكه وأظل وحدي . ولست بوحدي ، فقد كانت عنبر ، ومجلى وصحون وسكين المطبخ ، وحبال غسيل .

From Memoirs of an Unrealistic Woman

As the emptiness grew deeper, so would my own sense of inner void. My head would spin as if enclosed within the eye of a needle. The more events crushed me, the more submissive I'd become. Then my submissiveness would lead on to contentment, and I'd pray to God to send me more occasions for it. The virtues of my husband would become clearer to me, and I'd blame myself for not seeing them earlier.

If he brought something new for the house, I'd thank God that he wasn't mean with money; and if he no longer spent repeated evenings out of the house, I'd thank God our life had become settled. If he

Sahar Khalifeh

ordered me to perform some stupid service, I'd thank God he'd come to depend on me in large or small matters. The days would pass and I'd feel tranquil and secure; all memories of his faults would fade, would become mere phantoms, to be driven firmly and decisively from my mind. Then, when he returned to his old ways, I'd be devastated, and blame myself for his waywardness. "If you weren't barren, Afaf," I'd tell myself, "your house would be full of sound and movement, and the children would draw him towards you. If you weren't so listless, he wouldn't have tired of your dull company. If you weren't so plain-looking, he wouldn't have desired other women." In a desperate attempt to repair what life had destroyed, I'd begin to make the house and myself more attractive. I'd turn the house upside down, wash the window panes with soap until they gleamed like diamonds, and scrape the floor till it was like a mirror; lay the coverlets and blankets and pillows to air at the windows and on the balcony rails, and put his suits in the sun till the vapour rose from them. I'd go to the market too, and buy meat and vegetables, taking care to choose the largest and freshest: cucumbers that had kept their first freshness, tomatoes that were still half green, potatoes lovely as a full moon, and okras and green beans and cauliflowers and radishes. I'd come back home proud of my vegetables and my fridge full of good things, and thank God because I lived the best of lives.

Then I'd begin to make myself more attractive. I'd stand in front of the mirror inspecting my clothes. Here was a dark-colored dress which I should change for a lighter one, and there was a light-colored one which I should change for a darker one; here was a short dress whose hem I must let down, and there was a long dress which I must change for a short one, or shorten the dress itself. I'd spend days lengthening and shortening, buying and window-shopping. I'd make a full inventory of all the windows in the shopping center and all the sales going on in town, spend all the money I had. Then, when he'd stopped drinking for a while, and the bags had gone from under his eyes, I'd say, with silly coquetry, wearing my best dress, "Here, Mahmoud, give me some money, I'm broke." I'd throw open the fridge and show him the good things stacked up inside, then lay my new clothes down on the bed until you couldn't see the bedspread under them any more, and go joyfully round them, hoping he'd be glad. He'd smile grudgingly and say, "Is that the best you can do!" And I'd cry, "What's wrong with the way we live? Thank your God, Mahmoud, and don't deny your blessings. Your house is the cleanest and brightest in

the neighborhood, your wife's cooking is the best, and you and I are the best of people." He'd dip his hand in his pocket and hand over a stack of dinars. "Take this," he'd mutter, "and be quiet." So I'd take it and be quiet; and, day by day, I'd grow quieter still, till one day I'd break down and cry, then grow calm, and go back to my old listless ways. The fridge would become empty and the house would gather dust everywhere. A windstorm would blow and the windowpanes would become as dirty as sandpaper, and I'd sleep and sleep. I'd beg God to grant me a new light to disperse my darkness even for a few days, so I could gather the strength to continue my trip in the wilderness. God would answer my prayer and things would improve. My husband would smile and the sky would fill with a light that made my spirit overflow, that I'd drink to the depths as avidly as someone lost in the desert. This would provide me with the strength to step further into the burning heat of the wilderness. Whenever I fell back into listlessness, a spark would leap up again, giving me new strength to take further steps, and so on, endlessly.

The more I walked on, the less possible it became to return to my starting point when I was still a young girl toying with painting and reading pamphlets and defying the family. That was all clouded now. Indeed it had vanished, lost in the labyrinth of a shaken memory; it was no more than a remote dream, a mere illusion. Whenever that dream drove me through its many coils, I'd rebuke myself. "Be realistic, Afaf!" I'd say. "Be realistic!"

I often heard my father say that, may God rest his soul; and I'd hear my mother say those words too, whenever I met her and complained to her about my predicament. The same words would come from the women as they gathered round their coffee and read fortunes in the cups. The word "fate" was the refrain of a kind of communal song repeated by the womenfolk. One woman would begin by unburdening her inner soul, revealing the ruin of her life in an intimate gathering, unfolding the contents of her heart and the scrapbook of her sorrows; and she'd cry, and draw on her cigarette, and describe her husband in the ugliest terms, giving him vicious nicknames and calling down curses and misfortunes on him. Then, when she heard the horn of his car outside, she'd pull herself together, wipe her face, smooth her hair and dress, look at the lowered eyes with a kind of shared emotion, then whisper the words of wisdom: "That's our fate!" The words would be repeated by dry lips avidly smoking, and undulate like the echo of a common "Amen."

At the beginning I never said "Amen." But the deeper I went into the wilderness, into the desert of thirst and darkness, the dimmer the starting point became till it was a mere dream and the more I began to believe I should school myself to the realism I was said to lack. Realism meant accepting things as they were, adjusting to them, going along with them to the point of dying to preserve them. I'd remember the stories, some long, some short, that had fixed the whole intricate picture in my mind; the stories of women whom I'd heard, in those distant gatherings, call down curses and misfortunes—death and chronic deformities even—on their husbands. But if one of them became widowed or divorced, or if her husband took another wife alongside her, she'd fill the world with her crying and wailing. Once I phoned to congratulate a woman on her divorce, and she cursed me and slammed the receiver down. I stood stunned near the telephone, unable to believe what I'd heard, persuading myself, finally, that I'd dialled the wrong number or misunderstood what she said. So I rang her again and began the conversation more carefully. She sighed. "Oh, yes, Afaf!" she burst out. "Your heart does you credit, and so do your brains! Good riddance to him, you say? Why good riddance, you fool? He divorces me, and I'm supposed to rejoice? Who'll bring up the children? Him or me? And won't I have to pursue him through the courts, asking him for child support and begging him to leave me this child or that for another year, or even a few more months?¹ And if I should forget about him, would the children forget? And if he takes them away from me and burns my heart with anguish, who will I live for, and where? With my brothers, under the feet of their wives?"²

When I heard this, things became clear in my mind. "And you, Afaf," I said to myself, "where would you live? Under the feet of your own brothers' wives?"

I had marvelous brothers, who knew how to usurp a woman's rights. They're actually very respectable men, even though, when our father died, they snatched his inheritance before he was cold in his grave, leaving nothing to us girls except the family name and its good stock.

¹In Islam, a divorced mother keeps her son until he is seven and her daughter until she is nine. Then they go to live with their father.

²In Islam, men are responsible by law for supporting their womenfolk. When a woman in traditional society gets divorced, she will be supported first by her father, then, if he is deceased, by one of her brothers; this means that she has to go and live with him and his family, a situation which can engender much tension and hurt. Khalifeh is speaking here of women in traditional society, for whom the ancient law is still applicable. Today, educated women would shun this reliance and opt for independence.

I tried to spur my sisters to action. "What about our share?" I asked them. They repeated, with one voice, "That's our fate!" So there was more than one meaning and tune to the same word! And more than one heavenly reward! Since that time I've learned to repeat the words "our fate" with even greater conviction, and begun to realize their force with utter clarity. And since that time my husband hasn't missed a single opportunity to bring the matter up, to try and stop me taking pride in my family and its great repute, and in the fact that my father was an inspector of schools, more learned than anyone else round about. At a time when fingerprints were people's signatures, my father was writing reports and using the dictionary, looking for the roots of verbs and the meaning of difficult words. My husband used to feel inferior when my father was mentioned, especially when his own was mentioned too. His father was almost illiterate, and was married to two women and had a dozen children, mostly girls, all of them married to men with no money or status—in contrast to my sisters, who were all married to men with good jobs and high social standing; one of them was a deputy minister, and another was a bank manager, and a third was an ambassador. As for my brothers, one was a doctor, the second an engineer, and the third a lawyer. I came, then, from a family of high standing and lineage, and my husband used to regard this as my best quality. But when he heard the story of the inheritance, he was furious and began taunting me with my family, and I had nothing left to boast of.

In a desperate attempt to regain my status with him, I hurried home, crossing the deserts, and the bridge, and the river,³ and said to my sisters, "Come on, let's go." "Where?" they asked. "Come with me," I insisted, "and you'll see." They followed me out of curiosity—or desperation perhaps—and we sought the counsel of the family elders, who advised us to close our eyes. "Shame on you!" they said. "Each of your husbands is worth a ton of gold!" "And what if we should get divorced?" I said, continuing the argument. A single cry issued from all their throats, including my sisters: "God preserve us from your evil words, God preserve us from your evil words!" Everyone gazed into my sisters' eyes, then my sisters gazed into one another's eyes, then they all gazed at me. I was accused, among other things, of being

³Afaf is speaking here of crossing the Jordan river to the West Bank where her family lived. It is clear from the novel that she lived with her husband in one of the oil countries. The bridge is one of two bridges across the Jordan where Palestinians visiting their homes or relatives in the West Bank are searched and inspected by the Israelis.

rebellious; that's the way I'd always be, they said, however good my life was. And they agreed that I'd been like that since childhood. I asked what they meant by this, but they didn't deign to answer, and turned to my sisters, ignoring me completely. My sisters were cleverer than me. They absorbed the general mood around them and repeated again, "God preserve us from her evil words!"

We left after I'd been given such a lesson in "fate" that I'd learned it by heart. I began repeating the word in my memory lest I forget it; I'd begin the day, every morning, with the word "fate" and end it with the same, in a whisper at first, then in a loud voice, until with time I became convinced of its wisdom. One day, by chance, I happened upon a political article that greatly impressed me, and, adopting some of its political jargon, said to myself, "It's true, I'm one of the oppressors, not one of the oppressed." My cause was finally lost.

One day I felt a sudden sense of awakening and repeated my protest to one of my sisters. She said, "It would be shameful, Afaf, for us to fight our brothers." The sons of our father deserve his money more than sons-in-law who are perfect strangers. "And what about us?" I screamed. "We're the wives of those strangers," she answered. "And what if those strangers should divorce us?" I retorted. "Afaf!" she shouted. "You're nearly thirty. Grow up! Be realistic!" "Do you think it's so unlikely?" I shouted back. "What guarantee do we have?"

"The only person who can guarantee it is you," she said. "Try and understand. Men need patient handling. What can I tell you? Shall I tell you about my husband's bad temper? About the constant burden of living with him and his violent reactions to the smallest thing? But it's all in the family and hushed up, thank God. Everyone knows your husband spends long evenings out and goes in for certain things, but mine? No one knows about my suffering. We don't let it out!" I clutched her arm. "Tell me!" I begged. "Tell me!" She stopped abruptly, suddenly realizing what she'd said. Then she shot me a look full of suspicion, and I started laughing. I remembered how my mother, sisters, brothers, and all the other members of the family never trusted me with a secret; they used to warn one another, "Don't tell that chatterbox!" The warning was always an encouragement to my nose, ever eager for stories, to start twitching, and I'd begin sniffing around and searching. I'd resort to reading Sherlock Holmes and Arsène Lupin and learning enough to keep looking till I found out. Then I'd stand on a chair or a bed or by the window, and shout, "I've got it, I've got it, at last!" My mother would shout, "God! Take her to You and release

me!" "If you'd trusted me," I'd retort, "I wouldn't have said anything. But I will now, I'll let the whole world know!" But I never really revealed things outside the family, because I was always ready to make a deal. I'd agree to exchange one secret for another, and one story for another. That's how I built up such a rich collection of tales and anecdotes.

My sister gave me another suspicious look. I pointed to my nose. "Shall I start sniffing?" I said. "Be quiet," she said in desperation, "all that I need is you! Take it from me, Afaf, some husbands are sugar-coated, and some are open books, and others are stealthy like a snake in the grass." "Amen!" I shouted, as if totally amazed. "Oh, yes, Amen!" She sensed the sarcasm in my answer and shouted back, "By God, if my husband was like yours, I'd get every last thing I wanted! But you're an imbecile a million times over!" I winked at her. "Do you mean blackmail?" I said. As she walked away, she shrugged and muttered, "Call it blackmail if you like. What do you call the situation we're in?"

I rushed to her, laughing as I kissed her. I always laughed when I saw how people's reactions revealed their inner secrets; I was totally the opposite of how I'd been when I was still very young and pure, and refused to compromise with any kind of falsehood and insincerity. In those days, when I discovered a situation like this, I'd go out of my mind and start screaming, and my mother would shout, "God! Take her to You and release me!" But now, as I saw my sister reveal those things we'd discovered on the path of life wherever we found a foothold for ourselves, I couldn't stop myself laughing and laughing until my eyes and heart were drowned in tears.

And so I came closer to being realistic. I no longer thought of divorce as a solution to my problem; in fact divorce was a great source of fear, equaled only by my fear of marriage. For what could I do without the marriage? Years of my life had passed without my having any other profession except marriage, and even this I hadn't mastered according to the rules: I wasn't a fruitful wife who'd filled the house with children, and I wasn't the obedient servant, and I wasn't particularly endowed with beauty, or money, or coquetry. Besides, I wasn't in the least happy. I wasn't happy in my wretchedness, or in my husband's humiliation of me, or in his own self-reproach when he felt ashamed of himself and wanted to change. I wasn't happy in my present state, or happy contemplating the future. The present was a continuation of the past and the future was a continuation of the present. What would I do, in any

case, if I got divorced? Where would I live and how? Father was dead, and Mother was old now, living with my older brother. My sister-in-law was hot-tempered and irritable as a reaction to my own brother's temper and irritability. My other brothers were no better, and nor were their wives. Each one, in fact, had his own responsibilities and burdens, just as he had his own "wise and correct" outlook on things I considered pointless. They were so intent and fixed on these things that they had no time to think about anything else. Whenever one of them saw me reading a newspaper or a book, he'd smile and say, "There's our philosopher again!" And I, for my part, would retort, "There's our empty vessel again!" I'd say it silently, with the expression in my eyes. But since the language of the eyes is well-known and easily understood, they always knew exactly what I meant.

So I ended up being realistic and unrealistic at once. Realistic because I knew divorce wouldn't bring any solution, and unrealistic because the thought of it haunted me night and day, in my dreams and in my prayers. Realistic because I kept my house spotless so as not to give him the least excuse to take any final action against me, and unrealistic because (for all his suspicions about me) I remained faithful and solitary. But I wasn't really solitary. I had my cat, Anbar, the sink, the dishes, the kitchen knife, and the clothes lines.

—translated by Salwa Jabsbeh and Christopher Tingley

Appendix (2)

نفايات

كنت أعرف أنه طماع . كنت أرى طمعه الكثير في عينيه . تنظران إليك وكأنما تسألانك شيئا ما باستمرار ، بالحاح ، بوقاحة متناهية . ما رأيت مثلهما عيتين تلتهمان كل شيء . تلتهمان خبزة تأكلها ، وهواء تستنشقه ، وحذاء تتعله . تلتهمان الرجوه ، والسماء ، والماء ، وحجارة الطريق ، وزهر الحدائق ، كل شيء حتى النفايات ...

يأتي في الصباح الباكر ، بدق الباب بقبضته ، ويتعامى عن الحرس الكهربائي فلا يضغطه أبدا . هكذا .. بقبضة يده دائما بدق الباب دقا . انه لا يطرقه بلطف ، ولا ينقر عليه باصبع او باصبعين ، ويتعامى دائما عن الحرس الكهربائي . يضع وقاحته كلها في قبضته ويدق حتى أخرج له بصندوق اللقمامه فيتناوله دون أن يفوه بكلمة ، حتى تحية الصباح لا يلقها . وأعود أنا فأغلق الباب وأدعه وشأنه مع صندوق النفايات . ومرة حدثتني نفسي أن أرى ما يفعله . أتراه يفرغ الصندوق في الكيس الكبير ومعضي ؟ كلاً . أبدا . إنه يروح يتفحصه ، وينبشه بأصابع يديه اللتين ، وبعينه الطماعتين . ويظل ينش ويبحث باهتمام وبهمة غريبة . وأحيانا يصع في جيبه شيئا ما يجده بين النفايات والأقدار . وعشا حاولت ان أعرف هذا الشيء . وكنت اكراه ان تلتقي عيني بعينه ، لأنني أحس أنه يكاد يلتهمني عندئذ: بضوب إلي نظره جامدة، نظرة تريد دائما شيئا ما . كأنها تأمرك بأن تمد يدك إلى جيبك وتستخرج هذا الشيء وتدفعه له .

حدث أن أعطيته قطعة نقود مرة ، وبعدها ازدادت نظراته إلحاحا وتوغلا . وأعطيته مرة

أخرى ، وثالثة ، ثم أحسست أنه غدا يستفيد من الموقف بلؤم ، غدا يستغلني . ربما أدرك أنني لا أطيق نظراته . ربما خيل إلي أنه أخشاهما . قلت في نفسي : لا ... لا يمكن .. لن أعطيه شيئا بعد اليوم .

ومع ذلك بقيت أتهرّب من نظراته ، وجعلت أرقبه من النافذة خلصة دون أن يراني فألمحه يسير متقلّقا ، مرتجّا ، وعبّوه على ظهره ، ولكن عينيه الملتهمتين الطمّاعتين تحمّلان في كل شيء ، حتى في حجارة الطريق . انه طماع طماع كبير . ومضت أيام كثيرة وأنا لا أفنك أسئلة نفسي : ماذا تراه يجد ، وعم تراه يبحث في صناديق النفايات ؟ وهذا الشيء الذي كان يدسه في جيبه ، دون أن أتبينه ، ما هو ؟ كسرة خبز يابسة ؟ بقايا من مربى في علبة ؟ قطعة جبن فاسدة ؟ شيء من لحم محفوظ ؟ نصف برتقالة ملقاة ؟ لا ، لا شيء من هذا على الإطلاق . ما حاجته إليه ؟ ان أحدا لم يمت جوعا بعد . مرة واحدة استضعت أن ألمح هذا الذي يبحث عنه ويجده أحيانا ويسارع فيغيبه في جيبه . كان قد نبش النفايات والنفاذورات طويلا ، حتى تصبّ عرقه في ذلك اليوم الذي اختنق هواؤه ، ثم امسكت أصابعه بهذا الشيء .. اطبقت عليه كأنها كلابة . وبخفة عجيبة دسه في جيب بنطاله الثرث ، ثم راح يجفّف عرقه المتصبّب بطرف حطّته الممزّقة ، ومسح شاربيه المتهندين براحة يده ، وزم شفّتيه ، وتلمّظ كأنه قد تناول ، من توه ، قطعة من الحلوى . وكان هذا الشيء الذي لمحه في يده : ملعقة صغيرة من ملاعق الشاي . ضمعا فهو يجد ملعقة في يوم ، وشوكة طعام في يوم آخر ، وسكين في يوم ثالث ، وأشباه كثيرة مماثلة كل يوم ، كل يوم ... وفي البيوت أطفال ، وخدم ، وسنات لاهيات .. والأطفال والخدم والسنات يلقون أشياء البيت هكذا بلا مبالاة . ومع فضلات الطعام ، ومع النفايات تذهب الملائق ، والشوك ، والسكاكين ، وربما الصحون ، والأطباق والفناجين وغيرها . وغيرها ، فيجمعها هو ، يبحث عنها بحذق ، ينش النفايات والفضلات وقشر الخضرة والفاكهة بمهارة الخبير الماهر المتدرب فلا تخطئها يده أبدا . انه لا يفض يديه من القمامة والنفايات الأبد ان يستوثق ، ويطمئن إلى إن ليس فيها شيء . أو لم يبق شيء ما يبحث عنه .

شاهدته مرة يلتقط شيئا عن جانب الطريق . انزل العبء عن كتفه . حصّه على الأرض كمن يلقيه بكرامة وحقد دفين . ثم انحنى قليلا ، وانحنى كثيرا ، وانثقل هذا الشيء : قطعة نقود .. قرش .. خمسة قروش .. من يدري ؟ التمع في كفه هنيهة ثم ألقاه في جيب بنطاله المهلهل . واستراح لحظات . جلس نصف جلسة فوق قمة كيس القمامة الكبير ، وعاد فجفّف جيبه ، بطرف حطّته ، ومسح شاربيه براحة يده ، وتلمّظ ... ماذا تراه يفعل ذلك كلّما وجد شيئا ؟ غيمة .. أليس كذلك ؟ خيل إلي أن القط يفعل هذا أيضا ، بعد أن يخطف قطعة لحم أو فخذ دجاجة ويأكلها نهشا بأنياه بروح يتلمّظ هكذا ، ويدور بلسانه حول شفّتيه مستمرنا مسرورا . انه يفعل هذا بدون شك . اما هو ، ذلك الزبال الصفيق ، فانه يزيد على ذلك فيمسح شاربيه براحة يده ، كأنه يشني على نفسه ، ويطمئننا بأن الغنائم لن تنفذ أبدا ..

كنت أعرف ، منذ أمد طويل ، أنه طماع . ثم غدوت أتصوره ، وقد جمع أكواما من ملاعق وشوك وسكاكين واطباق وأدوات أخرى شتى ، وهو يبيعها ويتجر بها ولا شك . تجارة سهلة ، وبيع ، وبيع .. ربح .. ربح ... اراهن أنه لم يستثمر الندم قط ، واقسم أنه يخون ويفدد ويأخذ ما ليس له فيه حق بكل ارتياح . اشتيت ولو مرة واحدة في العمر أن يطرق الباب ، دون صفاقة ، ويقول : «وجدت هذا .. في صندوق الزبالة» ، لو فعل لرثيت له ، لأحسست أنه يتمب ويأكل خبزه مغموسا بعرق جبينه ، ولكنك خليقا أن أساعده ، واعطف عليه ، وأمنحه قطعة صغيرة من نقود بين حين وآخر . ولكن لا .. مستحيل . طماع هذا الرجل . وذو تجارة . وغنايمه لا تنفد ... لا تنفد .. وفوق هذا كله ما أوقح نظراته التي تلتهمك ، وتهبط إلى اعماقك . ولن أنسى أنه يخبط الباب بقبضته الصلبة . انها تقنحم علينا هدوءنا وصفاءنا . ولماذا تراه يتعاصى عن الجرس الكهربائي فلا يضغظ زره أبدا ؟

وارتديت ملابسى . كانت الساعة قد تجاوزت التاسعة صباحا . ولما صرت في الشارع خطر لي أن أدور ببيصري هنا وهناك ، وأحملك في الأرض ، والحجارة ، في كل شيء ، فقد أجد هذه القروش التي يجدها هو . اين هي ؟ اين تراه يجدها ؟ انه يذكرني بالحواة الذين يستخرجون الحيات والأفاعي من الشقوق وأكوام الحجارة . مضيت ، مضيت ، فانا لا احب أن أتأخر عن صديقي «ابو محمد» . في هذه الساعة نجلس معا نشرب فنجان قهوة ، ويسرني منظره وهو يستل أنفاسا مديدة من نرجيلته ، ولا يفتأ يقدم لي سيكارة ، ثم اخرى ، ثم ثالثة من سكاثر فاخرة يدخرها لاصدقائه . ابو محمد رجل محترم . تاجر محترم . صديق محترم . لا يمكن ان يدخل على ماله قرشا واحدا غير حلال . هذا الرزق الحلال يستأثر باعجابي حقا . ويعجبني اكثر من هذا ذكازه . رجل ابن صنعة . ولو لم يكن كذلك لما استطاع أن يجد لكفنيه متسعا في الزحام ، ولما استطاع ان تكون له في تجارة الجملة قدم راسخة ، ينفث دخان نارجيلته هكذا بهدوء وثقة بالنفس ، ويكتب لك «الفاتورة» متأنيا كأنه يقوم باخطر مهمة في حياته ، ثم يأمر أحد أجراءه أن يهيء لك هذا الكيس ، وذاك الشوال . وتدفع له الحساب مطمئنا ولسان حالك يقول : «ابو محمد رجل محترم» وحتى يوم فقد التيباك المعجمي من السوق لم تنفج الأزمة إلا على يديه هو... رمى في الأسواق ما اخترته منه . وجاءه الربح الحلال يسعى اليه جاراً أذباله . يومها قلت له :

- من كان يظن أن هذا سيحدث ؟ حصافتك أنقذت السوق .. وأجابني على استحياء...

- استغفر الله .. استغفر الله .. كأن الأمر مجرد مصادفة لا أكثر ولا أقل .

هؤلاء الرجال ما أبرعهم . خذ ، مثلا صديقي الآخر «ابو الياس» الكومسيونجي . رأس ماله : قلم وورق ولغة أجنبية يجيدها . انني لا أراه الا مكبا يكتب رسائله أو على الأصح يدقها على الآلة الكتابة دقا ويرسلها إلى الخارج . وتأتيه عينات من معلبات ، وعلطور ، واقلام ، وادوات مطابخ ، وجوارب ، ومناديل ، وربطات عنق ، وأمشاط ، ودبايس ، ومعاجين أسنان ،

ومعاجين حلقة ، وكريمات تطرية للسننات ، ونحف ، ولطائف ، وحملات مفاتيح ، وسفريات حلقة ... اشياء كثيرة لا أول لها ولا آخر يمتليء بها مستودعه ، ولا ينفك يبيع منها ويبيع ، ويأتيه غيرها ، وغيرها ... وانها لكافية ، بل فوق الكفاية .

تدخل بيته فينشرح صدره . جمع قرشا فوق قرش ، وبني هذه الدارة الانيقة . قال لي يوما ونحن نشرب الشاي في ركن من حدائقه المنسقة :

- البساطة هي سر الجمال

واعجبت أنا بهذه البساطة ، فهي واضحة في كل شيء .. حتى في هذه المقاعد الوثيرة التي اوصى عليها من ايطاليا . تجلس علي أحدها فيخيل إليك أنك تفوس فيها مرتاحا منتشيا كأنك في عالم الأحلام . وانت واجد هذه البساطة في الحديقة وممراتها المروشة ، واحواضها التيحتشد فيها الزهر اشكالاً والوانا ، وفي هذه النوافير الرشيقة تمج الماء حلقات ودوائر وسهاما منطلقة لا تلبث أن تنكسر ، وتهاوى قطرا يتفقا فوق مرمر وخام ... هذه البساطة اخذت بمجامع قلبي ، وذكرتني بذكاء صديقي ، وذكرتني بانكيا به المستمر على عمله ، وتعبه الدائم وجلوسه ساعات طوالا في مستودعه يتلقى الطلبات هاتفيا ، ثم يأمر فتلف تشكيليلة من العينات وترسل على جناح السرعة إلى طالبها . اهداني مرة ربطة عنق من باريس . قلت :

- ادفع ثمنها .. لا أريدك ان تخسر ..

قال :

- ولو .. انت صديق وما خسارة دينار إذا أرضتكَ ؟

هؤلاء رجال لا يلتهمونك بعيونهم ، ولا يهبطون إلى اعماقك ، ولا يقرعون باب بيتك بقبضاتهم . وحسبك منهم هذه الابتسامات اللطيفة ، وهذا الكلام الحلو ، والجلسات الممتعة ، والحديث المفيد ، والاخلاص الذي لا ريب فيه . وانا لولا إخلاص صديقي أبي الياس لذهب مالي لقمة سائغة في فم الفتى السفه : ابن اخي ...

مات ابوه . وقمت أنا على تعلميه ورعايته . وقال لي ابو الياس يوما :

- ومن يضمن لك أن يرد عليك بعض ما تنفقه عليه ؟

وافقت ، ساعثذ ، من غفلتي . وسألته :

- وبماذا تشير

قال :

- دعه على الأقل يوقع لك توكيلا بأرضه التي ورثها في جبل عمان .. انها كما قلت لي

مرة ، بضعة دونمات مربحة ...

توكيل ؟

- اجل . ضمان لمالك . أستغفر الله .. هو ابن أخيك ، وانت عمه .. ولكن في الدنيا ...

- موت وحياة ...

- اذن فهذا التوكيل أمان لك ..

ورقع الفتى توكيلا عاما، شاملا ، مطلقا ... وانفقت أنا عليه من حر مالي طوال ستين
كاملتين . ولما اشتد عوده واستطاع أن يدبر أمره على نحو ما أشاح بوجهه ، ولم يعترف بحق
او مال . واستعدى عليّ أصدقائي ، وطالب بالأرض ، وقال له ابو إلياس :

- عملك عيب ...

وقال له ابو محمد :

- عملك مكان والدك ...

المهم : ولد عاق . جحود . لم تنفعه الدعوي والمحاكم . وانا لولا نصيحة صديقي
لأكلني .. وإنه والله لطماع ، وإن له لعينين وقحتين ، نظراتهما مسامير تدق في صدرك . وما
لامست أصابعه يدي إلا ارتجفت وخيل إلي أنها لا عمل لها إلا أن تنبش باحثة عن شيء ما عن
سري ما ، عن غنيمة ما ، ومن ورائها عيناه الجارحتان ، الملحتان ، المتلصصتان ، أعوذ بالله ...
شد ما كفر بنعمتي وجحد حقوقي عليه . أف ... أف ... لعنة الله عليه ما اشبهه بذلك الزبال
الباحث أبدا في النفايات والفضلات والأقذار ، لعنة الله هو الآخر ، لقد أفسد عليّ يومي ،
وسأريه منذ الغد ، سأطرده ، لن أخشى عينيه الجامدتين ، ولا قبضته القذرة تفرع بابي ، سأقول
له إنه لص ، حرامي ، يسرق ملاعق الناس وشوكهم وسكاكينهم وأطباقهم ... سأقول له
بصراحة أنني رأيت كيف تنبش أصابعه الثعبانية صناديق القمامة وتستخرج أكواما من ملاعق،
وأكواما من شوك ، وأكواما من سكاكين وأكواما من أطباق تتكدس كلها في بيته ولا ينفك
يبيع منها ويبيع . ويضع في جيبه مالي ومال الآخرين غنيمة باردة ... هكذا دون خوف، دون
مبالاة ، بصفاة نادرة . اجل ... منذ الغد ... سأركله ركلا ... سأطرده ... ولن أعود أرى
عينيه الملتهميتين ... الجائعتين ... ولا أصابعه الثعبانية التي تنبش ، وتنبش ، ولا تشيع ابدا..
ولكن .. ولكن ... والله لن أخشى قبضته ...

Garbage

I knew he was greedy; it was reflected in his eyes. He would look at you with a questioning stare, with a persistent inquisitiveness, replete with utter impudence.

I have never seen such eyes before, relentless in their consuming focus, devouring the bread you eat, the air you breathe, and even the shoes you wear. Eyes that swallow faces, skies, water, cobblestones, flowers, everything, even the garbage.

He arrives early in the morning, and knocks on the door with his fist, completely ignoring the electric doorbell. He doesn't think of tapping lightly on the door. Thumps are always his way of announcing himself, as if the electric doorbell never existed. He impacts his impudence into his fist and thumps on the door till I come out to him with the garbage can, and he takes it away surlily, without offering so much as a good morning. I then close the door, leaving him alone with the garbage can.

Once my curiosity was such that I was compelled to watch his movements. Would he simply empty the contents of the can into the large sack and go away? He didn't! He carefully examined them, sifting through them with his fingers, all the time peering with his omnivorous eyes.

He would rummage curiously through the garbage until he found

something, which he would then place in his pocket. However, I have never succeeded in learning what sort of thing he retrieved from the rubbish. Most of all, I disliked making contact with his eyes; they completely overpowered one's defenses and trapped one in their web. It was as if those eyes always demanded something of you..

Once I did give him a coin. His gaze thereafter grew more insolent, more penetrating. And after I gave him money for the second and third times, I realized he had come to exploit the situation most vilely. Perhaps he knew intuitively that I could not withstand his stare, and that, in all possibility, I was afraid of it.

After a time I realized my error in offering him money. I took to avoiding any eye-to-eye contact and watched him discreetly from behind the window without his being aware of me. I would follow his movements with my eyes; that slow walk of his, with the sack slung over his back, his greedy eyes researching each detail of the road, missing nothing. I became obsessed with his perverse behavior and kept asking myself what it was he could be looking for amongst garbage, and what was the nature of the thing he invariably slipped into his pocket?

Could it be a piece of dry bread? I asked myself, or some jam left in the bottom of a jar? Perhaps a piece of rotting cheese or of canned meat? I wondered whether it was a partially eaten orange. And then again, I reasoned, what would be his purpose in extracting these things? It couldn't be that he was starving. But on one occasion I was able to get a clearer glimpse of the object of his search which he pocketed with such adroit cunning. He had searched through the garbage at some length that day, and because there was so little wind, he began to perspire profusely. Then I saw his fingers fasten like a clamp over something; and with surprising agility, he succeeded in conveying it to the pocket of his ragged pants. He then stood there and wiped the runnels of perspiration from his forehead with the tail of his tattered headcover. After that he wiped his moustache with the palm of his hand. He tightened his lips and licked them as though he relished the salt taste of his sweat. What I managed to glimpse him take was a small teaspoon. Of course, he must make similar discoveries every day. Perhaps the occasional spoon, a fork, a knife, and other miscellaneous ephemera. Children, servants, careless women, any or all of these could account for the negligence on which he preyed. For if the remains of food are deposited in the garbage, so it must be that items of cutlery and plates and saucers must follow in like fashion. And he had made it his business to unearth these things, searching through the remains of fruit and

vegetables with the accomplished skill of an expert in such matters. He is careful to unpiece everything, and to be sure he discards nothing of value.

I once saw him pick up an object from the side of the road. He dropped the load from his shoulder, and placed it on the ground at a distance, as though he resented its existence. He then bent down by slow degrees and picked up the object. It was a coin, a piaster . . . five piasters . . . who knows? It glistened as he studied it in the palm of his hand, before slipping it into his ragged trouser pocket. He rested for a few seconds, sitting on top of the large garbage bag, and then repeated the same actions of drying off his forehead with the tail of his head cover, wiping his moustache with his hand, and licking his lips. It fascinated me why he should act out this ritual whenever he had made a discovery. Then it occurred to me that a cat does the same thing after stealing a piece of meat or a chicken's leg. Once it has torn the flesh apart and eaten, it proceeds to lick its lips as a mark of satisfaction. But, our insolent dustman adds to it by wiping his moustache with the palm of his hand, as though congratulating himself and delighting in the prospect that there is no end to this spoil.

I realized a long time ago that he was greedy. I imagined that he collected knives, forks, spoons, and plates in order to sell them. It seemed an easy and profitable trade, and one about which I was sure he felt no shame. The parasitical instinct within him must have condoned his actions.

I longed for a day when he would knock on the door and, without impudence, say: "I found this in your garbage." Had he done so, then I would have felt sorry for him. I would have recognized that he worked with honesty, and that the food he got was soaked with the sweat of his labor. I would have recognized, moreover, that it was my duty to help him every now and then with a small tip. But this was impossible. His avarice stood in the way, that and his determination to make a business out of what he found. There was no end to his pickings and he knew it. Yet above all I resented his devouring glances which sank into the depths of one's being. And there was my other grievance which I've had occasion to mention—the way he maintained no respect for privacy and thumped on the door with his naked fist, completely ignoring the electric doorbell.

I got dressed since it was past nine o'clock in the morning. When I went out into the street, it occurred to me to look carefully at the ground, the stones, every detail my eye picked up on. It seemed to me

that if I looked hard enough I, too, might find the coins that he pocketed. But where were they? And where did he find them? He reminded me of snake charmers who succeed in conjuring snakes and vipers from cracks and piles of stones.

I quickened my stride; I didn't wish to be late in meeting my friend Abu Muhammad. It was at this hour that we sat down together over a cup of coffee, and it delighted me to watch my friend smoke his water pipe. He never forgot to offer me some of the luxurious cigarettes which he kept especially for his friends. Abu Muhammad is a good man, a respectable trader, and a decent friend. Every piaster he earns, he does so lawfully. I am impressed by his honest earning of money, and even more so by his astute, professional mind. And if he wasn't these things, he would never have been able to make a place for himself amongst such competition, nor earn such a secure reputation in the wholesale business. He puffs quietly at his water pipe and emits an aura of self-confidence. And when he writes you out an invoice, he does so with the meticulousness of one who undertakes the gravest responsibility. He then orders one of his employees to prepare a bag here and a sack there. And when you settle the account and pay him, your mind is completely at rest. You think to yourself: "Abu Muhammad is a respectable man." And even on that day when the Persian tobacco was missing from the market, it was through his efforts that the crisis was solved. He made available what he had stored, and that day he heaped up a handsome, lawful profit. I remember saying to him at the time. "Who would have thought that this would happen? Your sound judgment has saved the market."

"By God no . . . The matter was just a coincidence, no more and no less," he answered me modestly.

How astute these men are! Take, for example, my other friend Abu Elias, who works by commission. His credentials are a pen and paper, and a foreign language that he speaks fluently. Whenever I see him, he is busy writing letters or, rather, typing them on his typewriter to send abroad. And in return he receives samples of canned food, perfumes, pens, kitchen utensils, socks, handkerchiefs, ties, combs, pins, all kinds of toothpaste, shaving creams and ladies' skin-care creams, keychains, razors, objets d'art, and a multitude of items that go to fill up his warehouse. There's a constant demand for these products, and his profit is reflected through his busy trade.

When you enter his house you feel immediately relaxed. His home is beautiful, built from the profits of his work. Once, as we were sitting

Mahmoud Sayf al-Din al-Irani

in one of the corners of his neatly arranged garden and drinking tea he said to me, "Simplicity is the secret of beauty."

This concept of simplicity impressed me deeply; it was apparent everywhere in his house, even in the luxurious armchairs he had ordered from Italy. These chairs are so comfortable that you literally sink into them, and correspondingly feel elated, caught up in a world of dreams. And you find this simplicity in the garden, with its vined paths, its flower beds shimmering with color and fragrance, and its luxurious fountains that arrow upwards and descend in a rain of droplets on the surface of the marbled pool. This idea of simplicity completely overwhelmed me, reminding me of my friend's particular cleverness and of his persistent hard work in the warehouse, where he sits taking orders by telephone, and then arranging for samples to be packed and dispatched immediately to prospective clients. He once presented me with a necktie, imported from Paris, and when I offered to pay him for the article, he expressed surprise, saying, "What? Surely the loss of a dinar is nothing compared to pleasing a friend!"

These are men who don't devour one with their eyes, or penetrate one's depths with their stare, or knock on the door with a heavy fist beat. These are the men who impress by their gentle smiles, their kind words, their enjoyable company, their fine conversation, and unconditional loyalty. And if it wasn't for Abu Elias's friendship, my money would have been taken in front of my eyes by my pernicious nephew.

After his father had died, I took it on myself to educate and look after my nephew. One day Abu Elias said to me, "And what guarantee do you have that your nephew will repay even some of the money you are spending on him?"

The question startled me into an awareness I should have realized right from the start.

"What do you suggest?" I ventured.

"Get him to sign a power of attorney in your favor for the land he inherited in Jabal Amman. It is, as you once told me, a quite valuable piece of land."

"An authorization?"

"Yes. It is a guarantee for your expenditure. I know he is your nephew and you are his uncle, but in this world there is . . ."

"Life and death."

"Exactly. This document is simply your guarantee . . ."

And so the boy agreed to sign a power of attorney, and I maintained him for the next two years. But when he felt able to take care of himself,

he turned his back on me and refused to acknowledge my claim to compensation. He endeavored to turn my friends against me and requested his inheritance. Abu Elias told him, "You should be ashamed; he is your uncle." And Abu Muhammad reinforced this by saying to him, "This is your uncle, you should treat him like a father." But he was an ill-mannered and ungrateful boy. The court hearings did him no good. And if it hadn't been for a friend's advice, I can see he would have bankrupted me. He is avaricious and has impudent eyes. When they look at you, they are like nails being hammered into your chest. Whenever his fingers touch my hands I shiver, for it seems that their one obsession is to incessantly search for something, some secret, or some gain. I take refuge in God. But it's not easy to forget such ingratitude and such calculated malice in refusing to recognize my legal rights. Damn him, I think, and how closely he resembles that garbage man who is forever searching through litter. God damn that one as well. He has spoiled my day. But starting tomorrow, I'll show him. Yes, I'll clear him out of the place, make no mistake. I won't fear his eyes nor that dirty fist which pounds on my door. I will tell him that he is a thief, stealing people's knives, forks, spoons, and plates. I will expose him for stacking up stolen possessions in his house and selling them. And that unlawful money goes into his pocket, an easy profit made out of the likes of you and me. He feels neither fear nor guilt. Such impudence. Yes, as from tomorrow I will boot him out. I will expel him, and I will no longer have to tolerate his devouring, hungry eyes, nor his snake-like fingers that are forever unsatisfied in their rummaging. And my God I will not fear his fist.

—translated by Salwa Jabshah and Jeremy Reed

Appendix (3)

-١-

سعيد يدعي التقاء
مخلوقات من الفضاء
السحيق

كتب الي سعيد أبو النحس المتشائل، قال:
ابلع عني أعجب ما وقع لإنسان منذُ عصا موسى وقيامه
عيسى وانتخاب زوج* الليدي بيرد رئيساً على الولايات
المتحدة الامريكية.

أما بعد، فقد اختفيت، ولكنني لم أمت. ما قتلت على
حدود كما توهم ناس منكم، وما انضممت الي فدائين كما
توجس عارفو فضلي. ولا أنا أتعفن منسياً في زنزانة كما
تَقُولُ أصحابك.

صبراً، صبراً، ولا تتساعل: من هو سعيد ابو النحس
المتشائل هذا؟ لم ينبه في حياته فكيف تنبه له؟
انني ادرك حطتي، وانني لست زعيمًا فيحس بي
الزعماء. ولكن، يا محترم. أنا هو الندل*!

ألم تضحك من الاضحوكة الاسرائيلية عن السبع الذي
تسرب الي مكاتب اللجنة التنفيذية*؟ ففي اليوم الأول

* - المقصود الرئيس جونسون.

* - الخادم الذي يقدم الطعام والشراب.

* - اللجنة التنفيذية للهستدروت.

افترس مدير التنظيم النقابي، فلم ينتبه زملاؤه.. وفي اليوم
الثاني افترس مدير الدائرة العربية فلم يفتقده الباقون.
فظلّ السبع يمرح مطمئناً ويفترس مريئاً حتى أتى على نذل
السفرة، فأمسكوه.

أنا النذل، يا محترم، فكيف لم تنتبه بهوا على
اختفائي؟

لا هم، فالأهم ان اختفائي جاء في أمر عجب ترقبت
وقوعه طول العمر. وقعت العجيبة يا معلم والتقيت مخلوقات
هبطت علينا من الفضاء السحيق وأناذا موجود الآن في
المعية. وأناذا أكتب اليك بسري العجيب هذا وأنا معلق فوق
رؤوسكم.

اياك والريبة، وقولك ان عصر العجائب قد ولى. فما
دهاك، يا معلمي، حتى صرت تعكس الأمور؟

أما والذين أنا في كنفهم فإنّ عصرنا هذا لهو من أعجب
العصور، منذ عاد وشمود، الا اننا الفنا هذه العجائب. فلو
قام اسلافنا، واستمعوا الى الراديو، وشاهدوا التلفزيون،
ورأوا طائرة الجامبو وهي تهبط في ليل المطار الدامس،
تنش وتقصف، لأشركونا.

ولكننا تعودنا. فلم نعد نجد في خلع الملوك
خارقاً ولا في بقائهم. فبروتس لم يعد أمراً فذاً
تكتب الروايات عنه: حتى أنت يا بروتس؟ ولا
تقول العرب: حتى أنت يا بيبرس! وذلك ان السلطان

قطز* لم يخرج من فيه سوى حشرجة تركية. وما زال أبو
زيد الهلالي يكب على الأيدي تقبيلًا، فلا يتطير السلطان.
لست قطزًا - يقول الملك. ولا زمني زمان البيرسة - يقول
عبده.

والقمر أصبح أقرب علينا من تينتنا القمراء* في قرينتنا
الثكلي. وسلمتم بكل هذه العجائب، فكيف تنكرون علي
عجيبتي؟

مهلاً، مهلاً، ولا تتعجل الشرح، يا معلم. كل شيء في
وقته يعسل. فاذهب بسلامتك ولا تماحكني في شكهم، وفي
لباسهم، وفي نظامهم، وفي علومهم. اني أقهقه في
وجوهكم: لقد أصبحت أعلم ما لا تعلمون فكيف لا
أبتغدر؟

أما كيف اختاروني من دون خلق الله أجمعين، فلست
متيقناً أنني الوحيد الذي التقاهم. وحين استنصحتهم في

* - قطز السلطان المملوكي الذي وقعت في عهده وقعة عين
جالوت. بالقرب من الناصرة. وهي الوقعة الشهيرة التي أوقفت زحف
هولاكو التنري. وكان بيبرس قائد هذه الوقعة خت أمرة قطز. فأبلى بلاءً
حسناً. فتوقع أن يقطعه قطز مدينة حلب. ولكن قطز خيب أمه. فتأمر
بيبرس وزميل له على حياة قطز. فأكب زميله على يد السلطان بقبلها.
فأهوى بيبرس على عنق السلطان بالسيف فقتله وقعد مكانه. وذلك في
سنة ١٢١١م.

* - التي يتأخر ابناء ثمرها.

اطلاعتك على ما وقع لي، كي يعلم العالم، تبسموا وقالوا لا
 بأس. ولكن العالم لن يعلم. وصاحبك لن يصدقك، فليس كل
 ما يهبط من السماء حياً. وهذه من عجائبكم!
 قد لا أكون الوحيد الذي اختاروه. ولكنني، وحقك، مختار
 من المخاتير. وأنت أيضاً، يا معلم أصبحت مختاراً. فأنا
 أختيرتك لتروي عني أعجب عجيبة، فتمط عجباً!
 كيف اختاروني؟ لأنني اخترتهم. ظلت طول العمر أبحث
 عنهم، وانتظرهم، وأعوذ بهم، حتى لا مندوحة.
 عجيبة؟ لا بأس. كان أسلافنا في الجاهلية يصنعون
 ألهمهم من التمر، حتى إذا جاعوا أكلوها. فمن الجاهلي يا
 معلم، أنا أم أكلة ألهمهم؟
 ستقول: لأن يأكل الناس ألهمهم خيراً من أن تأكلهم
 الآلهة.
 فارد عليك: ان ألهمهم كانت من التمر!

-٢-

سعيد يعلن أن حياته في
اسرائيل كانت
فضلة حمار!

لنبدأ من البداية كانت حياتي كلها عجيبة. والحياة
العجيبة لا تنتهي الا بهذه النهاية العجيبة. حين سألت
صاحبي الفضائي: كيف أويتموني؟ قال: هل لديك من بديل؟
فمتى كانت البداية؟
كانت البداية حين ولدت مرة اخرى بفضل
حمار.

ففي الحوادث كمنوا لنا واطلقوا الرصاص علينا.
فصرعوا والدي، رحمة الله عليه. اما انا فوقع بيني وبينهم
حمار سائب، فجندلوه. فنفق عوضا عني. ان حياتي، التي
عشتها في اسرائيل بعد، هي فضلة هذه الدابة المسكينة.
فكيف علينا ان نقوم حياتي يا استاذ؟
غير انني اراني انسانا فذا. ألم تقرأ عن كلاب لعقت
الماء المشبع بالسم، فماتت، لتنبه اسيادها ولتنقذ حياتهم؟
وعن الخيول التي فرت بفرسانها الجرحى، تعدو سوابق
ريح، فأنفقها الاجهاد بعد ان بلغت بهم مضارب الامان؟
أما أنا فأول انسان، على ما اعهد، انقذه حمار محرن لا

يسابق ريحا ولا يبغم. فانا انسان فذ. وقد يكون الفضائيون
اختروني على ذلك.

علمني، بحياتك، الانسان الفذ من يكون؟ أهو الذي
يختلف عن الآخرين، أم هو الواحد من هؤلاء الآخرين؟
قلت أنك لم تحس بي أبدا، ذلك انك بليد الحس يا
محترم. فكم من مرة التقيت اسمي في امهات الصحف؟ ألم
تقرأ عن المثات الذين حبستهم شرطة حيفا في ساحة
الحناطير (باريس حاليا) يوم انفجار البطيخة؟ كل عربي
ساب في حيفا السفلى على الاثر حبسوه، من راجل ومن
راكب. وذكرت الصحف اسماء الوجهاء الذي حبسوا سهوا،
وأخرين.

آخرون- هؤلاء انا. الصحف لا تسهو عني. فكيف تزعم
أنك لم تسمع بي؟ اني انسان فذ. فلا تستطيع صحيفة ذات
اطلاع، وذات مصادر، وذات اعلانات. وذات ذوات، وذات
قرون، ان تهملني. ان معشري يملأون البيدر والدسكرة
والمخمرة. انا الآخرون. أنا فذ!

One:

Saeed Claims to Have Met Creatures from Outer Space

In his letter to me, Saeed, the ill-fated Pessoptimist, pleaded: "Please tell my story. It is surely as weird as the story of Moses's staff, the resurrection of Jesus, and the election of the husband of a lady bird to the presidency of the United States.

The fact is I've disappeared, but I'm not dead. I wasn't killed at the border, as some of you imagined. Nor did I join the guerrilla movement, as those who knew my virtue feared. Nor am I rotting long-forgotten in some jail, as your friends may suppose.

Now, now! Patience, please! And don't ask, "Who is this 'Saeed' fellow?" Or, "Since he drew no attention throughout his life, why should we give him any now?"

All right, I know my place. I'm not one of your so-called leaders, someone thought worthy of notice by an élite. What I am, my dear sir, is—the office boy.

Didn't you just break up at that Israeli joke about the lion that sneaked inside the offices of the executive committee of the *Histadru*, the Labor Union Confederation? First day it ate the director of union organization, but not one of his colleagues noticed. Next day it devoured the director of Arab affairs, but the rest didn't miss him.

So the lion went on roving happily about, munching contentedly. Finally it ate the office boy, and then they caught it right away.

Yep, I'm that office boy, honored friend. So why didn't you notice I'd gone?

No problem. What matters is that my disappearance, for all its weirdness, was something I'd been expecting all my life. Anyway, the miracle did occur, fine sir, and I did indeed meet with creatures from outer space. I'm in their company right now. As I write to you of my fantastic mystery, I'm soaring with them high above you.

Now don't be a skeptic. Don't say the Age of Miracles is past. What makes you always get things upside down?

By those heavenly hosts with whom I abide, I swear this age has got to be the strangest since the destruction of those errant ancestors of ours, the peoples of Aad and Thamood. But we're used to the wonders of today. Why, if our forebears were to arise and hear the radio, see television, and witness a jumbo jet landing at an airport, spitting and roaring in the pitch-black night, they would think us polytheists for sure.

But we're used to these wonders. We don't raise an eyebrow if kings are deposed or if they stay. Brutus is no big deal now, no subject worth writing about. "Et tu Brute," indeed! The Arabs certainly don't say, "Et tu Baybars"; Qutuz, the sultan this hero Baybars murdered, could only, after all, mutter a grunt in Turkish. And now our great hero Abu Zaid El-Hilaly bends to kiss royal hands. But the sultans have no cause for concern. "I'm no Qutuz," say the kings. And their slaves repeat, "This is no age for Baybars!"

The moon is closer to us now than are the fig trees of our departed village. You accept all these wonders—why not mine too?

Easy there, easy! Don't press me for more details yet. Everything in its own time. Please don't pester me with questions about my companions, how they look, dress, organize, and think. Oh, it all makes me feel so superior! I now know what you don't. Why shouldn't I put on airs?

As for why they chose me alone of all God's creatures—well, I'm not sure I am the only one ever to meet with them. When I asked them what they would think of my informing you of what has happened to me so that the world might know, they just smiled and

said: "We have no objection. But the world won't find out. Your friend won't believe you. You see, all that descends from the sky is not necessarily divinely inspired. This itself is one of your 'miracles.' "

So, although I might not be the only one, I most certainly have been chosen by them. And you too, my fine friend, are chosen as well. I have selected you to relate my weirdest wonder of all. You may well puff with pride.

Why did they choose me? Because I chose them. I spent my whole life searching for them, waiting for them, relying on their protection, until meeting them became inevitable.

You find this peculiar? Never mind. In the so-called Age of Ignorance, before Islam, our ancestors used to form their gods from dates and eat them when in need. Who is more ignorant then, dear sir, I or those who ate their gods?

You might say: "It's better for people to eat their gods than for the gods to eat them."

But I'd respond, "Yes, but their gods were made of dates."

Two:

Saeed Reports How His Life in Israel Was All Due to the Munificence of an Ass

Let's start at the beginning. My whole life has been strange, and a strange life can only end strangely. When I asked my extraterrestrial friend why he took me in, he merely replied, "What alternative did you have?"

So when did it all begin?

When I was born again, thanks to an ass.

During the fighting in 1948 they waylaid us and opened fire, shooting my father, may he rest in peace. I escaped because a stray donkey came into the line of fire and they shot it, so it died in place of me. My subsequent life in Israel, then, was really a gift from that unfortunate beast. What value then, honored sir, should we assign to this life of mine?

I consider myself quite remarkable. You've no doubt read of dogs lapping up poisoned water and dying to warn their masters and save their lives. And of horses, too, racing the wind bearing their wounded riders to safety, only to die of exhaustion themselves. But I'm the first man, to my knowledge, to be saved by a mulish donkey, an animal unable either to race the wind or to bark. I truly am remarkable. That must be why the men from outer space chose me.

Tell me, please do, what makes one truly remarkable? Must

one be different from all the rest or, indeed, be very much one of them?

You said you never noticed me before. That's because you lack sensitivity, my good friend. How very often you have seen my name in the leading newspapers. Didn't you read of the hundreds imprisoned by Haifa police when that melon exploded in Hanatir Square, now Paris Square? Afterwards every Arab they found in Lower Haifa, pedestrian or on wheels, they put in jail. The papers published the names of everyone notable who was caught, but merely gave general reference to the rest.

The rest—yes, that's me! The papers haven't ignored me. How can you claim not to have heard of me? I truly am remarkable. For no paper with wide coverage, having sources, resources, advertisements, celebrity writers, and a reputation, can ignore me. Those like me are everywhere—towns, villages, bars, everywhere. I am “the rest.” I am remarkable indeed!

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