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Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation of American Literary Works into Arabic: Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin as a Case Study

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CHALLENGES OF CROSS-CULTURAL TRANSLATION OF AMERICAN
LITERARY WORKS INTO ARABIC: HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S *UNCLE TOM'S*
CABIN AS A CASE STUDY

A Dissertation

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Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Title: Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation of American Literary Works into Arabic:

Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a Case Study

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This dissertation explores the challenges of cross-cultural translation of American literary works into Arabic which, I argue, have prevented many nineteenth-century literary works from being translated into Arabic. I have used the Arabic translations of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and an abridged English text accompanying one of the translations as a case study. Since most of the Arabic translations of English and especially American literary works are merely linguistic oriented ones, I reinforce the importance of adopting a period-specific cultural-oriented approach that maintains the cultural context of American literary works, including the historical, cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based elements, during the literary translation into the Arabic culture. I start with discussing the internationalization of American works and the importance of a cultural reading of these works. Reviewing many translations of English and American works in general, I categorize the challenges of cross-cultural literary translation from English into Arabic into the following: cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based ones. While I am not calling for accurate cross-cultural literary translations since it is impossible, however, I am advocating for faithful translations which maintain the literary text's cultural and historical contexts. The

accuracy of a literary translation depends on the amount of linguistic skill a translator has while the faithfulness of a literary translation is based upon the translator's sincere effort to include the literary text's entire cultural context including the historical, cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based elements. Using *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a case study, I discuss how the previous challenges had negatively affected the translation process of the work. Despite the fact the work has been translated seven times into Arabic, due to the linguistic-oriented approach, the historical and cultural significance of Stowe's novel has not yet been introduced to Arab readers through translation. Due to the current era of globalization that demands individuals to have multicultural knowledge and understanding and due to the recent cultural and translation projects of literary works from English into Arabic, this dissertation reinforces the importance and possibility of addressing the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges while using *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as an example.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of Content	vii
 CHAPTER ONE	 1
INTERNATIONALIZATION AND CULTURAL READING OF AMERICAN LITERATURE	1
American Studies and the Cultural Shift	2
The Popularity of <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>	3
<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> : Questions of Race and Black Representation	11
International Popularity of <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>	17
 CHAPTER TWO	 28
CHALLENGES OF CROSS-CULTURAL LITERARY TRANSLATION FROM ENGLISH INTO ARABIC.....	28
Literary Translation Theories.....	29
The Shift to a Cultural-Oriented Approach.....	32
Who Should Translate?	38
General Constraints of Cultural-Oriented Literary Translation.....	40
Arabic Language and the Linguistic Focus of Arabic Literature.....	44
Censorship on Literary Production and Translation in the Arab World.....	52
The Cultural Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation from English into Arabic	54
The Religious Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation from English into Arabic	58
The Geopolitical Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation from English into Arabic	60
The Gender-Based Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation from English into Arabic.....	62
Conclusion.....	66

CHAPTER THREE	70
<i>UNCLE TOM'S CABIN: ARABIC TRANSLATIONS AND ACCOMPANYING ENGLISH ABRIDGED TEXT AS A CASE STUDY OF CHALLENGES OF CROSS-CULTURAL LITERARY TRANSLATION FROM ENGLISH INTO ARABIC</i>	70
Arabic Translations of <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>	73
The Analysis of Paratextual Material	77
The Cultural Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation of <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> from English to Arabic	87
Cultural Constraints related to the Translation of Culture-Bound Words.....	87
Cultural Constraints related to the Translation of Cultural, Classic, and Literary Allusions into Arabic	94
Cultural Constraints related to the Translation of Colloquial Dialect	107
The Religious Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation of <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> from English to Arabic.....	115
The Geopolitical Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation of <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> from English to Arabic.....	128
The Gender-Based Challenges facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation of <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> from English into Arabic.....	134
Challenges Related to the Translation into Arabic of Stowe's Use of Sentimentality in <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>	144
Conclusion.....	161
CHAPTER FOUR	163
ADDRESSING THE CULTURAL CHALLENGES FACING THE CROSS-CULTURAL TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH LITERARY TEXTS INTO THE ARABIC CULTURE: <i>UNCLE TOM'S CABIN</i> AS A CASE STUDY	163
The Importance of Multiculturalism in the Global Context	164
Cultural Approaches of Literary Translation	165
Addressing the Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Translation of Literary Texts from English into the Arabic Culture	170
Cultural Translation Projects	172
Arabic Projects for Cultural Translation	174
Addressing Cultural Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Translation of Literary Texts from English into the Arabic Culture.....	181

Addressing Religious Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Translation of Literary Works from English into the Arabic Culture	187
Addressing the Geopolitical Challenges Facing Cross-Cultural Literary Translation from English to Arabic	194
Addressing the Gender-Based Challenges facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation from English to Arabic	202
Conclusion	211
Notes.....	217
Works Cited.....	225

CHAPTER ONE

INTERNATIONALIZATION AND CULTURAL READING OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

Many American literary works have been available to readers in the Arab world through translation. However, the historical and cultural importance of many of these works is rarely noticed by Arab readers. Accordingly, in this dissertation, I explore the reasons that prevented the historical and cultural significance of the work from being acknowledged by the Arab readers. By starting with the literary translation process, I found that it is merely a linguistic-oriented one. Therefore, I locate the challenges of cross-cultural translation of literary works from English into Arabic which I categorize as cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based ones.

To reinforce the importance of shifting from a linguistic-oriented translation approach to a cultural oriented one during the literary translation of English works, especially American ones, in this chapter, I focus on the importance of the cultural reading of American texts, especially on an international scale. I then specifically focus on Harriet Beecher Stowe's antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* since it is one of the main masterpieces in the field of American antebellum literature and culture. Discussing its genre and Stowe's use of sentimentalism, and placing *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the context of slave narratives and other antislavery works, while focusing on issues concerning white supremacy and white/black readership/authorship, I explore the reasons that it became an international bestseller and one of the most famous works in the field of abolition literature and the most widely translated one.

American Studies and the Cultural Shift

J. Hillis Miller, in the “The Triumph of Theory, the Resistance to Reading, and the Question of Material Base,” explains that literary studies have experienced a “universal shift” from language toward “history, culture, society, institutions” (283). American literary studies was one of the main areas that focused on such a shift due to its desire to differ and break from British literary ideology. Furthermore, not only did American literary studies move away from the British ideology, rather it had an ideology of its own that “demanded that American authors be defined in opposition to their European counterparts, to the point that the greater the difference, the greater the claim an author has had to being American” (Kohn, Meer, and Todd xiv). Furthermore, the shift toward history and culture demanded a specific kind of reading and analysis of American literary texts. Indeed, Heinz Ickstadt, in his essay “American Studies in an Age of Globalization,” explains that “American studies emphasized the cultural reading of its primarily literary material” (546). This cultural reading is either through a close cultural analysis of the literary text or through understanding the text’s cultural indication through the analysis of its mythic structure. This kind of cultural reading is crucially important with literary texts that discuss the social and political spheres of the American culture.

In fact, Ickstadt notes that American studies scholars have claimed that some of the American literary masterpieces “expressed the essence of American culture” (547). Other scholars like Sacvan Bercovitch in his work *The Rites of Assent: Transformation in the Symbolic Construction of America* went to the extent of claiming that “America” “was a literary canon that embodied the national promise” (363). According to Bercovitch, the American literary text has been “invested with all the subtleties of

historical process so that history may be understood through the subtleties of literary criticism” (363). Indeed, the American Antebellum culture could be to some extent understood through a cultural reading of the literary texts written at that time. Reading slave narratives and autobiographies including the works of Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs gives readers a glimpse of that period. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is, despite the different debates concerning its faithful depiction of antebellum America and racial presentation of slaves, one of the most widely circulated and translated in comparison to other American antislavery literary works. Stowe wrote the work as a response to the Fugitive Slave law. Through her text she addressed and critiqued the policy makers, religious leaders, and the entire American nation and called on them to initiate social reform where slavery is abolished. Thus, it is important to approach Stowe’s text through a cultural reading to understand its significance in the American culture of the nineteenth century.

The Popularity of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

I do not advocate selecting a literary text for translation based on its popularity, but since many of the translations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* presented Stowe’s work as one of the popular literary texts, I believe that it is important to discuss the text’s popularity both on national and international scales. Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is considered one of the main American literary texts that played a vital role in shaping American history in the area of abolition and resistance against the Fugitive Slave Law. It is true that there are other works, such as Frederick Douglass’s *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845) and Harriet Jacobs’s *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), which were written by those who experienced slavery and

therefore considered themselves responsible for representing their people and are actually more capable of presenting accurate representations as well. However, the genre of a work played a vital role in its popularity; a novel was more likely to be a bestseller than was a narrative, essay, or speech; therefore, Stowe's novel was the most popular anti-slavery work in her time. Furthermore, I believe that the writing process of this novel played a vital role in its popularity. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was first published in the form of a serialized novel of forty-one installments in the *National Era* from June 2, 1851, through April 1, 1852. Consequently, it lived with the readers for almost a year. Susan Belasco in her essay titled "The Writing, Reception and Reputation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" states that "the story unfolded--week by week and episode by episode--in the pages of the *Era* and the author [Stowe] responded to requests from both her private and public audiences to extend and further develop the narrative" (29). Accordingly, Stowe's weekly episodes must have started a conversation among the readers. Sarah Ducksworth in her essay titled "Stowe's Construction of an African Persona and the Creation of Identity for a New World Order" explains that "[f]rom June 3, 1851, through April 2, 1852, her serialized story depicting down-trodden victims of chattel slavery created waves of controversy throughout the country" (206). Indeed, Stowe's novel could have been one of the few factors that encouraged readers to discuss the issue of slavery on a continuous weekly basis. In fact, as antislavery figures, and especially African Americans, commented on Stowe's work the work became more popular. For instance, Langston Hughes in his essay titled "Introduction to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," states that Frederick Douglass initially considered Stowe as a "kindred spirit," and in one of Douglass's letters, he writes that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was

“a flash to light a million camp fires in front of the embattled hosts of slavery” (102). Furthermore, Richard Yarborough in his essay titled “Strategies of Black Characterization in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and the Early Afro-American Novel” states that Douglass explained that he “saw no reason to find fault with well-meant efforts for our benefit” (71). The African American abolitionist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper also praised Stowe and her antislavery novel by writing three poems in response: “Eliza Harris” in 1853, and “To Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe” and “Eva’s Farewell” in 1854. In the first poem, Harper describes Eliza’s escape and miraculous crossing over the Ohio River to save her child from slavery. In a move similar to Stowe’s sentimental appeals, Harper then condemns the institution of slavery that made slave mothers endure harsh paths to rescue their children. In “To Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe,” Harper addresses Stowe and thanks her for pleading for the sake of the slaves and for advocating ending the institution of slavery. In “Eva’s Farewell,” Harper presents the dying little Eva addressing her father and describing the “glory land” that she is departing to and the rewards being arranged for her by the angels waiting for her. Harper’s poems and appreciation for Stowe had a positive significance in terms of reactions of contemporary African Americans to Stowe’s novel. For instance, in praising Stowe and her work, black poet Paul Laurence Dunbar in 1898 wrote a sonnet titled “Prophet and Priestess” where he describes Stowe’s courage to write a novel condemning the institution of slavery

In the same vein, Belasco states that “throughout 1851 and 1852, the ongoing installments of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* were a stunning success for Bailey [the *Era*’s editor], the *Era* and for Stowe. By the time John P. Jewett contracted to publish the novel in 1852, Stowe was the most popular novelist of the day” (30). As a result, *Uncle Tom’s*

Cabin's popularity was built up gradually among the readers. By the time of its publication as a book, it was already widely read and known among American readers. However, buying the novel in one single volume was a chance for some readers to have a copy of their own in which they could revisit a powerful story which participated in changing the American culture and for others another chance to read some of the episodes that they might have missed reading in the *Era*.

However, most important, I believe that Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* became the most popular antislavery work because it did not aggressively attack white readers. Indeed, being first written in the *Era* governed Stowe's discussion concerning the institution of slavery. Gamaliel Bailey, the editor of the *Era*, wanted to "accomplish the goal of promoting abolition among southerners" Therefore, all of the antislavery arguments and writings in the newspaper, including the episodes of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, had to be "moderate and persuasive" (Belasco 24). Bailey adopted "steady persuasion in a variety of forms" including reviews, poems, essays, stories, and articles that "all had a common purpose: to subvert the ideology of slaveholding" (Belasco 24). Indeed, Stowe's text did not attack Southern slaveholders; rather she presented specific types of slaveholders and their different dealings with slaves. For instance, we are first introduced to Mr. Shelby who, although he could have done other things to pay his debt to the slave trader Mr. Haley rather than selling Tom and little Harry, still justifies to his wife that he had sold them only out of necessity. Toward the middle of the novel, readers are introduced to St. Claire, who also treats his slaves with good intentions, but who dies suddenly before freeing Tom. Toward the end of the novel, we meet again George Shelby, now a young man, who manages to free all of his slaves. Despite the

brutal characters of Mr. Haley and Simon Legree, most of the other white slaveholders presented in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, excluding Marie, St. Claire's wife, were not willing to treat their slaves with brutality; they were victims of the institution of slavery as well. Therefore, Stowe is addressing them to encourage them to free themselves from the sin of slavery and emancipate all the slaves that they have before it is too late, as in the cases of St. Claire and Mr. Shelby. However, in general, through *Uncle Tom's Cabin* "Stowe sends a message to 'good' white people all over the country," (212) and not only those in the South whom, according to Ducksworth,

may have felt unconnected to the evil of slavery. Her message is that they, through both their silence and hypocrisy, also share the blame for the crimes of slave dealers. She then charges all upstanding white citizens with a God-given duty to agitate against the chattel system in order to save their own souls and recover the auspicious promise of America's golden future. (212)

Stowe combines her message with a religious duty which is delivered to every white Christian in America. Furthermore, Stowe's work was more popular than other works written on the subject of slavery because she showed the North's support to the fugitive slaves whereas Douglass and Jacobs revealed the racial segregation in the North. Stowe did not attack any of her readers; instead she wanted to convince them to save themselves from the sin of slavery and grant the slaves their freedom.

Another factor that made Stowe's novel the most popular antislavery text, I believe, could be the many subplots and characters Stowe presents to her readers. Although Uncle Tom is the main character, still we learn the stories of many other

slaves in every new destination Uncle Tom travels to. However, other antislavery works, such as slave narratives, don't have this variety and number of characters. Josephine Donovan in *Uncle Tom's Cabin: Evil, Affliction, and Redemptive Love* states that "slave narratives tended to focus on one person's unhappy experiences from that individual's point of view. Stowe realized that no one would read a novel that was relentlessly grim" (62). Indeed, Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* and Jacobs's *Incidents* contained more harsh representations of slavery than Stowe's text, and Stowe's text outsold all slave narratives and other abolitionist novels put together.

Despite the different debates concerning the use of sentimentalism in Stowe's novel, I believe, sentimentalism was one of the factors that expanded the popularity of the novel. Stowe wanted her readers to sympathize with slaves and to help end the institution of slavery, and she used sentimentality to try to accomplish those goals. In her preface, she says that she wants "to awaken sympathy and feeling for the African race, as they exist among us" (xiii). Furthermore, through this sentimentality that awakens the sympathies of readers, Stowe links the white readers with the experiences and feelings of the slaves and in an attempt to create bonds between the slaves and white readers. Stephen Railton in his essay titled "Black Slaves and White Readers" explains that "by this representation of the racial other inside the identities and spheres her readers already cherished--children, mothers, home, food, education, religion--Stowe encourages [white readers] to include the slave inside the circle of their sympathies" (105). Closely reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, one could observe that Stowe addresses free readers, who were mainly white, after narrating tragic incidents the slave endured under the institution of slavery to make the readers sympathize with the slaves.

Most of the tragic incidents in Stowe's novel happen to mothers whose children are either dead, sold, lost, or about to be sold. Stowe wants free white readers, specifically women, to experience the feelings of the slave women in order to sympathize with them and try their best to end the institution of slavery.

Furthermore, the element of domesticity in Stowe's novel could also be one of the factors that made it popular among many American readers. "Stowe intertwined domestic subplots with didactic reform--and thereby made the political vividly personal for a mass audience of middle-class readers" (Kohn, Meer, and Todd xiii). Through some of the female characters' dealings within their domestic sphere, including Mrs. Shelby, Mrs. Bird, and Miss Ophelia, Stowe indirectly shows how middle-class women can help in social reform, especially when it is concerned with slavery. Accordingly, I assume that by identifying themselves with the female characters in the novel, many female readers felt that they could participate in social reform and abolition of slavery within their own domestic sphere.

Uncle Tom's Cabin is not a work that mostly shows the misery of one slave as in the case of Douglass's and Jacobs's works. Instead it depicts American domestic life in which slavery is an existing condition that should be reformed through the emancipation of all slaves. Following a major strand of antislavery writings that advocated ending slavery by sending the slaves "back to Africa" could be one of the factors that led to the popularity of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Many debates took place among the abolitionists concerning this solution for ending slavery. In a letter to Stowe opposing her solution of sending the slaves to Africa Frederick Douglass writes in December 1853 "We are here, and we are likely to remain. Individuals immigrate--nations never. We have grown up

with this republic, and I see nothing in her character, or even in the character of the American people as yet, which compels the belief that we must leave the United States” (qtd. in Levine 535). In the same vein, Elizabeth Ammons in her essay titled “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Empire, and Africa” states, “Most African Americans opposed colonization as a racist scheme to remove Americans whose heritage and labor justified their citizenship every bit as much, if not more than, that of anyone else in the United States” (71). Since Stowe advocated such a controversial solution to end slavery, many debates had to take place around her work, which was a condition that made the work more popular.

Moreover, issues related to nineteenth-century white superiority that give whites the agency in both the writing and production fields and issues relating to white/black authorship/readership all played a role in the popularity of Stowe’s work. Indeed, unlike Douglass and Jacobs, Stowe did not need to be authenticated by any white figure since she was of the white race. She was free to write whatever she wanted and express her views openly compared to any blacks who wanted to write about the institution of slavery. James Bense in his essay titled “Myths and Rhetoric of the Slavery Debate and Stowe’s Comic Vision of Slavery” explains that, “[b]ecause the ex-slave could not assume the same authority as a white author” (194), the truth of the narrative is questioned, and, therefore, such work had to be authenticated by a white figure. For instance, Frederick Douglass’s *Narrative* had to be authenticated by William Lloyd Garrison and by Wendell Phillips and Harriet Jacobs’s *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* had to be authenticated by Lydia Maria Child.

Furthermore, another important factor that played a role in the popularity of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is Stowe's family reputation. Stowe was part of a very famous American family, the Beechers, who were also known for being "persuasive in their influence" (Belasco 25). Indeed, Dr. Leonard Bacon, a contemporary of Stowe, states that "this country is inhabited by saints, sinners, and Beechers" (qtd. in Belasco 25). Since the male members of the Beecher family, especially Stowe's father, Lyman Beecher, and her brother Henry Ward Beecher, were commonly heard by the American people, reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was then I suppose a chance for American people to know what a female member of the Beecher family has to say. Furthermore, it could be viewed that Stowe carried the religious thoughts and ideas of her father, who was widely respected in American society at that time.

Uncle Tom's Cabin: Questions of Race and Black Representation

Despite its undeniable popularity, toward the end of the nineteenth century *Uncle Tom's Cabin* started to face a lot of criticism that it was a racist text that could not represent African Americans. Michael Mayer in his essay titled "Toward a Rhetoric of Equality: Reflective and Refractive Images in Stowe's Language" states, "Many African-American critics only with great difficulty can see *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as anything but a novel by a white woman writing about a topic about which she knew nothing" (238). In the same vein, Richard Yarborough explains that many African American critics have adopted the opinions of Martin Delaney, who asserted in an April 1853 letter to Frederick Douglass that no white person can represent a black, and that the black question in America can only be solved by violence, not passivity (70). James Baldwin is one of those critics who strongly criticized both white writers and readers, particularly

Stowe and her white readers of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In his essay titled "Everybody's Protest Novel," he states that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is a bad novel associated with "dishonesty" (496). He claims that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* does not represent black identity since the black characters are strikingly presented with passivity and that the "negroes" are shown as "lovable figures presenting no problem" (497). Sarah Ducksworth also surveys the different reviews of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and concludes that "history shows that even in the wake of appreciation for Stowe's antislavery support, the portrayal of passive Uncle Tom was problematic for blacks who believed that every human being's highest duty is to resist the tyranny of oppression" (233). Not only did some critics negatively view Stowe's portrayal of Uncle Tom, Stowe's presentation of other slave characters has been harshly critiqued. For instance, Baldwin claims that since Eliza and George are the most courageous slaves who did not act in passivity but instead fled to Canada to break from the institution of slavery, Stowe shows them "as white as she can" (497). To reinforce his argument about the whiteness of Eliza and George, Baldwin compares Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with Richard Wright's *Native Son* and explains that Blacks should follow the violent steps of Thomas Bigger in destroying white power instead of passively submitting to it as in the case of Uncle Tom. Presenting Uncle Tom as a passive character, Baldwin further explains that Stowe has robbed him of his humanity and masculinity (498). It is not my purpose here to defend or argue against Baldwin's argument, but it is important to note that some gendered readings of Stowe's text claim that Stowe presented Uncle Tom with feminine qualities to reinforce women's empowerment through her text by showing that the morals of forgiveness are associated with women more than they are with men.

Baldwin does not only criticize white writers; he extends his criticism to include white readers. According to him the white writers of any protest novel are “being forgiven, [by white readers] on the strength of their good intentions, whatever violence they do to language, whatever excessive demand they make of credibility” (499). Baldwin claims that inaccuracy of presenting the black identity cannot be forgiven even if gaining greater freedom for blacks was the goal of the white writer. So, according to him, Stowe’s depiction of weak and comic black characters should not be praised regardless of Stowe’s intention of writing the novel to help to abolish the institution of slavery and critique the Fugitive Slave Law.

Many other critics have claimed that *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is a racist text because of its racial stereotypes of some of the black characters. Indeed, “Stowe has been unfairly accused of subverting her ostensibly Abolitionist purpose by creating characters that exhibit significant and culturally powerful racial stereotypes. Her text, the argument runs, is basically a racist tract in sheep’s clothing” (Mayer 236). For example, J.C. Furnas in *Goodbye to Uncle Tom* regards *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as racist propaganda which aims to “instill or strengthen racist ideas” (107). For many critics the racist ideas are more significant in Stowe’s comic depiction of slave characters. Yarborough States that

[o]f necessity, Stowe falls back upon popular conceptions of the Afro-American in depicting many of her slave characters. As one result, the blacks she uses to supply much of the humor in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* owe a great deal to the darky figures who capered across minstrel stages and white imaginations in the antebellum years. (47)

Concerning Stowe's comic depiction of Sam and Andy, who "ultimately seem little more than bumptious, giggling, outsized adolescents," Yarborough argues that their efforts of helping Eliza in her escape are not sincere since they did not have "any real desire to help the fugitives," rather they were only trying to "please their mistress" (47).

Yarborough further criticizes what he describes as Stowe's racist stereotypes and claims that her work negatively influences future writings about African American race. Since I totally disagree with Yarborough's argument, I defend Stowe's comic depiction of these characters in great detail in the third chapter of this study in my discussion of Stowe's use of colloquial dialect in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

However, many other critics defended Stowe and her text from this harsh criticism. For instance, Josephine Donovan argues that Stowe had to include comic characters in her book since she wanted her work to be read and since the exact reality of slavery cannot be fully written or read. She explains that Stowe "acknowledges that the book is a very inadequate representation of slavery [since] slavery in some of its workings is too dreadful for the purposes of art. A work which should represent it strictly as it is would be a work that could not be read; and therefore one can 'find refuge from the hard and the terrible' by inventing scenes and characters of a more pleasing nature" (62). Furthermore, according to Belasco, the writing process of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* also forced Stowe to present certain characters in the way she did. "This creation of striking characters was crucial to the serial novelist, who was more concerned with scenes that had to work as independent installments than with the full integration of plot lines" (30). Most important, other critics defend Stowe and her novel by pointing out that it was the first novel to present black characters as major ones. Stephen Railton states that "[a]s

just about the first novel to feature blacks in prominent roles, it [*Uncle Tom's Cabin*] is trying with great rhetorical skill and courage to put a human face on the racial other" (107-08). Furthermore, Michael Mayer explains that "[d]espite the tradition of negative assessment focusing on stereotypical misrepresentation, the characters in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* reinforce Stowe's antislavery position rather than deliberately subvert her intent" (237). Mayer further explains that Stowe uses mirroring techniques to reinforce her rhetoric of equality among blacks and whites. He states that a strand of Stowe's rhetoric for equality is the "use of reflective naming, emphasizing identical names in order to establish parallels and contrasts": there are two Georges; one white and one black; two Toms, one white and one black; and two Henrys, one white and one mulatto. According to Mayer, "these choices are not by chance. In one case the naming suggests similar identities; in the other two naming evokes a significant contrast of personalities" (241). In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* all of the naming comparisons are for the benefit of the slaves since the slaves are morally superior in comparison to many of the white characters in Stowe's novel. So, it could be said that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages of the representation of slave figures in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Until now controversy surrounds Stowe's text, and research is still taking place concerning issues of race. Some current scholars are arguing that Stowe's text is not a racist one. In their introduction to *Approaches to Teaching Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Elizabeth Ammons and Susan Belasco state that race is still a challenge in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* but "it is important to historicize race theories and attitudes so that [we] do not simply judge Stowe by values of our own day" (2). Indeed, Susan Nuernberg in her essay "Stowe, the Abolition Movement, and Prevailing Theories of Race in Nineteenth-

Century America” states that issues of race were debated in Stowe’s own time and what is portrayed in her novel is “representative in general of ideas and attitudes held by others in the abolitionist movement and in the antebellum American culture”; therefore Nuernberg asks, “Do we downgrade Stowe because she shared many of the misconceptions about race common in her day?” (43). In the same vein, Sophia Cantave in her essay titled “Who Gets to Create the Lasting Images? The Problem of Black Representation in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*” defends Stowe and states that “Stowe wrote her novel at a time when African humanity, intelligence, and subjectivity were still being debated” (99). So, despite the confused racial representation in Stowe’s novel, I believe that it was courageous enough for Stowe to discuss the slaves’ condition and call for their rights in a society that regarded slaves as inhuman.

Furthermore, some researchers defend Stowe by stating that she did not advocate for racial equality but rather to abolish slavery. Susan Nuernberg states,

Readers who reject *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* because it portrays African Americans in an offensive way should know that Harriet Beecher Stowe did not write it to advocate racial equality in the secular and social sphere. She aimed to put an end to slavery, to what stood in opposition to her notions of Christian morality, which required the abolition of slavery to purify the nation of sin. (37)

It could have been either hard for Stowe to call for slaves’ racial equality in a white male dominated society or she had not yet been convinced of the slaves’ rights for racial equality. However, it is not my purpose here to defend Stowe or argue against her work; instead I would only like to state that *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* had an effect to advocate

for abolishing slavery in America. It was courageous for her to raise her feminine voice in the midst of a patriarchal society.

International Popularity of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Uncle Tom's Cabin was a famous bestselling text not only in the United States; in fact it travelled all over the world. It travelled through translation where English is not the spoken language. By 1853 it had been translated into many languages including French, German, Welsh, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Norwegian, and Slovenian. John Mackay in his essay titled "The First Years of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Russia" explains that Stowe's novel was "published in at least sixty-seven different editions in Russia between 1857 and 1917; well over seventy separate editions in at least twenty-one different languages appeared in the Soviet Union between 1918 and 1991" (67).

Furthermore, Venuti in *The Scandals of Translation* states,

Since the 1970s, the drive to invest in bestsellers has become so prevalent as to focus the publisher's attention on foreign texts that were commercially successful in their native cultures, allowing the emotional and translating process to be guided by the hope of a similar performance in a different language and culture. (124)

Indeed, many American literary works were translated into Arabic during the 1950s, and the first Arabic translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* appeared in 1953; from that date until 2011 the work has been translated into Arabic seven times in more than thirteen different editions.

One of the possible factors that made it the most translated antislavery work could be due to the existing myth of it being the novel that caused the Civil War in the

United States. Many of the prefaces and introductions of the translation include President Lincoln's supposed statement to Stowe: "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this Great War!" In the introduction to *The Transatlantic Stowe*, the editors state that Stowe

had a complex mythic status in American consciousness: she is supposed to have single-handedly brought the abolitionist crusade against slavery to fruition yet also to have created our culture's most pernicious image of African Americans. As a result, her work has been too influential and controversial ever to be forgotten. (xiii)

It is regarded as a work that marked and changed the history of the United States. Furthermore, "Stowe has been understood primarily within her national boundaries as an American author writing about American issues. This is curious because the international success of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* arguably made Stowe the most internationally visible American writer of her time" (Kohn, Meer, and Todd xi). This success, I believe, is due to the fact that Stowe's portrayal of slave oppression is applicable to many forms of oppression around the world. Therefore, it was considered as a call for reform applicable to many different kinds of oppression worldwide.

"Readers across Europe interpreted the story not solely as American but as a text that spoke for them; it became a book that reflected issues of oppression and reform in their own nations" (Kohn, Meer, and Todd xviii). In Russia during the 1850s, Stowe's text was read as "an allegorical attack on and description of Russia's own serfdom-based society" (Mackay 67). Therefore, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* faced many kinds of pressure that caused it not to be widely available in the Russian literary market.

The editors of *Transatlantic Stowe* also state in their introduction that “in many ways, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in its travels becomes a different text” (xviii). During its travel to the Arabic culture through linguistic translation, I believe, Stowe’s text became a completely different text because it lost its entire historical and cultural context that marked its significance and importance in the antebellum culture. Despite that “Harriet Beecher Stowe’s fiction of American slavery had become transatlantic....[and] had partly come to represent the process of cultural translation” (Kohn, Meer, and Todd xi), the Arabic linguistic-oriented translations of Stowe’s work made a cultural reading of the text a seemingly impossible task. By excluding the historical context, the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* had prevented Arab readers from being introduced to the mid-nineteenth-century American culture.

Furthermore, Heinz Ickstadt states that since the rise of American studies in the twentieth century, “American studies emphasized the cultural reading of its primarily literary material” (546). Indeed, many American literary works including Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* reflect the history, culture, and politics of the United States. Therefore, it would be appropriate to investigate if American literature, whether in its main language or when translated into a different language which is of a different cultural setting, is read in a way that reflects its culture. Being an Arabian person, with a Bachelor’s degree in English literature from an Arabic university, who has had the opportunity to specialize in American literature in an American university, I found that most of the American literary texts read in the Arab world, whether translated or in English, do not emphasize the cultural reading. Therefore, I felt that it is my responsibility to locate the

challenges that face cross-cultural translations of American literary texts into Arabic in order to encourage the cultural reading of these American texts in Arabic.

It is true that many American literary works have been translated into Arabic, but not many Antebellum American works were chosen for translation; *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was the only antebellum nineteenth-century American literary work discussing slavery that has been translated into Arabic. However, I have chosen Stowe's text as a case study for my dissertation because it has been translated more than once into the Arabic language.¹ Moreover, as one of the top bestsellers in nineteenth-century American literature, Stowe's novel is an appropriate choice. There are seven existing Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The first translation appeared in 1953 while both the sixth and the seventh appeared in 2009. In general, all of the seven translations along with the abridged English version printed with the 2005 translation are mainly plot-oriented unsuccessful ones. Stowe's work has been translated without taking into consideration the historical, political, cultural, and religious contexts that shaped it. Most of the translated versions simply convey the story of a slave named Tom who manages to cope with different forms of torture at the hands of his white masters until he dies at the end of the novel after portraying a heroic example of forgiveness. All of the translators have made similar omissions, modifications, and summarizations during the translation process.

Another reason that I chose this work is the fact that Stowe's novel advocates women's rights through her creation of strong female characters, whether enslaved or free and white. Presenting such characters is a challenge in an Arabic, patriarchal culture. Predictably, the stories of the women slaves--Eliza, Chloe, Prue, Cassy, and

¹ I will discuss the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in chapter three.

Emmeline--are referred to only briefly in the translations. Furthermore, the white women in the novel, Mrs. Shelby, Mrs. Bird, and the Quaker women are not fully presented in the Arabic translations. Eva is only presented as a young girl who shows sympathy to slaves while her mother, Marie, is presented in a way that shows her complaining character and disgust for slaves. Therefore, through the use of feminism as a theoretical framework, I discuss the gender-based challenges that face the cross-cultural literary translation of American works into the Arabic language and culture.

Furthermore, I chose this novel because of Stowe's use of sentimentality as a narrative strategy in her antislavery novel. I was struck by the fact that most of the translations either omit or modify the voice of the narrator along with her sentimental message. Much research has been done on sentimentalism in nineteenth-century American literature generally and on Stowe's use of sentimentality as a narrative strategy, including Jane Tompkins's *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860*, Joanne Dobson's "Reclaiming Sentimental Literature," and Robyn Warhol's "Toward a Theory of the Engaging Narrator: Earnest Intervention in Gaskell, Stowe, and Eliot." My research will continue the scholarly conversation on Stowe's use of sentimentalism in a different context.

Therefore, the purposes of this study are multiple. Concerning the field of literary translation, it will be one of the few works that discuss the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of nineteenth century American literary works into Arabic. Arabic culture is a tribal one and is also considered, to a certain extent, a conservative one; therefore any American literary work which encourages individuality and self-reliance either does not get

translated into Arabic or those elements are excluded. Furthermore, the religious challenges that face the literary translation of American literary works into Arabic exist because most of Arab countries are Muslim ones; and when American works are assumed to reflect Christianity they are less likely to be translated. However, when works like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* do get translated, the Christian references are omitted.

The geopolitical factors are also considered challenges that hinder the translation of some American literary works into Arabic. The history of colonization made many Arab countries regard any presentation of Western literary works in general and especially American ones as an attempt to colonize the Arabic society. In addition, the gender-based challenges exist because the Arabic society is a male-dominated one, and therefore any American literary work that challenges that patriarchal force either through presenting strong independent female characters or advocating women's rights is less likely to be translated into Arabic.

Concerning the scholarly field of Harriet Beecher Stowe, my dissertation will specifically add to the scholarly research that is taking place on her literary production through using her antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a case study to locate and address the cross-cultural challenges that face its literary translation into the Arabic language and cultural setting. Most of the current research on Stowe's novel in an international context discusses the adaptations of the work. For instance, Frederick H. Jackson's article titled "An Italian *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" discusses a play composed by the Italian dramatist Giovanni Sabbatini in 1854 that is similar to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in its title and message. The play focuses on the misery of chimney sweeps in the Piedmont region and how the masters forced children to work under miserable

conditions which are similar to what the slaves in America had to go through. Besides the work titled *Transatlantic Stowe*, which is a collection of essays concerned with Stowe's influence on Europe and the reception of a number of her works there, I have found few works that specifically critique existing translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Margaret John Baker's dissertation titled "Translated Images of the Foreign in the Early Works of Lin Shu (1852-1924) and Pearl S. Buck (1892-1973): Accommodation and Appropriation," which is about the efforts of the translators more than a critique of Stowe or of the translation itself.

In the second chapter, titled "Challenges of Cross-Cultural Literary Translation from English to Arabic," I discuss the cross-cultural literary translation challenges from English to Arabic. Through using a combination of theoretical approaches with main emphasis on cross-cultural translation theories, I discuss the cultural shift in literary translation which also, I argue, reinforces the cultural reading of American literary texts, especially when translated into languages of cultures that differ from the American culture and do not have adequate knowledge of the historical context of these American literary texts. Using postcolonialism and feminism, in chapter two I specifically discuss the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that have prevented the production of accurate presentations of American literary works when translated into Arabic. As an example of the existence of such challenges that have affected the translation of some American works into Arabic, I have used *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a case study. I continue chapter two by explaining the purposes of literature in Arabic, which are mainly linguistic ones where the writers show the decorative beauty of the language and their ability to express it. Then, I discuss in depth the amount of

censorship that governs and suppresses Arabic literary production, which is, of course, also applicable to any literary translation. After stating the purposes of Arabic literature and the censorship it suffers from, I discuss how it is taught to Arab learners. Finally, I categorize the challenges facing cross-cultural translation attempts of nineteenth-century American literary works into Arabic into the following: cultural challenges, religious challenges, geopolitical challenges, and gender-based challenges. However, it is important to note that while I am not calling for accurate translations since it is impossible, I am calling for faithful translations which reveal the text's cultural and historical contexts. Indeed, the accuracy of a literary translation depends on the amount of linguistic skill a translator has while the faithfulness of a literary translation is based upon the translator's sincere effort to include the literary text's entire cultural context including the historical, cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based elements.

In *Approaches to Teaching Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Ammons and Belasco conducted a survey among U.S. teachers of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and found that some of the problematic areas when teaching the novel are

Stowe's use of dialect, her direct authorial intrusions, the characterization of Eva, and the baldness of the book's melodrama. Other teachers note the challenges presented by students' lack of historical knowledge about nineteenth century events and ideas, especially domestic ideology, religious beliefs, slavery as an institution, and the struggle for abolition. (3)

So, in the third chapter of my dissertation, titled "*Uncle Tom's Cabin: Arabic Translations and accompanying English Abridged version as a Case Study of Challenges of Cross-Cultural Literary Translation from English to Arabic*," I locate the

problematic areas when translating *Uncle Tom's Cabin* into the Arabic culture. I discuss the challenges that could face translators concerning Stowe's narrative strategies with special emphasis on her use of sentimentalism. Much research has been done on Stowe's use of sentimentalism, but yet much remains to be done about its translation into different languages and cultural settings. Therefore, in this chapter I discuss how her use of sentimentalism has been modified in the Arabic translations and the accompanying English version.

After that, I move to the Arabic translations of the work and the abridged English version accompanying one of them that had been modified by one of the Arabic textbook publishing houses. I will deal with the translations along with the abridged English version as one whole body instead of dealing with each one separately since not much difference exists among them except for the shortest version, which is in only thirty-four pages. I compare them with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as edited by Christopher G. Diller in 2009, which is based on the 1852 edition and reprints all of the prefaces that Stowe wrote for authorized European republications of the novel. Diller's edition also gathers a diverse collection of primary materials that display the development and unprecedented reception of the work. In this comparison I will point out the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that hinder an accurate literary translation of the work.

The fourth chapter of the dissertation, titled "Addressing the Challenges of Cross-Cultural Literary Translation from English into Arabic," is where I explain how cultural translation of literary texts from and into different cultures is more important than before in this current era of globalization. Indeed, cultural translation of English literary texts

into the Arabic culture is highly demanded by the current status of globalization that reinforces the need for individuals to have a multicultural knowledge and perspective. Such multicultural knowledge cannot be achieved unless there is a cultural translation of the literary texts that gives readers a chance to practice a cultural reading of the text and understand the historical context of the work. Furthermore, in this chapter I discuss the importance of multiculturalism in the global era, which, I believe, stresses the need of cultural translation. I include some current cultural and translation projects taking place in the Arab world which reinforce the need for cultural translation of literary texts. After that, I discuss both the possibility and importance of addressing the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that hinder the cross-cultural translation of English literary texts into the Arabic culture and language. I address the cultural and religious challenges by providing some possible solutions in approaching a period-specific cultural translation through the use of a mixed cross-cultural translation method which maintains the foreign cultural context of the text being translated, including the cultural, historical, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based norms, and adds some domestic cultural elements from the culture being translated to. Such translation approach is crucial in the age of globalization and achieves the demands of multiculturalism. I address the geopolitical and gender-based challenges through discussing the current changes in the Arab world, which, I believe, can pave the way for Arab translators to include subjects previously considered taboo. Concerning the geopolitical challenges, I discuss the lessening amount of censorship practiced by some Arab governments on aspects including literary production and literary translation due to the forces of globalization, the establishment of Non-Governmental Organizations in the

Arab world, the social media, and Western pressure concerning the status of democracy in the Arab world. In addressing the gender-based challenges, I discuss the status of women's empowerment currently taking place in the Arab world in both the political and literary spheres. In addressing these cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges, I use *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a case study and present possible strategies for addressing some of its challenges.

In conclusion, I aim through my work to reinforce the importance of period-specific cultural translation of American literary works into the Arabic culture which enriches the understanding of American culture especially in the current age of globalization that not only demands multilingual individuals but rather multicultural ones who are able to understand and appreciate other people. I also aim to continue the scholarly conversation regarding the challenges of period-specific cultural translation by locating the challenges that have existed and to a certain extent exist in the face of cultural translation of American literary works into the Arabic culture and by encouraging such cultural translation through discussing the possibility of addressing these challenges in the current era of globalization.

CHAPTER TWO

CHALLENGES OF CROSS-CULTURAL LITERARY TRANSLATION FROM ENGLISH INTO ARABIC

Toward the end of his discussion concerning literary translation, Andre Lefevere in his work *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context* acknowledges that “[m]uch work remains to be done in the study of translation. New translations need to be made, existing translations need to be analyzed, and the role played by translations in the development of literatures and cultures needs to be further elucidated” (142). Through my research I aim to take up Lefevere’s challenge to study literary translation. In this chapter, I will focus on the challenges of cross-cultural translation of English and especially American literary works into the Arabic culture and language. I believe it is important to start by discussing the different theoretical approaches of literary translation. Then, in order to situate the audience coming from an English-speaking culture within the context of my dissertation, I believe it is important to give them a sense of the purposes of Arabic literature, how it is taught in the Arab world, and the amount of censorship that governs both its subject matter and production. Finally, I will move toward pointing out the challenges of cross-cultural literary translation from English into Arabic through a cultural-oriented approach. I will specifically address the cultural, the religious, the geopolitical, and the gender-based challenges that hinder accurate translations of English and especially American literary works into the Arabic culture.

Literary Translation Theories

During the first half of the twentieth century, literary translation research mainly focused on the linguistic challenges that faced the translation of literary works from one language to another. Lawrence Venuti in *The Scandals of Translation*, which is an important reference in the field of literary translation theory, first published in 1998, states in the introduction that “translation research and translation training have been impeded by the prevalence of linguistics-oriented approaches that offer a truncated view of the empirical data they collect” (1). The main focus of linguistic-oriented approaches lies in locating the differences that exist between the two languages and aiming at offering solutions that could assimilate these linguistic differences. According to the linguistic-oriented approach, the literary translation’s level of success is governed by the amount of similarity that exists between the two linguistic systems. Therefore, Anton Povic in his essay titled “The Concept Shift of Expression,” which reinforces the linguistic focus in literary translation, also states that any translation process “involves an encounter of linguistic and literary norms and conventions, a confrontation of linguistic and literary systems” (79). According to Popvic, any changes of the original text are due to “the differences between the two languages,” and these differences “determine the major components of the translation’s structure, the integrative principle of its development which we label ‘style’” (79). The style of the translation is, then, also determined by the amount of similarity between the two linguistic systems regardless of the content of the original literary work.

To further reinforce the influence of the similarity between the two languages, Paris Jean in her essay titled “Translation and Creation” explains that the translation is

easier “when the two languages bear a close kinship.... When the roots are the same, when the rules are sisters, when both tongues have in common a certain syntax, climate and resonance” (58). It seems according to these critics that the language is the only problem during the translation process. Moreover, other researchers go to extremes in reinforcing the importance of the linguistic similarity between the source text and its translated version. Werner Winter in his essay titled “Impossibilities of Translation” explains that

the degree of similarity possible between the original and translation depends on the degree of similarity between the system of form and meaning in the two languages involved. The more serious the deviations from one language to the other, the less of the original can be salvaged in the process of transfer. (69)

Again from a linguistic-oriented approach, he further states that the translator cannot substitute for the meaning of a message in language A an expression with exactly the same meaning in language B, “because what can be expressed and what must be expressed is a property of a specific language in much the same way as how it can be expressed” (71). Looking at the previous opinions, one can easily observe that such linguistic-oriented research does not, or more accurately, cannot, take into consideration the cultural difference that is considered a crucial factor in the differences between languages and authors. The linguistic-oriented approach does not consider the content to raise any problem in the translation except as that content has imprecise linguistic referent. Venuti, critiquing this linguistic focus in the field of literary translation, states that “because such [linguistic-oriented] approaches promote scientific models for

research, they remain reluctant to take into account the social values that enter into translating as to the study of it" (*The Scandals of Translation* 1). Even if the translator did not purposefully want to neglect the cultural element found in the text, the linguistic-oriented approach methodology does not allow the translator to consider the cultural importance of the literary text.

Thus, the linguistic-oriented approaches in literary translation neglect the importance of conveying the historical context of the work that had played a significant role in the work's creation and transmission in its original culture. Such limitation of the linguistic-oriented approach reinforces the probability of having literary translations that could never reveal the significance the original works have achieved in their original cultural setting. However, it is important to note that some linguists already acknowledge an existing degree of limitation in their approach; therefore, they do not claim their ability to produce exact replicas of the source text during the translation process. Otto Frantisek Babler in his essay "Poe's 'Raven' and the Translation of Poetry," while speaking on behalf of those translators approaching literary translation from a linguistic angle, claims that

though we are willing to admit that absolute adequacy on the part of a translation is quite impossible, there can be very close approximation in the realms of form, phonetic values, and factual information, but only if the translation reflects a high degree of sensitivity to the linguistic elements of the source language and the receptor language alike. (195)

So, the limitation of their approach can never be prevented; however, it could be lessened through a close consideration of these linguistic elements of both languages.

Looking at the previous linguistic opinions, one could easily observe that the linguistic-oriented approach in literary translation does not, and perhaps cannot, take into consideration the differences that exist between the cultures, the one they will translate from and the other that they will translate into.

The Shift to a Cultural-Oriented Approach

Before discussing the importance of approaching literary translation from a cultural perspective, it is important to define the meaning of culture. Instead of citing more than one definition of culture, I adopt Ward H. Goodenough's complete definition of culture since it includes all of the basic elements that compose a society's culture. In *Explorations in Cultural Anthropology*, Goodenough defines a society's culture as consisting of

whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves. Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end product of learning: knowledge, in a most general, if relative, sense of the term. By this definition, we should note that culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behavior, or emotions. It is rather an organizing of these things. It is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them. As such, the things people say and do, their social arrangement and events, are products or by-products of their culture as they apply it to the task of perceiving and dealing with their circumstances. To one who

knows their culture, these things and events are also signs signifying the cultural forms or models of which they are material representations. (39-40)

Based on the definition of culture, then, it is important to focus on the cultural elements of the literary text while translating because culture is what significantly determines the meaning and value of the literary text. Andre Lefevere, in "Translation and the Creation of Images or 'Excuse me, Is this the Same Poem?'," further explains that "if readers do not 'receive' translations in any meaningful way, the originals of those translations will not enter into the culture of those readers, no matter how good the translators are" (78). Lefevere indicates that there will be no impact of the translation on the readers in the target culture, and accordingly the literary translation will not have any value. However, he credits the translators and states that "[t]heir intentions are not in doubt, nor is their creativity" (78), but rather the fact of neglecting the cultural element is what devalues their translations.

Lefevere was not alone in focusing on the importance of cultural translation; Piotr Kuhiwczak in his essay titled "Translation and National Canons: Slav Perceptions of English Romanticism" also states that "[i]f the translation of any literary work is to leave a mark on the receiving culture, it must aim beyond what is normally understood as linguistic equivalence" (83). Indeed, I believe that most readers are not interested in knowing the amount of similarity their linguistic system has with that of the source text. I assume that many readers tend to read a literary translation in order to know more about different cultures and accordingly could acknowledge the amount of differences and similarities that exist between their culture and that of the original text. Based on my

own experience, that could be, I assume, applicable to many readers of translated foreign literature; being introduced to another culture is what matters most since translations are one of the most accessible venues of knowing other cultures without necessarily physically leaving one's native culture. Thus, these literary translations are responsible to a certain extent concerning the image that readers construct of other cultures. Accordingly, translators should produce faithful translations of the cultures they choose to introduce.

Many prominent scholars concerned with literary translation have acknowledged the importance of making a shift toward cultural-oriented translation approaches. Anurdaha Dingwany, in her introductory essay titled "Translating 'third world cultures'" in *Between Languages and Cultures and Cross-Cultural Texts*, first published in 1995, states that "it seems entirely appropriate that translation theory and practice has, in recent years, turned to both 'source' and 'target' cultures as something to be studied before the translation of a work can proceed" (3). Furthermore, I believe that possessing the knowledge of more than one language is no longer enough to translate literary texts from one culture into the other. In the same vein, Jeremy Munday in his work *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications* explains that "the cultural turn," a term which was first introduced in 1990 by Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere in their work *Translation, History and Culture*, became a key term used in translation studies afterward to refer to "the move towards the analysis of translation from a cultural studies angle" which determines "the move from translation as text to translation as culture and politics" (126). This move should consider the analysis of both cultures; that being translated from and the other being translated into. Accordingly, I

believe that any analysis and evaluation of a literary translation should investigate whether the historical context and culture of the source text has been carried during translation to the target culture audience and locate the challenges relating to the target culture that could hinder or even resist the literary translation process from a cultural angle.

Furthermore, Mahasweta Segupta in her essay titled “Translation as Manipulation: The Power of Images and Images of Power” explains that this move toward cultural literary translation should “bring into focus the position of a translated text within the intersecting networks of a culture” in order to understand the significance of the text in its original culture, and to acknowledge the cultural factors that have determined such significance. Segupta also explains that such a cultural approach should also bring into focus “the manipulations behind a given positioning of the translator, her or his culture, and the text/culture being translated” (159). Thus, considering the historical context of the original literary work is the cornerstone of the cultural-oriented approach of literary translation. Studying and examining such cultural and historical factors will help in determining the faithfulness of the literary translation process.

In the same vein, Otto Frantisek Babler states that “[e]very language, every people, every literature, every literary genre has its own peculiar forms originating for very complex physiological, historical, sociological, and intellectual reasons” (195). Both the writer of the original literary text and the translator are affected by the cultures they live in, which also govern both the writing and the translation processes. The importance and influence of both cultures of both texts make it necessary to discuss the

need for translating the literary works within their historical context: that is, to consider all of the cultural elements that have shaped these works and in some cases the cultural revolutions and historical moments that these literary works could have shaped.

Werner Winter in another essay titled “Translation as Political Action” explains that “[t]o take works of the literature of a nation and to make them available to members of another culture is to take that nation’s literature, that nation’s culture, and that nation itself seriously” (174-75). Indeed, it is the culture that has shaped the text and its author who is also a native of that culture. Fictional or non-fictional, a literary work is a synopsis of the culture it had been produced in and produced about.

Moreover, Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* speaks about the privilege and benefit of being able to speak another language through the following statement: “To speak a language is to take on a world, culture” (38). Fanon’s claim is, I believe, applicable to the state of reading a translation. Speaking and understanding another language give a person a chance to understand another culture and communicate with its people. Reading the translations of another language gives those who do not speak it the chance to know other cultures. Thus, the translator must consider, and faithfully carry through the translation process, the cultural elements shaping the world of the original literary text in order for the target-culture readers to “take on” (to use Fanon’s term) and realize the new culture presented to them in the translation. Indeed, the culture of the source text is the most important to consider during the translation process. Moreover, Susan Bassnett in her work titled *Translation Studies* also reinforces the importance of considering the culture of the source text during the translation since “[l]anguage is the heart within the body of culture ... so the translator

cannot treat the text in isolation from the culture” (14). Language cannot be isolated from its culture since the culture is what has shaped the language and constructed it in the first place. Therefore, the period-specific cultural context including the historical, cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based features should not be ignored during the translation process. Andre Lefevere in his essay titled “Translation: Its Genealogy in the West” further explains that “[l]anguage is not the problem ... cultural elements [are] that are not immediately clear, or seen as completely ‘misplaced’ in what would be the target culture version of the text to be translated” (26). Indeed, approaching literary translation from a cultural angle is not an easy task. If the literary text’s historical context, including all of the cultural and ideological features, is not well considered or translated, the literary work will not capture the attention of the target-culture reader since it will make no sense; it neither looks similar to their culture, nor conveys a new culture in a meaningful way. The conflict between two cultures can result in assorted forms of misunderstanding and alienation. Therefore, the translator has to accompany his or her translation with extra historical background about the culture of the source text in order to situate the target culture readers within the culture of the source text. Accordingly, I agree with Rosario Ferre, when he explains in his essay titled “On Destiny, Language, and Translation; or, Ophelia Adrift in the C.&O. Canal” that “translation is not only a literary but also a historical task; it includes an interpretation of internal history, of the changing proceedings of consciousness in a civilization” (41). The cultural-oriented literary translation process demands that the translator has an adequate knowledge of the historical context of the source culture being translated. This historical context is important to acknowledge because “[t]exts are not context-free; they

are produced within the confines of a given literature, which has its own generic and stylistic features and which is, in its turn, embedded in a whole culture,” and therefore translators should “proceed from the top down,” which is to start from “the culture to the structure of that text to paragraphs, lines, phrases and words” (Lefevere, *Translating Literature* 13). This process demands certain skills from the translator of the literary text, especially if there is a big difference between the two cultures, and furthermore, if the text being translated is from an earlier historical period.

Who Should Translate?

Producing successful literary translation relies on having successful translators who obtain more than one skill. In fact, scholars who are interested in the linguistic-oriented approach acknowledge that translators should also have other capabilities besides the linguistic ones. According to Otto Frantisek Babler, the translator

should be enough of a linguist and of a literary critic to be able to judge all basic devices and semasiological patterns of the original poem, and it goes without saying that he should be enough of a poet to make a new poem in his own language in place of the original one. (195)

Thus, as previously observed, not only do linguists acknowledge the incapability of their approach to produce “adequate” translations; they also admit that the translator’s linguistic skills alone are never enough for achieving an “approximate” literary translation.

Since the translator is the connecting link between the source and target cultures, the shift from the linguistic-oriented approach of literary translation to the cultural-oriented one accordingly demands a shift in the translator’s interests and

capabilities. The cultural-oriented approach should be done by those translators who have a deep knowledge of both cultures, the one translated from and the other translated to. Of course, the knowledge of both cultures already requires the knowledge of the linguistic features of both languages. Lefevere in *Translating Literature* demands that the translators “should already know the languages and cultures into and out of which they want to translate; how else can they produce meaningful work in the acculturation zone that is their real field” (12). Therefore, I believe that it is crucial for translators, before proceeding to translate any literary text, to determine whether they have enough knowledge of both cultures in order for them to produce a faithful translation. An adequate knowledge of the source culture will aid the translator in translating the significance of the text. Lefevere also states that translators should “understand the position of the source text in the source literature and the source culture” (92). Understanding such position will help the translator to know all of the cultural factors that have affected the production and reception of the literary text, especially those that are not fully expressed in the literary work itself.

Furthermore, if the understanding of the text’s historical context is accompanied by a rich knowledge of the target culture, the translator will be able to locate some cultural similarities between the two cultures. It is then the role of the translator to convey such knowledge to the readers through including it as footnotes in the translation. Thus, the readers of the target culture will understand and fully acknowledge the source text’s historical importance and will also be able to compare its features with those that are present in their own culture. Such knowledge will bridge the gap between

the two cultures and will help the readers from the target culture to know the culture of the “other.”

Accordingly, I also believe, it is important that “scholars should translate, and translations should be considered works of creativity and scholarship” (*Translating Literature* 92). Being a scholar in one culture and a native of the other insures the translator’s knowledge of the historical and cultural elements of both source and target cultures. Having knowledge of both cultures enables a successful literary translation of the cultural elements that signify the source text along with linking them with the similar ones in the target culture that could be included in the form of footnotes or endnotes in the translation.

General Constraints of Cultural-Oriented Literary Translation

Approaching literary translation from a cultural-oriented perspective is never a constraint-free process. Lou Wei in an article titled “Cultural Constraints on Literary Translation” states that it is generally taken for granted that “any work of literature is nurtured by culture. The subject matter, the topic, the way the author reveals himself, are products of certain circumstances of a certain age”(154). Thus, translators will have to face a lot of challenges that arise from both the culture of the source text and the culture of the target text, depending on the amount of similarity and difference that already exists between them. However, it is important to note that some translators have chosen to adhere to the norms of the target cultures during the literary translation process. For instance, Abbe Prevost, who translated Samuel Richardson’s novel *Pamela* into the French culture while constrained by the norms of French culture, explains in his preface the following justification:

I have suppressed English customs where they may appear shocking to other nations, or else made them conform to customs prevalent in the rest of Europe. It seemed to me that those remainders of the old and uncouth British ways, which only habit prevents the British themselves from noticing, would dishonor a book in which manners should be noble and virtuous. To give the reader an accurate idea of my work, let me just say, in conclusion, that the seven volumes of the English edition, which would amount to fourteen volumes in my own, have been reduced to four. (qtd. in Lefevere, "Translation: Its Genealogy in the West" 20-21)

This huge cut can only indicate the amount of cultural context that has been ignored and excluded during the translation process. So it seems fair to say even without reading the French translation of *Pamela* that the English culture was not fully presented in a meaningful way for French readers. Accordingly, if the translation was their first or only venue to know the English people, the images they have constructed of the English culture and its people are not close representations to the existing ones.

However, before discussing the different challenges that affect the literary translation process, it is important realize that "exact reproduction is impossible, since the worlds in which the original text and its translations are produced are inevitably different worlds" (Bassnett, *Translation Studies* 1). Therefore, in such a situation, according to Bassnett in her introduction to her other work entitled *Essays and Studies: Translating Literature*, the translator has to "mediate between those two different moments in time and space and to produce a text that exists in a relationship with both" (1). So, the literary translation will never be an exact replica, but through attempting to translate from a cultural-oriented perspective along with locating the different challenges

that could exist, translators can be more successful in producing faithful translations of the source texts that could be better received in the target culture.

It is then important to consider the possible challenges during any literary translation and specifically cross-cultural ones. Indeed, Itamar Evan-Zohar in his essay titled “The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem” states that “[t]ranslation is no longer a phenomenon whose nature and borders are given once and for all, but an activity dependent on the relations within a certain cultural system” (qtd. in Munday 124). In the same way that the writers of the original literary text are influenced by their culture, the translators are also influenced and actually more governed by their cultures. In the same vein, Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere in their preface point out that the translators are constrained by their own cultures with all of the ideologies these cultures determine since “[a]ll rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way” (*Translation, History and Culture* ii). This ideology is reflected through different perspectives including the criteria of selecting the literary texts being translated, the approach being used for translation, that is either linguistic or cultural, and the specific audience the literary translation is aiming at. John Frow in *Marxism and Literary History* explains that works of translation are the

results of a complex articulation of the literary system with other institutions (the school, religion), institutionalized practices (moral or religious training, commemoration, or else relatively autonomous aesthetic function) and other discursive formations (religious, scientific, ethical).
(182)

Lawrence Venuti also acknowledges the presence of such constraints during the translation process and states that “[t]ranslation lies deeply repressed in the cultural identities that are constructed by academic, religious, and political institutions; in the pedagogy of foreign literature.” He also explains that the influences on translation are cultural, economic, and political factors (*The Scandals of Translation* 2). Similarly, Lefevere suggests that translators “are constrained by the times in which they live, the literary traditions they try to reconcile, and the features of the language they work with” (*Translating Literature* 6). All of these constraints show that the translator is not the only one responsible for the amount of faithfulness to the source text during the translation process. Accordingly, Bassnett and Lefevere explain that translation studies “deal with the constraints that enter into play during the process of both the writing and rewriting of texts.” Furthermore, they explain that “[t]hese constraints both belong to the field of literary studies ‘proper’ and transcend it” (*Translation, History and Culture* 12). Indeed, there are many factors that intervene with translation such as postcolonial, political, cultural, gender-based, and religious ones.

Literary translation studies should, as Bassnett and Lefevere explain, “deal with hard, falsifiable cultural data, and the way they affect people’s lives” (*Translation, History and Culture* 12). There should be studies that consider these literary translations among different cultures. Due to my Arabian origin and scholarly specialization in American literature and culture, I would like to address the constraints that arise during translating literary texts, specifically American ones, from English into the Arabic culture. Arab scholars focus on linguistic-oriented approaches; many of the previous translation studies that deal with analyzing the Arabic translations of English literary works are

mainly concerned with the linguistic aspect. Therefore, I would like to reinforce the importance of shifting to a scholarly conversation that locates the challenges of cross-cultural translation of literary translation of English and specifically American literary texts into the Arabic culture. I will specifically categorize these challenges as cultural challenges, religious challenges, geopolitical challenges, and gender-based challenges.

However, while attempting to discuss anything pertaining to the Arabic culture and literature among English-speaking audience, it is important to acknowledge that most Western readers have little knowledge of Arabic culture and literature. Edward Said in his essay titled “Embargoed Literature” states that

[f]or all the major world literatures, Arabic remains relatively unknown and unread in the West, for reasons that are unique, even remarkable, at a time when tastes here for the non-European are more developed than ever before and, even more compelling, contemporary Arabic literature is at a particularly interesting juncture. (97)

Therefore, it is important to first introduce some features of Arabic literature for the Western and mainly English-speaking readers of my dissertation.

Arabic Language and the Linguistic Focus of Arabic Literature

Arabic literature is mainly linguistic-oriented due to the fact that Arabic language carries a lot of unique linguistic features. For instance, despite the changes that had happened to the classic spoken form, which was then transformed to different colloquial dialects found in different Arab countries, until now the written expression has to be carried by a classic standard form of the language. The classic standard form is the same spoken form that has been used for fifteen hundred years. Part of its permanent

existence is due to the fact that the Holy Quran has been recited to the Arabian prophet Mohammed (May peace be upon him) through the standard form. Therefore, knowing this classical form of the language is important for both reading and understanding the Holy Quran.

Historically, tracing the development of the Arabic language in both spoken and written forms, Kees Versteegh in his essay titled “Linguistic Attitudes and the Origins of Speech in the Arab world” explains that the classical Arabic language “served as the written language and the spoken language of the Elite in formal situations, whereas the colloquial, the native language for all speakers regardless of their social class, served as the language for everyday communication” (17). There are now many colloquial Arabic dialects: Egyptian, Gulf (Saudi, Qatari, United Arab Emirates, Kuwaiti, Omani, and Bahraini), Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, Moroccan, Sudanese, Syrian, and Tunisian. Furthermore, the dialect of each country further differs according to the region of its speakers. Accordingly, the variations in the spoken form made the classical standard written form, as Versteegh explains,

to be regarded with the utmost respect by all members of the community, even by those who have only a sketchy knowledge of it. The classical language serves as the most powerful model for everyone, educated and uneducated alike. It goes without saying that the model function is reinforced by the fact that the classical language is also the language of the revelation of the religion [the Holy Quran]. (17)

This Arabic classic written form carries strict features concerning grammar, syntax, and phonology. Furthermore, each word has many derivatives that are produced through

either adding or deleting some of its sounds and letters. Most of the verbs, nouns, and objects have the same root but differ by some additions of letters and sounds either before or after the root. Indeed, such rules are found in many languages including English, but they are far stricter in Arabic. In the same vein, the past form is almost always the basic root of the verb, and the present and future tenses are formed through adding one or more letters before or after the verb's root.

Another feature is that many Arabic words have numerous synonyms and antonyms, and some of them are obtained through also changing the order of two letters and/or sounds. Accordingly, many of the sentences carry a specific metrical rhyme and specifically if it is a work of literature. Sameh AL-Ansari in his article titled "NP-Structure Types in Spoken and Written Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) Corpora" explains that each word takes a specific morphological pattern to express a different meaning (155). He then gives the three first examples of words (and I have included the others):

Arabic Word	English Transliteration	English Equivalent
كاتب	Kaatib	author
مكتب	Maktab	desk
كتابه	Kitaaba	writing
مكتوب	Maktuub	written
مكتوب	Maktuub	Written Letter
كتاب	Kitab	book
كتب	Kutub	books
كتاب	Kuttab	authors
مكتبة	Maktabah	library
يكتب	Yaktub	writes
اكتب	Auktub	Write
كتب	Kataba	wrote
كُتِبَ	Kuttab	Old Islamic school mainly teaching Quran, writing, and reading

Almost all of the previous thirteen words of different meanings are derived from the root “كتب,” “Kataba,” which is the past form of the verb meaning “wrote,” through adding some letters either before or after the root. Most of the words dealing with the writing process and product share the same pronunciation as well. For instance, whole sentences can be formed through the use of some of these previous words. One could say: “كتب الكاتب الكتاب في المكتبة” which in transliteration is pronounced as follows, “kataba alkatib alkitab fee almaktabah,” and means “The writer wrote the book in the library.” So, a rhyming feature exists in the Arabic language due to the composition of many derivatives from one root.

Philip K Hitti in his work titled *History of the Arabs from the Earliest Times to the Present states*,

No people in the world manifest such enthusiastic admiration for literary expression and are so moved by the word, spoken or written, as the Arabs. Modern audiences in Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo can be stirred to the highest degree by the recital of poems, only vaguely comprehended, and by the delivery of orations in the classical tongue, though it be only partially understood. The rhythm, the rhyme, the music, produce on them the effect of what they call “lawful magic”. (82)

Indeed, according to the Arabic literary field, poetry is the most prominent genre in Arabic literature. Arabic poetry also has many forms according to its rhyming pattern. The Kaseeda is the main genre which is written in one block with no divisions like those that exist between stanzas in English. However, each line is divided into two equal

parts: the first half called the “chest” and the second half the “rump,” they form the meter and rhyme of the poem. The two halves are separated by a gap that equals the space of 7 letters or two words as in the following example:²

أَلَيْسَ اللَّيْلُ يَجْمَعُنِي وَلَيْلَى كَفَاكَ بِذَاكَ فِيهِ لَنَا تَدَانِي
(www.adab.com). نَرَى وَضَحَ النَّهَارِ كَمَا أَرَاهُ وَيَعْلُوها النَّهَارُ كَمَا عَلَانِي

The English transliteration:

Alais allailo yajmonee walayla kafaka bithaka feehee Ina tadanee
Trra wadaha alnahari kma araho wayalooaha alnaharo kma alanee

The ends of the “chest” may rhyme together, but, most important, the ends of the “rumps” should rhyme together. So, in the previous example the ends of the rumps “tadanee” and “alanee” rhyme together.

Moreover, the two halves in each line should form a single sentence; there are no sentences that run over to another line in the Kaseeda at all. The Kaseedah also have seven main rhyming patterns that poets have to follow while constructing their poems. Arabic prose also demands the presence of rhyme and meter, but not to the extent of what should be present in poetry. The Holy Quran is also written in verses that carry these poetical metrical features. Therefore, the superiority of a literary work and its writer is measured by the decorative stylistic features present in it. Although Arabic literature is mainly written in the standard form, even if colloquial dialects are used a rhyming pattern must exist. Therefore, most of the Western literature translated into Arabic is in the prose form, including novels and short stories; not much poetry gets translated into Arabic because of the strict rules that govern the composition of a poetic literary piece in Arabic.

² Reading and writing in Arabic is from right to left.

Due to the strict linguistic dominance in Arabic literature, it is accordingly taught in a way that reflects this linguistic emphasis. The teaching of Arabic literature reinforces its linguistic values such as the syntax and the form, the different derivatives a single word has, the decorative style of the work, and the rhyme and meter of its lines. There is not much consideration of its subject matter. However, if the subject matter is discussed, it is discussed mainly in a way that reinforces the different cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based ideologies that shape the Arabic culture.

For the purpose of my study, I believe it is important to include some of the Arab linguists' opinions on the topic of literary translation into the Arabic language. Some Arabian linguists also have their own arguments regarding literary books translated from the Western culture. They argue that Arab readers need to be introduced to the richness of Arabian literature, and that translated literary books from Western culture might distract Arab readers from the beauty of Arabian written literary form. Ali Al-Safawi in his article "Linguistic Barriers in Literary Translation" explains that Arab readers should be exposed to enriched Arabic texts that are full of different decorative linguistic techniques. Providing Arab readers with translated literature prevents them from being fully exposed to the Arabic language's decorative techniques that could never be fully replicated by a translation of a foreign literary text. He insists that Arab readers should be exposed to these techniques at the same time that they are exposed to any literary piece from the Arabic culture.

The translation of Western literary works follows the same purposes and interests of Arabic literature, which are linguistic-oriented ones, and a translation is also governed by the same evaluation criteria. So, it is not surprising that much of the

research done on Arabic translations of English literary works focuses on linguistics. Fatima Muhaidat in her dissertation published in 2005 titled “*A Tale of Two Cities* in Arabic Translation” discusses the linguistic challenges, including sound effects, figurative language, humor, repetition, and the French element, that have faced the translation of the text into Arabic and offers some solutions for addressing these challenges. In the discussion of sound effects like onomatopoeia, alliteration and rhyme, Muhaidat shows that “there is no one to one correspondence between English and Arabic in reflecting these linguistic phenomena,” and that “[w]hat might be expressed onomatopoeically in English may not have a counterpart that reflects similar sound effects in Arabic” (v). The author also points to the problem that “[s]ome structural, morphological and collocational asymmetries between English and Arabic make translators dispense with repetition.” Her solution is that Arab translators “can render the function of the repeated expressions by resorting to synonymy, collocations, and constructions that fit Arabic” (v). The author also points to the problem that “[d]ifferences in grammatical and morphological structures between the two languages underlie sacrificing various rhyme patterns in Dickens’s text” (313). Although Muhaidat discusses the translation of imagery that is considered a cultural challenge and suggests offering equivalents from the Arabic culture, still most of her work discusses the translation of English literary works into Arabic from a linguistic-oriented approach.

Bassnett and Lefevere state that in the first half of the twentieth century there were “painstaking comparisons between originals and translations which do not consider the text in its cultural environment,” and they argue that therefore there should be a focus on “the larger issues of context, history and convention” (*Translation, History*

and Culture ii). Indeed, this observation is applicable to the condition and current focus of research concerning the translations of literary works from English into Arabic. However, it is important to note that, while I don't neglect the importance of such research, I believe that it is more important to make the shift toward the cultural translation and analysis instead of the linguistic ones concerning the literary translation from the English culture to the Arabic one. Furthermore, through my research I would like to respond to Bassnett and Lefevere's plea in their work titled "*Constructing Cultures*" for a "pooling of resources" that links translation studies and cultural studies, since they explain that

in these multifaceted interdisciplines, isolation is counter-productive....

The study of translation, like the study of culture, needs a plurality of voices. And similarly, the study of culture always involves an examination of the processes of encoding and decoding that comprise translation.

(138-39)

In the same vein, Gayatri Spivak in her essay titled "Translating in a World of Languages" states that "whereas much is published on the westward translating arm of the Arabs, little is published on the eastward arm. Let us begin, then, with an appeal for a person with knowledge not only of Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit but also of Pahlavi" (35). Accordingly, in the following sections of my chapter, I will investigate the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that hinder accurate translations of American literary works into the Arabic culture.

Censorship on Literary Production and Translation in the Arab World

Before specifically discussing the challenges pertaining to the translation of literary works into the Arabic culture, I believe it is important, as an introduction, to discuss in general the amount of censorship on literary production and translation that is applicable to many cultures. Andre Lefevere in his work *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* states that any literary production, including literary translation, is governed by three main factors: (1) “professionals within the literary system,” (2) “patronage outside the literary system,” and (3) “the dominant poetics.” By professionals within the literary system, Lefevere refers to critics, translators, and reviewers, whose opinions affect the reception of the work and/or its translation. By patronage outside the literary system, Lefevere refers to the powers of persons or publishers, media, the political class, and educational establishments and institutions which regulate the distribution of literature and literary ideas that can further hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literary works (15). Lefevere identifies three elements in this patronage: (a) the ideological component, which governs the selection of subjects to write about and accordingly of works to be translated; (b) the economic component, which deals with the payment writers and translators receive for their works; and (c) the status component, which deals with how the works of writers and translators are received (16). By the dominant poetics, Lefevere refers to the following two components: (a) the literary devices, which include the different genres, symbols, and prototypical situations and characters; and (b) the concept of the role and relationship of literature in the culture in which it exists (26). These different censorship elements also

shape some of the cross-cultural constraints of literary translation from English into Arabic that I categorize as cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based ones.

The Arabic culture is to a large extent a conservative one, and in some Arabic countries the government practices a certain amount of censorship around the discussion of its religious, political, and gender-based ideologies. This censorship also applies to any translation of literary work, especially those works that are of Western origin and express different cultural, religious, political, and gender-based ideologies. Therefore, translators tend to produce translations that do not conflict with the standards of acceptable literary work to be introduced in the Arabic culture. Indeed, “if the source text clashes with the ideology of the target culture, translators may have to adapt the text so that the offending passages are either severely modified or left out all together” (Lefevere, *Translating Literature* 87). In Arabic culture, there are strict cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based, ideologies that govern Arabic literary production, reception, acceptance or rejection, and accordingly challenge the production, reception, acceptance, or rejection of the literary translation of Western (mainly American) literary works into Arabic. What is ideologically acceptable in the source culture can be totally rejected in the target culture. Therefore, I will discuss each challenge separately in the following sections, and I will also give examples of some Arabic translations of English literary works that have been constrained and consequently modified by some or all of these challenges.

The Cultural Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation from English into Arabic

Lefevere states that “[t]ranslations can be, and are still seen as a threat to the identity of a culture” (*Translation, History and Culture* 17), and as a result some “cultures may resist translation because it is felt to threaten their self-image” (Lefevere, *Translating Literature* 128). Arab scholar Fadia Khataya in her article “Difficulties in Literary Translation” argues that Arab readers should be exposed to their own cultural surroundings, surroundings they are familiar with. In her review of some Western literary works translated into Arabic, Khataya discusses the differences in cultural backgrounds and values between Arabic and English-speaking societies. She argues that if Arab readers are exposed to such a foreign cultural medium, they will neither understand the foreign text nor will they be fully exposed to their own culture. Being exposed to two cultures, she suggests, could result in making readers feel alienated from their main culture along with the new foreign culture that they are being introduced to.

However, if some literary works get translated, Venuti explains that “[t]he cultural difference of a foreign text ... is always represented in accordance with target-language values that construct cultural identities for both foreign countries and domestic readers” (*The Scandals of Translation* 104). According to Venuti,

a specific cultural constituency controls the representation of foreign literatures for other constituencies in the domestic culture, prevailing certain domestic values to the exclusion of others and establishing a canon of foreign texts that is necessarily partial because it serves certain domestic interests. (71).

Indeed, this is applicable to the condition of translating Western and especially American literary works into the Arabic culture. Certain norms and traditions of the Arabic culture could present obstacles to literary translation. I categorize these challenges into the following: cultural constraints related to the translation of the subject matter, cultural constraints related to the translation of culture-bound words, cultural constraints related to the translation of allusions, and cultural constraints related to the translation of colloquial dialect.

As I have previously stated, the Arabic culture is, to a certain extent, a conservative one, and any topic that might free the society from certain cultural constraints is prohibited. For instance, literary works that deal with a journey to achieve individuality that requires a break from society is likely to be banned. The Arabic society is mostly formed of tribes, and the sense of pride in such tribal formation is very high. On the other hand, most Western literature, and especially American literature, advocates individuality and self-reliance. Therefore, translators face a difficulty in translating these works that are against the cultural tribal norm of the Arabic society. Additionally an American work which encourages rebellion does not get translated into Arabic, or if it does, these elements are not included. Most of the translated works are from British eighteenth and nineteenth century literature and are works that reinforce the social sphere among the members of several families. Contemporary literature, especially American literature including Asian American and African American literature, are not translated into Arabic since they reveal a greater amount of individuality and rebellion. For instance, George Eliot's *Silas Marner* is translated in a way that only stresses the need for the individual to build a social network with the other members of

the society. The Arabic translation of Louisa May Alcott's novel *Little Women* also reinforces both the beginning and ending of the novel where the family members gather and are happy for their union.

Andre Lefevere explains that since language is the “expression of a culture, many of the words in a language are inextricably bound up with that culture and therefore very hard to transfer in their totality to another language” (*Translating Literature* 17). Almost all of the English and specifically American literary works include culture-bound words. There are even certain words that refer to particular historical periods that are no longer used. The culture-bound feature is found in idioms, puns, and could refer to certain customs, folklore, costumes, food, practices, and professions. Because of the amount of difference that exists between English, specifically American, and Arabic culture, Arab translators will find difficulties in translating these culture-bound words. Most of the British and American literary works translated into Arabic do not fully represent their original cultures since most of the culture-bound words are omitted during the translation process. In fact the only culture-bound words that get translated are the names of the characters and the names of some cities and villages. So, most of what is translated is a simple plot that could take place in any culture and at any time.

Furthermore, Lefevere states that “[f]our types of allusions are likely to occur with some regularity in literature written in English: biblical, classical, cultural, and literary” (*Translating Literature* 22). These allusions reveal the significance of the work. Since the Arabic culture does not carry some of the allusions that are found in Western literary works, Arab translators face cultural and religious challenges during the translation process. Furthermore, Arab translators have to know what the allusions stand for, and

accordingly what the author of the original literary text wanted to achieve from including these allusions in the literary work. Most of the Arabic translations of Shakespeare's plays do not include any of the Biblical, Greek, and Roman classical allusions.

Although there are different colloquial dialects of spoken Arabic, there is only one standard form used in writing. Most Arabic literature is written through the standard form. However, some Arab literary writers are now starting to include some colloquial dialects in their works, but such dialects are used to refer to people of certain countries. Therefore, such limitation of Arabic colloquial dialect, of being a representative of a certain country, makes it difficult for Arab translators to translate the colloquial dialect used in some literary works written in English. Indeed translating the colloquial dialect is one of the most difficult cultural challenges to address. Many works written in English and specifically American works contain different dialects such as the "African American dialect" to represent the linguistic and social differences among the characters and to refer to the geographical space they come from. So, the African American dialect used in American literature is used to identify some members of the American society itself and not another society and country. Furthermore, some writers of English literature use different dialects to signify the differences among the characters concerning their social status, level of education, and such use of dialect is hard to show in Arabic literature. Accordingly, none of the African American texts that include African American vernacular have been translated into Arabic. Furthermore, the African American vernaculars have not been included in some of the existing translated American works where the originals include an African American vernacular. For instance, "Kalima," a recent cultural translation initiative project taking place in United Arab Emirates, which I

discuss in depth in chapter four, chose to translate the poetry of the African American poet E. Ethelbert Miller. I assume that this choice is due to the fact that most of Miller's poetry does not contain the African American vernacular. In fact the translation is through the use of Arabic standard language.

The Religious Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation from English into Arabic

Most Arab countries are Islamic ones; therefore, the religious aspect may be the most important challenge translators could face in the cross-cultural translation process. In the Arab world, conversations about religion should be within a scholarly context and should be under the supervision of Muslim Shaikhs (religious leaders) and scholars. Therefore, Arab writers are not encouraged to write any literary work that discusses any aspect of religion, and any attempt of literary translation should follow the same rules. Many Arab writers prefer not to discuss religion in their texts because they know that publishing houses will refuse to print them, or if their works get published, Arab readers will not buy their books and could reach the extent of refusing to buy any of a writer's previous or future literary production. In fact, "dozens of writers across the Arab world have been imprisoned or even executed for their religious views. Several Islamist writers remain in detention across the Arab world" (*Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* 171). Furthermore, some rejections of the work reach the extent of considering the writer a non-Muslim. In the same vein, Amel Amen-Zaki in "Religious and Cultural Considerations in Translating Shakespeare into Arabic" states,

In the Arab world, Islamic culture predominates. While there have been significant numbers of Christian and Jewish Arabs, Islamic culture in the use of language, for instance, has exerted a tremendous influence even

on non-Muslims in the Arab world. Accordingly, translators usually eschew those references which might give offence to a Muslim audience. (223)

Therefore, Arab translators, regardless of their religious belief, do not tend to translate works that reflect Christianity, or if so, they do not include the Biblical verses and references. Accordingly, any literary work that advocates or discusses certain religious issues that are presented differently in Islam are mainly rejected and, I could assume, will never be translated. For instance, Milton's *Paradise Lost* is one of the important works in English literature and has never been translated into Arabic, and I assume it will never be translated. Milton's presentation in *Paradise Lost* of the story of the creation and Adam and Eve is different from what is found in the Holy Quran. In fact Eid Dahiat, a Jordanian critic and researcher in English literature, wrote a book on Milton and his work *Paradise Lost* titled *John Milton and Arab-Islamic Culture*, which was first published in 1986 in English and was translated into Arabic and published in 1993. Dahait discusses Milton's work but did not actually translate it.

Furthermore, since suicide is heavily prohibited in Islam, literary works that reveal characters who end their lives by committing suicide are rarely translated. However, if they get translated, the translator does not translate this act as a heroic act and takes care not to make the readers sympathize with that character. For instance, many of Shakespeare's characters end their lives through committing suicide; Juliet is probably the most famous one whose death was praised at the end since it unified her and Romeo's families. The Arabic translation does not offer such justification at the end; instead, Juliet's death was presented as divine punishment for her for marrying Romeo without the knowledge and against the will of her family.

The Geopolitical Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation from English into Arabic

Literary writing in the Arab world is highly censored, especially if the writer discusses some political aspects. The emergency legislation law is used to imprison any literary writer who imposes ideas that threaten the political agenda of the government. There is a “near-total control of publishing by government in countries such as Libya, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria.... Emergency legislation gives the authorities draconian powers of censorship. Most countries have laws that prohibit the criticism of many issues including most commonly, the head of state or ruling family” (*Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* 171). Writers critical of ruling authorities have been subjected to administrative detention. Not only what is written and published in the Arab world gets censored, but “Censorship beaurus operate at many airports to screen the contents of imported literature” (*Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* 171). Accordingly, any attempt to translate literary works, especially American ones, is governed by a high amount of censorship, especially of their political content. For instance, the Arabic translation of Charles Dickens’s novel *A Tale of Two Cities* rarely includes any of Dickens’s discussions of the French revolution.

Since most of the Arab countries fall in the category named the “third world,” the process of translating any literary work from the “first world” has been doubted. Mahasweta Segupta states that it is crucially important to acknowledge that “translations often operate under varied constraints and that these constraints include manipulations of power relations that aim at constituting an ‘image’ of the source culture that preserves or extends the hegemony of the dominant group” (159). Jeremy Munday

also states that “[t]he linking of colonization and translation is accompanied by the argument that translation has played an active role in the colonization process and in disseminating an ideologically motivated image of colonized people” (134). According to Munday, “power relations” are the “central intersection of translation studies and postcolonial theory” (134). Therefore, the history of colonialism of the third world by the first world has made some of the Arab and Islamic countries view the West, especially America, Britain, and France, negatively. Most important, Ira Marvin Lapidus in his work titled *History of Islamic Societies* states that “[f]rom the 1920s to the 1950s many Arab states were caught up in a double political struggle. Each attempted to win independence from its French or British colonial overload [sic]” (540). So, translating any literary work that reinforces the political view in the West could have been, I assume, considered an obstacle blocking the independence of some Arab countries. Furthermore, colonial history played a major role in shaping the image of the Western world and consequently Western engagement in the Arab world. Therefore, as Shadi Hamid explains in his essay titled “Between Orientalism and Postmodernism: The Changing Nature of Western Feminist Thought Towards the Middle East,” it is really important for Western scholars to realize that previous Western engagement in the Muslim Arab world has led Arab Muslims to reject Western critique (88). So, presenting Western literature and especially American literature to Arabs could be viewed as an attempt to westernize or colonize their societies. Eric Cheyfitz in *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from The Tempest to Tarzan* explains that the history of colonialism has shown that some colonizers have employed translation as a cultural-political channel of imperialism (205). Thus, any literary translation, despite its

translation by Arab translators and its closely monitored content, is to some extent considered an attempt to impose Western ideas on the Arabic society and advocate the superiority of the Western and especially the American culture in comparison to the Arabic culture. Gayatri Spivak also states, “In the act of wholesale translation [from any third world culture] into English there can be a betrayal of the democratic ideal into the law of the strongest” (qtd. in Munday133). Spivak’s statement, I believe, could also be applicable to some views regarding the translation of English literary works into Arabic; some Arab critics could view these translations as presenting the West, which is the strongest, as the ideal that should be followed. In fact, Tejaswini Niranjana in her work titled *Sitting Translation: History, Post-structuralism, and the Colonial Context* presents an image of the postcolonial as “still scored through by an absentee colonialism” and argues that literary translation is a discourse which “inform[s] the hegemonic apparatuses that belong to the ideological structure of colonial rule” (8,33). Since some of the literary Western and mainly English works represent the Arabic culture as either barbaric or violent, not many of these works get translated, or if they do, such description or reflection is left out during the translation process.

The Gender-Based Challenges of Cross-Cultural Translation from English into Arabic

Arabic society has certain customs and traditions that “preserve a specific order for the family and society” (*The Arab Human Development Report 2005: The Rise of Women in the Arab World* 13). It is mainly a male-dominated society. Women are governed by a certain cult of womanhood that resembles most of the features found in the cult of true womanhood in American society during the nineteenth century, which

required the attributes of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. Marsha Posusney and Eleanor Doumato in their work *Women and Globalization in the Arab Middle East: Gender, Economy, and Society* explain that in the Arab world women are idealized “as homemakers ... wives and mothers who stay at home, care for their families and raise a new generation of good Muslim children” (8). Such idealization was also accompanied by considering women of an inferior position compared to men. In fact, some gender-based proverbs were, and unfortunately still are, used to portray and reinforce the inferiority of women in the Arab society. The Arab Human Development Report published in 2005 discusses these proverbs and explains that

[t]hese proverbs rely on underlying the inferior position of women in society and some go even further, considering a woman to have only half a mind, half a creed, half an inheritance, and to be worth only half a man. Their general drift is to limit women’s biological and domestic life and denigrate their worth and independence. (13)

These cultural proverbs reinforce the existence of gender inequality in the Arab world. However, some women activists in the Arab world have done extensive research in the Arab and Muslim world to correct the status of women in these male-dominated societies.

Ziba Mir Hosseini in her article “Muslim Women's Quest for Equality: Between Islamic Law and Feminism,” explains that Muslim feminists argue that the source of gender inequality is not Islam but rather the “cultural [gender-based] norms of early Muslim societies” that assume that “women are created of men and for men; women are inferior to men; women need to be protected; men are guardians and protectors of

women; and male and female sexuality differ and the latter is dangerous to the social order” (643). Women’s inferior position in the Arabic male-dominated society has prevented them from having a voice in the society. Therefore, women in Arabic countries are continuously facing many challenges in their third world societies and in the world in general, one of which is to secure a good status for themselves in a mostly male-dominated society. Tracing this topic historically, one could observe that many Western feminist scholars participated directly and indirectly to help their sisters in that part of the world. However, because Western feminists’ efforts were through the application of Western culture and understanding of gender equality in the Arabic Muslim world without really taking into consideration the specific geopolitical, religious, cultural, and gender-based notions of the Muslim societies, many Arabic Muslim societies have rejected this interference. Western feminists’ contributions were regarded as either a planned strategy to destroy the culture and tradition of the Arabic Muslim world, or a force to westernize the society. Therefore, according to Hamid, Arabic society considered Western feminists as a threat to the Arabic social order because their interference was seen as an attempt of Westernization (77). Furthermore, previous Western interference in the Muslim Arab world had led Arab Muslims to reject Western engagement, especially in the field of feminism. In the same vein, Leila Ahmed notes in her article “Feminism and Cross-Cultural Inquiry: The Terms of Discourse in Islam” that “the colonial powers and their agents, and in particular the missionaries through the schools they founded did indeed explicitly set out to undermine Islam through the training and remolding of women” (144). As a result, Western feminists are always seen as a threat and as an indirect way to colonize this part of the world.

Arab women's inferior position extends to the literary field. They have not been given the chance to enter the literary field either as writers or as strong characters in literary works. The male-dominated society requires women to act within a certain cult that deprives them of most of their rights in favor of men. Therefore, men who govern literary production prevent many literary works that present strong women who fight for their rights and also possibly ban any translation of literary work that portrays the resistance of women to different forces, especially the patriarchal one.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that some women writers were able to resist the male dominance in the literary field and presented some literary works of their own. However, these women writers were only able to write literary works that reinforce their domesticity. Dalya Cohen-Mor compiled an anthology titled *Arab Women Writers: An Anthology of Short Stories* where she translates into English sixty literary works of forty Arab women writers from across the Arab world. She categorizes the works according to their themes into the following eight categories: growing up female, love and sexuality, male and female relations, marriage, childbearing, customs and values, self-fulfillment, and the winds of change. So, one could see that six out of the eight themes deal with issues of domesticity and women as wives and mothers. Only the two themes of "self-fulfillment" and "winds of change" reflect signs of individuality and independence.

Accordingly, Western literary works that advocate feminism were also rejected and these works are rarely translated into the Arabic culture. If they are translated, they are presented in ways that situate the female characters in the cult of womanhood. Charlotte Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre* is considered one of the important feminist works that reveal the heroine's journey and struggle and rebellion against the norms of the

English male-dominated society. *Jane Eyre* in its original English culture encouraged women to make their own choices in living their lives, to develop respect for themselves, and to become full individuals. Although translated into Arabic, Jane in the Arabic translation, due to the gender-based norms governing the cult of Arab womanhood, was transformed into a passive, virtuous girl who gets rewarded for her morality and sacrifice for the sake of the male character in the novel, Mr. Rochester. Western feminist theorists have argued that women in general are often repressed in society and literature. Sherry Simon in her work *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission*, in which she approaches translation from a gender-studies perspective, states that the main interest of feminist translation theory aims to “identify and critique the tangle of concepts which relegates both women and translation to the bottom of the social and literary ladder” (1). She also refers to the presence of a language of sexism in translation studies, with its images of fidelity, dominance, and betrayal. Therefore, Simon, urges feminist translators to pay attention to the tools that could help in reinforcing the elevating the status of women in literature. Indeed, the male-dominance in the field of literary translation, specifically in the Arab world, limited the Arab readers to reading literary works that have been translated in a way that reinforces the inferiority of women in different cultures.

Conclusion

After examining the different challenges that face the cross-cultural translation of literary works in English into the Arabic culture, it is fair to say that any translation effort that does not pass these challenges and remains constrained by them will produce alien cultural forms that neither present the culture of the source text nor resemble that of the

target readers. Furthermore, if the translator chooses to be constrained by all of these challenges when translating English literary works into Arabic, she or he will end up translating only those texts that conform to the target culture's ideology or manipulating the source text in order to make it fit into the ideology of the target culture. According to Anurdaha Dingwany, such decision is considered a serious mistake committed by translators; and she states that "the process of translation involved in making another culture comprehensible entails varying degrees of violence, especially when the culture being translated is constituted as that of the 'other'" ("Translating 'third world cultures'" 3). Accordingly, it is always important to remember that "there is always the possibility that our view of other cultures will be distorted by translation" (Neubert and Shreve *Translation as Text* 3). Indeed, this distortion could happen if translators aim at confining their translations of English literary works to the constraints of the target culture. Furthermore, being restricted by these constraints during the translation process dehistoricizes the literary source text from its context, from which it derives its significance and importance. Indeed, Sun Yifeng in the essay titled "(Multi)-Cultural Context Interpretation and Translation Adrift" reinforces the importance of considering the historical context of the work, explaining that "[d]ue to historical and cultural factors, the intended or putatively 'real' meaning of certain parts of the source text is undoubtedly not limited to their literal meaning and then it is the responsibility of the translator to 'explain' what is beyond the literal meaning" (249). In fact, many of the significant messages of the work lie behind the literal meaning of the work. So, it is vitally important for readers to understand and grasp the historical context that lies behind the work in order to get the writer's opinion and message.

Venuti also has an important view regarding the violence of translation which he states in his article “Translation as Cultural Politics: Regimes of Domestication in English” through the following lines:

The violence of translation resides in its very purpose and activity; the reconstruction of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs, and representations that pre-exist it in the target language, always configured in hierarchies and marginality, always determining the production, circulation, and reception of texts. Translation is the forcible replacement of the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text to a text that will be intelligible to the target-language reader. (209)

It is then, I believe, the role of the translator to acknowledge the historical context of the source text and translate it to the readers of translation. The translator should also be aware of the challenges that relate to the target culture that could hinder an accurate translation of the source text. Translators should also bear in mind that “[t]ranslation wields enormous power in constructing representations of foreign cultures (Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation* 67). Thus, they should not misrepresent the culture of the source text, since it could be the only venue from which these readers construct their knowledge of other cultures and especially those cultures that have more differences than similarities with the target culture, such as in the case of American and Arabic culture, which are significantly different from one another.

Therefore, I argue that it is also the continuous role of Arab translators of English literary works to make decisions over and over again to address the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that hinder an accurate translation of literary

works from English into Arabic. Translators should also be aware that their decisions are open to scholarly criticism. Thus, considering my position as a native of the Arabic culture and specialization in American literature and culture, it is my responsibility to critique existing translations of American literary works into the Arabic culture.

Therefore, through using the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges, I will analyze and critique the decisions that Arab translators made while translating Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* into the Arabic language and culture.

CHAPTER THREE

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN: ARABIC TRANSLATIONS AND ACCOMPANYING ENGLISH ABRIDGED TEXT AS A CASE STUDY OF CHALLENGES OF CROSS-CULTURAL LITERARY TRANSLATION FROM ENGLISH INTO ARABIC

Many literary works written in English have been introduced to Arab readers through translation, including Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*, *Hard Times* and *Great Expectations*, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, and Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* and *Jamaica Inn*. Works such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, and Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and *A Tale of Two Cities* are widely circulated, and some of these works are retranslated more than once. For instance, not only is Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* the only text chosen for translation from the antebellum period discussing slavery, but in fact, it is one of those texts that have been retranslated more than once into Arabic; it has been retranslated more than five times by different Arab translators since the 1960s. However, after a close reading of these translations, I believe that none of them stand as a faithful translation of Stowe's original work. All of them are mainly plot-oriented ones; the work's cultural significance is, to a high degree, missing. Instead these linguistic-oriented Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* have produced plot-oriented texts conveying the story

of Uncle Tom, the slave who, despite his long journey in slavery, remains a forgiving hero. Therefore, I feel that it is important to introduce *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to the Arabic culture through a period-specific cultural-oriented translation that is capable of presenting the cultural significance of Stowe's work within its historical context that will enrich Arab readers' understanding of nineteenth-century American culture concerning issues of slavery and women's empowerment and also reveal Stowe's critique concerning these two issues. However, I am not planning on presenting a new translation through my study, but since I have located the challenges of cross-cultural literary translation from English to Arabic in the second chapter of this study, I will investigate their validity through examining the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

In this chapter, I will, examine the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the abridged English version accompanying two of them that had been modified by one of the Arabic textbook publishing houses. I will deal with the translations along with the abridged English version as one whole body instead of dealing with each one separately since not much difference exists among them except for the shortest version, which is only thirty-four pages long and must have been based on the children's abridged version of Stowe's text. I will compare these translations with Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* edited by Christopher G. Diller in 2009, which is based on the 1852 first edition and reprints all of the prefaces that Stowe wrote for authorized European republications of the novel. Diller's edition also gathers a diverse collection of primary materials that display the development and unprecedented reception of the work. In this comparison I will point out the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based

challenges that hindered and could hinder an accurate literary translation of the work into the Arabic culture. I will then discuss the challenges facing the translation of Stowe's use of sentimentalism as a narrative strategy.

Much research has been done on Stowe's novel and her use of sentimentalism, but yet much remains to be done about its translation in different languages and cultural settings. Denise Kohn, Sarah Meer, and Emily B. Todd, the editors of *Transatlantic Stowe; Harriet Beecher Stowe and European Culture*, state in their 2006 introduction that "[e]ven if in the nineteenth century Stowe was understood as a significant transatlantic writer, more recently she has been read within the tradition of American women's writing in the nineteenth century, scholarship that until now has been national in scope" (xiv-xv). Indeed, there is not much research available concerning the translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Until now, no research has been done concerning the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and their reception in Arabic cultures. This study will be the first to discuss Stowe's work in the scope of Arabic culture. However, it is important to note that my focus is not solely critiquing the translations; I am only using them as case studies to examine the possible challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of literary texts written in English into the Arabic culture.

Roger Shattuck, in his essay titled "Artificial Horizon; Translator as Navigator," states that "it has become a commonplace of translation to say that every version of a work in a foreign language necessarily suggests a critical interpretation of the work" (153). Indeed, any translation manifests how the translator read the original work and how she or he wanted it to be read by the audience of her or his culture. Furthermore, I believe that another level of interpretation of the literary translation must also take place

by scholarly critics. Through this interpretation critics must investigate the reasons for selecting the literary work for translation, the possible challenges that had faced the literary translation process, and suggest possible solutions for such challenges. Indeed, presenting these interpretations is more crucial if the foreign work has been translated to many languages and also more than once in a specific language.

Arabic Translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

There are currently seven existing Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The first translation appeared in 1953, just over a hundred years after the novel first appeared, while the sixth and seventh translations both appeared in 2009. The first translation was by the famous Lebanese linguist Muneer Al-Ba'albaki and published by Dar El Ilm Lilmalayin in two hundred and seventy-five pages. It is introduced by a two-page preface about Stowe that includes the fact that the novel had sold more than a million copies. Most of the later translations make some changes on Al-Ba'albaki's original translation through either deleting certain parts of that text or substituting synonyms for some words. One possible reason for the wide circulation of this translation is due to the fame of the translator; Al-Ba'albaki is a well known Arabic translator in the Arab world. His knowledge in English linguistics enabled him to produce one of the most credible and widely used dictionaries from English to Arabic. He is also the translator of many literary texts from English into Arabic, including Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Citizen Tom Paine* by Howard Fast, *The Old Man and the Sea* and *Across the River and into the Trees* by Ernest Hemingway, and *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte. Most of his translations are targeted toward college students, who are the main readers of translated English literature. Publisher Dar El Ilm

Lilmalayin, after the passing of Muneer Al-Ba'albaki in 2004, recognized his efforts in the Arabic literary field by presenting a second edition of all of his translations of literary works written in English accompanied by an introduction about him. The revised edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is of two hundred and eighty six pages but no differences exist between the two editions of the novel itself.

In 1997, a second translation of Stowe's work was presented by Yaqoub AL-Sharouni and published by Dar Al Thaqafa. Here the translator claims to present Stowe's text through a different narration (his own); the resulting text is only thirty-four pages. AL-Sharouni is an author of many works of Arabic literature for children. He is also a translator of many English literary works that he specifically presents for young children. Therefore, he translated *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in only thirty-four pages.

However, this translation did not achieve any success and therefore it is now out of print. I was never able to get a copy of this translation, but based on his previous works I believe AL-Sharouni's Arabic translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was based on one of the versions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that were specifically addressed to children.³ Then, in 2002 a third translation occurred and was the first to be accompanied by an abridged English version of the original English text. This work is published by Dar Al Bihar, one of the main publishing houses for translated literary works for Arab college students in two hundred and fourteen pages, but unfortunately it does not mention any information about the actual translator of the work. The translation was also concluded by study

³ Stowe's work has been adapted more than once for young readers. For a complete list and view of these versions please refer to the website designed by the Department of English at the University of Virginia titled *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and American Culture and go to Uncle Tom as Children's Book <<http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/childrn/cbhp.html>>.

questions about each chapter. Each page of the Arabic translation is faced by another page including some of Stowe's text in English. Through my reading of the work, I found that this Arabic translation strongly depends on Muneer Al-Ba'albaki's translation. The accompanying English text corresponds to what has been included in Arabic.

In 2003, Dar El Ilm Lilmalayin presented a fourth translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as part of a campaign of retranslating English literary works for middle and high school Arab readers, who range between the ages of eleven and fifteen. This translation, in one hundred and fifty-two pages, was by Dr. Qadri Kalaji, who has also translated other English-language literary works including Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* and George Eliot's *Silas Marner*. However, this translation is not widely circulated among Arab readers. This translation is not different from Al-Ba'albaki's translation except that it deletes additional passages.

A fifth translation followed and was titled *Uncle Tom's Cabin or the Life of the Tortured on Earth* by Dr. Saleem Khalil Qahwaji published by Dar AL Jil in 2004 in three hundred and forty-five pages. This translation is accompanied by an introduction about Harriet Beecher Stowe and two paragraphs about the popularity of the novel in American literature. It also includes a brief synopsis of the characters. The book is concluded with plot-oriented study questions about each chapter.

In 2009, three translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were published. One was translated by Michel Haddad in three hundred and fifty-four pages, revised by Dyaa Qubaisi, and published by Al Ahleeah publishing and distributing house. However, after a close reading of the work I found that it is also solely based on Ba'albaki's translation. The differences were based on replacing some Arabic words with their synonyms.

Haddad did not make any changes of what Ba'albaki summarized, changed, modified, or deleted. The other translation was also published by Dar El Ilm Lilmalayin and translated in one hundred and eighty-four pages by Akram Alrafai. The publishing house introduces this translation as a summarized version of Stowe's work so Arab readers can recognize that parts of Stowe's text have been excluded.

Wadi Alneel, another Arabic publishing house, published a final Arabic translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* whose translator is not identified. This translation is accompanied with an abridged English version of Stowe's original novel. The total number of pages of this edition is two hundred and forty pages divided in half between the Arabic translation and the abridged English text accompanying it. Although the publishing house claims that it presents a new translation of Stowe's original novel, I have found that it is an exact replica of Dar AlBihar's Arabic translation and its accompanying English abridged version. The only differences are in the type of font used and the space between paragraphs on each page. So, at first glance, they seem different translations.

In general, all of the translations along with the abridged English texts are mainly plot-oriented unsuccessful ones. Stowe's work has been translated without taking into consideration the historical, political, cultural, and religious context that shaped it. Most of the translated versions simply convey the story of a slave named Tom who manages to cope with different forms of torture at the hands of his white masters until he dies at the end of the novel after portraying a forgiving heroic example. Accordingly, based on my close readings of these translations, I found the existence of cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that hindered the production of a faithful translation of Stowe's work. Furthermore, I strongly believe that these challenges have

also governed the modification of the abridged English version accompanying two of the Arabic translations.

Before discussing the translations, it is important to note that when comparing an original work with its translations seeking an exact replica of the original is impossible.

Werner Winter states that

we may compare the work of a translator with that of an artist who is asked to create an exact replica of a marble statue, but who cannot secure any marble. He may find some other stone or some wood, or he may have to model in clay or work in bronze, or he may have to use a brush or a pencil and a sheet of paper. Whatever his material, if he is a good craftsman, his work may be good or even great; it may indeed surpass the original, but it will never be what he set out to produce, an exact replica of the original. ("Impossibilities of Translation" 68)

So, I believe that the task of professional criticism of any literary translation is to ascertain how closely the translation faithfully represents the original rather than expecting it to be an exact replica of the original. After that, the critic, in an attempt to facilitate the production of faithful literary translations, should point out any challenges that prevent producing a faithful version of the literary work being translated.

The Analysis of Paratextual Material

The task of criticism concerning literary translations should be performed through following certain criteria. Ivan Kashkin, a famous Russian translator and critic, states that "criticism has a role that is both specific and very responsible.... The critic must discover the task the author set himself ... and define how this task has been

understood and implemented by the translator” (qtd. in Leighton 54). The translator’s understanding of the literary work she or he intends to translate and her or his focus through the translation are mainly illustrated through the paratextual material accompanying the translation. Bassnett and Lefevere in *Translation, History and Culture* state that “the peripheral matter which accompanies the text of translations are useful tools in analyzing the constructed subject of translation in its various historical forms” (110). They specifically discuss in depth the importance of the translator’s preface and state that in any literary translation, the translator’s preface is “of particular interest” (110). They also explain that these prefaces are significantly useful since they “trace the contours of literary ideology and expose for [the readers] the sociopolitical context which commands literary exchanges” (111). Furthermore, Bassnett and Lefevere also state that the preface

foregrounds the presence of the second hand ... [and speaks] a double language. It is at the same time speech and action ... offering information, it also seeks protection from the outrages of power; advancing propitiatory disclaimers ... propels the work towards new markets and audiences [and mainly] captures the goodwill of the public. (111)

Therefore, both the content and intended function of the preface has to be analyzed before critiquing the actual literary translation.

Accordingly, I will start by critiquing the paratextual material and paying special attention to the prefaces that have accompanied the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and the abridged English text. Although I have stated before that I will deal with the translations as a whole body since no major differences exist among them, I will

rather deal with the included paratextual material separately because some differences exist among them. However, it is important to note that none of the Arabic translations and the abridged English version include Stowe's preface, which reinforces the plot-oriented concern during the translation process.

The first Arabic translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Ba'albaki, which was introduced in 1953, was accompanied by only a two-page preface. This very short preface is titled "About this book." In it Ba'albaki states that the purpose of presenting this translation is to introduce Arab readers to classical literary works that involve humane and sympathetic content. Ba'albaki then notes the importance of Stowe's work by situating it within its historical context; he briefly explains that it was one of the works that played a significant role in starting the war between the North and the South of the United States, referring to Lincoln's supposed comment to Stowe that she was "the little lady who started the big war." Ba'albaki also briefly mentions that the main purpose of Stowe's work was to abolish the condition of slavery. Finally, Ba'albaki points to the popularity of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* inside and outside the United States, including the number of copies it sold and mentioning the fact that it has been translated into many languages; he says that he is proud to be the first to translate it into Arabic. So, Ba'albaki attempts to provide the readers with information concerning the importance of the work within its historical context. Based on the paratextual material Ba'albaki includes, I argue that his translation should convey the text's importance.

Dr. Saleem Khaleel Qahwaji's preface is titled "The Writer and the Work." This preface includes all of the information mentioned in Ba'albaki's preface. Fortunately, Qahwaji adds some biographical information about Stowe, such as her education at her

father's house and the death of her son. He also includes titles of eight of her other literary works. Most important, Qahwaji gives some historical background about *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. He explains that Stowe first published *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a series in one of the newspapers to critique the Fugitive Slave Law. Qahwaji also includes some information about the institution of slavery, particularly in the South, and the effect of its abolition on the sociopolitical condition in the United States.

Furthermore, Qahwaji includes other paratextual material with the preface. Directly after the preface and before the actual translation of the literary work, Qahwaji includes a synopsis of some of the characters. He puts them in four categories: the first, titled "Uncle Tom," gives a brief synopsis of his character; the second, titled "slave holders and traders," gives a paragraph-length synopsis for each of the following characters: Mr. Shelby, Haley, Augustine St. Clare, Simon Legree, and George Shelby. The third category is titled "female characters," where he also gives a paragraph-length synopsis for each of the following characters: Mrs. Shelby, Mrs. Bird, Miss Ophelia, Aunt Chloe, Eliza, Cassy, and Emmaline. The last category is titled "the children," where Qahwaji includes a couple of sentences introducing Harry, Uncle Tom's children, Topsy, and Eva.

Qahwaji also ends his translation with some study questions for each chapter. These are some examples:

Ch.1. Analyze the grammatical context of the following sentence....

Ch.2. Where does George plan to travel? Why?

Ch.4. How did the Birds help Eliza and her son?

Ch. 6. What did Haley read in the newspaper?

Ch.10 What did this chapter end with?

Ch.16. Who is Henrique? How does he treat slaves?

Ch.24. Change the grammatical order of the following sentence....

Ch.30. Give the antonyms of the following words....

Ch.34. What was George Shelby's important decision? (365-75)

Clearly, these questions are either plot-oriented or test the linguistic knowledge of Arabic syntax and morphology. Finally, it is important to note that Qahwaji, in almost every page of the translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, highlights some words in bold font and gives their meanings in footnotes, a fact which also reinforces the linguistic concern of the translator.

Al Rafi's translation published in 2009 does not include a preface; instead, its publishing house Dar El Ilm Lilmalayeen states that this book is a part of its "global library" series of translated literature that aims to develop the young readers' linguistic and comprehension skills. Like Gahwaji, the translator here also includes some study questions at the end of the translations that mainly test young readers' Arabic linguistic knowledge and their understanding of the plot:

1. What were Mr. Shelby's compliments of Tom?
2. Why was George Harris returned to the plantation?
3. Using the dictionary, give the meaning of the following words....
4. Explain the grammatical structure of the following sentences.... (185-87)

However, the back cover of the book includes the five following points about the novel:

- It is the most famous “story,” of American literature,
- the writer illustrated the lives of slaves before the civil war, and called for their rights as humans and citizens,
- it is translated to different languages, and to Arabic several times,
- it should be read until now, since the Uncle Tom’s misery is still going on since many Blacks still face racial oppression all over the world.

Since both publishing houses Dar Albihar and Wadi Al-Neel present the same translation whose translator is not identified, they both include exactly the same preface of three paragraphs in English and Arabic titled “Harriet Beecher (1811-1896).” The first two paragraphs are about Stowe and the last paragraph is about the novel. The information included in these paragraphs does not differ from what has been included in the previously discussed prefaces. Although these prefaces do not give readers enough information about Stowe and her work, it is important to note that the other translators and publishing houses do not include any information; they only point out that it is a translation. These two translations also include many study questions at the end of their texts. The following are some examples:

Ch.1. Did Mr. Haley like women? How did he deal with them?

Ch.2. When did George meet Eliza and marry her?

Ch.3. What job did Aunt Chloe do at Mr. Shelby’s plantation?

Ch.4. What was Mr. Haley’s trade?

Ch.7. What’s the name of the man who set his slaves free and bought himself a place in the woods?

Ch.16. What is the difference between Topsy and Eva?

Ch18. What was the usual question that Eva asked Tom?

Ch.22. Describe the slave warehouse in New Orleans.

Ch.24. Why did Simon Legree raise dogs?

Ch.32. Where was Tom Buried. (428)

Looking at these prefaces as a whole, it is obvious that Arab readers are not given enough information that enables them to recognize Stowe, as an author and intellect, and her work. Concerning Stowe, the readers are not provided with information that presents her as an important figure in the public sphere and who is a strong advocate of slaves and women's rights. Stowe's religious upbringing and views also were not fully presented in the prefaces. Furthermore, Stowe's preface to her novel is never translated. Concerning the novel, if any paratextual material is included, it only reinforces the fact that it was a text about the institution of slavery and the text that had caused the war. How and why it caused the war is not mentioned. None of the prefaces mentions the importance of the text regarding the cultural empowerment of women during the mid-nineteenth century.

After reading the prefaces, I was assuming, and hoping, that the translators and publishing houses might have thought that it would be better for Arab readers to understand the importance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and to acknowledge Stowe as author and intellect through reading the actual translations. Unfortunately, I was disappointed since the Arabic translations dramatically suppressed Stowe and her work to the extent that the final chapter, "Concluding Remarks," was not included in any of the Arabic translations.

Instead paratextual materials in some of the Arabic translations and the abridged English version of the text further reinforce the plot-oriented approach and the linguistic concern of all of the attempts to translate Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* into the Arabic language. Some translations include study questions that are mainly plot-oriented ones and others include a glossary of word meaning. The questions are divided according to the chapters.

Despite the inaccuracy of these translations, I believe that the intentions of the translators and the publishing houses are not to blame since their efforts to translate foreign literary texts and present them to Arab readers should be commended. Indeed, Levefre states that "the text of a translation has often been called a culture's window on the world" (*Translating Literature* 11). If it was not for these translations, limited knowledge of certain languages would have prevented Arab readers from knowing other cultures even slightly.

Moreover, producing an accurate translation is not the responsibility of the translators alone. I believe that scholars who have the advantage of being natives of one culture and language and experts in another are equally responsible. Having a scholarly knowledge of two languages and two cultures should enable a critic to study the work in its original language and culture and also study its translation in another language and culture. Such a critic will have enough knowledge of the historical context of the original literary work to investigate whether the literary work had been fairly translated, to help in pointing the challenges facing literary translation, and to present possible solutions for such challenges. Lauren G. Leighton, states that "[t]he task of the critic is not only to point out errors but also to show translators where they can improve

their work and to insure that the work achieves its full potential” (*Two Worlds, One Art* 54). However, I would, clearly like to state that in this chapter of my study I do not aim to critique the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in a way that specifically highlights their errors; instead I would like to point to the challenges that could have faced previous translators and might well face future translators of the work. In the same vein, Lefevere states,

The product, the finished translation, the strategies behind the making of this product, the objectives with which it is made, and eventually, the role the product plays in a culture and a literature--all these aspects of translation will pave the way for translation studies in the institutions of academe, simply because the study of the product fits in so well with literary theory and historiography as they are practiced already. (*Translating Literature* 134)

In this study, I will not be able to address all of the aspects concerning the field of literary translation from English into Arabic culture. Thus, I will specifically focus on the challenges that could hinder accurate literary translation and aim that my study could pave the way for better literary translations of English literary texts into the Arabic culture and language.

In the second chapter of this study, I categorized the challenges of cross-cultural literary translation from English into Arabic culture as the following: cultural, religious, gender-based, and geopolitical ones. But not all translations face all of these challenges, and if they do, the degree of the challenge may differ as well. Closely reading the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, I found that its cultural translation

into the Arabic culture is confronted by all of the previous challenges. In the following sections I will discuss each challenge in depth and show how it played a role in the translators' decisions to modify, summarize, or delete some parts and elements of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Since *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is one of the most important masterpieces of American literature, its translation should reflect its significance. Agata Brajerska-Mazur, in the essay titled "Katena and Translations of Literary Masterpieces," states,

Masterpieces need invisible translation. They are too precious, too beautiful in themselves to be either spoilt or (what's often worse) "bettered" by their translators. Their sheer integrity and value should be protected from any unnecessary changes in their shape and meaning. In order to "measure" the quality of a translation of a literary masterpiece a critic has to compare the translation with its original and choose the best method of evaluating the translated text. (16)

Through comparing Stowe's original text with the Arabic translations and the abridged English text accompanying two of them, I have located the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that could prevent an accurate presentation of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. However, I will mostly cite from the abridged English version since it is similar to all of the Arabic translations. It also reveals what is introduced to the Arab world under the title of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Furthermore, referring to the abridged English version will strengthen my claim that any literary work introduced to the Arabic culture--whether written in Arabic, translated to Arabic, or

introduced in its original language-- is faced with some of the challenges that I have outlined.

The Cultural Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* from English to Arabic

Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is a work that is deeply embedded in the historical context in which it is written. Its cultural context is extremely important since it was a crucial factor of its significance. Yet, this cultural context is in itself a challenge which is extremely important to consider during the process of translating the work. Closely reading Stowe's original work in its native language and closely examining the different Arabic translations and the accompanying English version, I have located the following cultural constraints that have hindered and are likely continue to impede future translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* into the Arabic language and culture. These cultural constraints are related to the translation of culture-bound words, to the translation of foreign words, to the translation of classical, cultural, and literary allusions, and to the translation of colloquial dialect

Cultural Constraints related to the Translation of Culture-Bound Words

Culture-bound words are very important to consider during the translation process from the English culture to the Arabic one. Andre Lefevre explains that since language is the "expression of a culture, many of the words in a language are inextricably bound up with that culture and therefore very hard to transfer in their totality to another language" (*Translating Literature* 17). Indeed, most of the culture-bound terms in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are bound to the Christian religion and the institution of slavery that do not and did not exist in the Arabic culture. Susan Bassnett Mcguire

states that “[c]ultural untranslatability is due to the absence in the TL [target language] culture of a relevant situational feature for the SL [source language] text” (*Translation Studies* 32) For this reason, there are many culture-bound terms in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* that were not translated into Arabic and, most important, the words that relate to the Christian religion and the institution of slavery, including the fugitive slave law and slavery stereotypes. In using these culture-bound words in her text, Stowe assumes that her readers fully understand their implications. She does not need to use a lot of explanation for her readers concerning certain situations and conditions. In this section, I will locate some examples of culture-bound words in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* that were neither translated into Arabic nor included in the accompanying abridged English text. After that, I will discuss the effect of neglecting such culture-bound words on gaining a full understanding of the text and Stowe’s intention of using such culture-bound words.

Stowe opens her text with a chapter describing the characters of the slave owner Mr. Shelby and the slave trader Mr. Haley. She describes Mr. Haley’s command of English grammar through putting it into comparison with Murray’s grammar in the following sentence: “His conversation was in free and easy defiance of Murray’s Grammar” (47). Murray’s Grammar is a culture-bound term since it is one of the most famous English grammar books, written by Lindley Murray and first published in 1795. Assuming that her American readers already know Murray’s Grammar, Stowe wanted to show the low and weak condition of Haley’s language, and further state that his language “was garnished at convenient intervals with various profane expressions, which not even the desire to be graphic in my account shall induce me to transcribe” (47). If the Arab translators are not fully aware of the significance of this culture-bound

word and accordingly the importance of this book in the American culture, Stowe's intention of degrading Haley's command of language will be missed. Unfortunately, the Arabic translations and the abridged English text accompanying the Arabic ones do not refer to Murray's Grammar.⁴ Some translations explain only that Haley's language is grammatically incorrect. The only description of Haley in the abridged English version is through the following statement: "One of the men was a short thick-set man, with coarse commonplace features, and that swaggering air of pretension which marks a low man who is trying to elbow his way upward in the world" (11). Arab readers will not fully grasp Stowe's description of Haley's speech and linguistic ability, and will not recognize that some women's and slaves' speech is far superior to Haley's in the novel. Since the cultural norm at the middle of the nineteenth century for measuring humanity is to be a white man, Stowe advocates for women's empowerment and slaves' rights through making comparisons in their speech, as I will discuss more fully in the section concerning the cultural constraints related to the translation of the colloquial dialect. For instance, Stowe gives superior linguistic abilities to some of her slave and white female characters, including George Harris, Cassy, Miss Ophelia, and Eva. Therefore, the use of "Murray's Grammar" to satirize Mr. Haley's speech will make the readers consider such comparison, which is unfortunately not available for Arab readers.

Furthermore, since the Arabic culture is an Islamic one, not many Biblical proverbs are widely circulated in such a culture, and it could be hard for Arab translators to translate the Biblical proverbs found in literary works in English. Since the American culture is mainly a Christian one, in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Stowe uses a lot of Biblical proverbs that were not translated into Arabic. In George and Eliza's

⁴ I will cite throughout from Dar AlBihar's edition for the abridged English text.

conversation about George's misery on Harris's plantation, George says that his life "is bitter as wormwood," referring to the Biblical proverb, "For the lips of a strange woman drops as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil. But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword" (Proverbs 5.3-4). Unfortunately, none of the translators understood the meaning of the word "wormwood," and therefore some of them did not include it at all. However, some of them literally translated it as an "earth worm"; it seems to me that these translators thought that George meant to say that his life is meaningless, just as the life of an earthworm is.

The dominance of Islam in the Arabic culture also hindered the translation of culture-bound words relating to Christianity, including reference to various Christian denominations. For instance, the Quakers have not been adequately introduced to Arab readers. On one hand, some of the translations simply present them as a religious group known as "the friends" without pointing to any of their beliefs and practices and their opinion regarding the institution of slavery. Such presentation of the Quakers is not enough for readers who are not familiar with the different Christian religious sects. On the other hand, other translations present the term "Quaker" as the family name of the people who help the running slave couple Eliza and George. Through such translations Arab readers will not know that the Quakers are actually a religious group that has helped slaves in their path to freedom. Recognizing such information enriches Arab readers understanding of the Quakers' efforts in the abolition of slavery during the nineteenth century in America.

Another important challenge of translating culture-bound words into Arabic relates to the different historical context that exists between the institution of slavery in the Arabic culture and that which existed in America. The institution of slavery in Arabia was abolished with the rise of Islam; that is, fourteen hundred years ago. Yet, it was totally different from the institution that existed in America. Therefore, many of the culture-bound words related to the institution of slavery used by Stowe in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were either left out or translated incorrectly. "Abolitionist" is one of the culture-bound terms that are related to the institution of slavery that does not exist in the Arabic cultural context of slavery; therefore, it was not translated into Arabic. The abolition of slavery was an order by Islam that had to be followed, and Islam presented a unique and gradual way of abolishing slavery. With the rise of Islam, many new Muslims were not able to follow all of the rules; therefore one way to repent was through freeing the slaves. If a person was a slaveholder himself, he should grant his slave's freedom, or if he does not own slaves, he should buy a slave's freedom from another slaveholder. Furthermore, freeing a slave was a highly rewarded deed in Islam, and therefore many Muslims either freed all of their slaves or paid for the freedom of other slaves. Therefore, the term "abolitionist" was not relevant to the history of slavery in the Arabic culture. Although the term does not exist in any of the Arabic translations, however, it occasionally occurs in the abridged English text, but it is still hard for the readers to understand its meaning. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Mr. Shelby tells his wife that she is "getting to be an abolitionist quite" (80). None of the Arabic translations include the Shelybs' conversation while the abridged English one briefly explains Mrs. Shelby's shock over the selling of the slaves without any reference to Mr. Shelby's comment to

his wife about becoming an abolitionist (49). Accordingly, the translator's decision not to introduce the term "abolition" made them delete Stowe's opinion about abolitionists and religious preachers which she revealed after the Shelbys' conversation. As a result, the Arabic readers do not get the chance to be introduced to the important abolitionist movement of the American culture.

Stowe also used other culture-bound words relating to the institution of slavery in her work. For instance, the term "down river" was used in this novel to refer to the lower Mississippi, where slave conditions were at their worst, since slaves were punished by being sold to more brutal slaveholders farther South. However, the meaning of such term never appeared in the Arabic translations. Again, most of the translations give the literal meaning of the term, that is, selling a slave to a slaveholder who has a plantation located farther south on the other side of a river. Accordingly, Arab readers will not be able to understand the indication of such a term and that the institution of slavery was at its worst farther South.

The "Middle Passage" is another culture-bound term relating to the culture of the institution of slavery. In the transatlantic slave trade, this term refers to the deadly "Middle Passage" from Africa to America, "where slaves were packed into cargo holds without fresh air, water, or sanitary facilities" (Diller 375). Indeed, Arabs brought slaves from Africa, but the journey did not include the "Middle Passage"; the journey was either by a sea voyage, through the Red Sea that is between Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, or by land, since Egypt is both part of Africa and also part of the Arab world. Lacking such knowledge of the meaning of the "Middle Passage," the title of chapter XXXI, "The Middle Passage," was never translated correctly in any of the Arabic

translations. Since the previous chapter ends with Simon Legree taking the slaves to his plantation on the Red River, some translations translated the title “Beyond the River,” referring to the Red River included in the opening sentences of the chapter. Others translated the title as “Beyond the Red River,” “The trip across the River,” and “The Narrow Path.” As a result, Arab readers will not be able to recognize Stowe’s indication that although the importing of slaves from Africa had stopped its shocking experience still exists through the slave trade taking place in the South, especially the ones that are happening “down river.”

The culture-bound words relating to the American Fugitive Slave Law and other laws related to slavery are neither translated into Arabic nor included in the abridged English version. In *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* Stowe occasionally refers to such laws through quoting some of their terms and statements. For example, Stowe, referring to Tom’s sale with furniture after the death of St. Clare, critiques the inheritance of slaves like any other piece of furniture after the death of their owner through the following statement: “The great difference is, that the table and chair cannot feel, and the *man* can; for even a legal enactment that he shall be ‘taken, reputed, adjudged in law, to be a chattel personal,’ cannot blot out his soul, with its own private little world of memories, hopes, loves, fears, and desires” (376). In this example, Stowe quotes from the South Carolina slave code, from which she quotes at greater length in *A Key To Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1853): “Slaves shall be deemed, sold, taken, reputed, and adjudged in law to be chattels personal, in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators, and assigns, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever” (132). Since such a reference was neither translated nor included in the abridged

English text, Arab readers will not appreciate Stowe's participation in social reform through critiquing the Fugitive Slave Law and other laws enforcing slavery in her novel. In the same vein, Stowe's comment on the white Kentuckian man who wanted to help Eliza was also not translated. Stowe states that the man "had not been instructed in his constitutional relations, and consequently was betrayed into acting in a sort of a Christianized manner, which, if he had been better situated and more enlightened, he would not have been left to do" (106). By "constitutional relations" Stowe refers to the passed Fugitive Slave Act that criminalized aiding and helping runaway slaves. Since none of the Arabic translations nor the abridged English version include Eliza's escape in depth, let alone this reference, Arab readers will not be able to grasp Stowe's commentary on the Fugitive Slave Law that has been the main cause for her to write this novel in the first place.

Cultural Constraints related to the Translation of Cultural, Classic, and Literary Allusions into Arabic

Before discussing any of these different allusions it is important to point out that although Arabic culture and literature are full and rich with such kinds of allusions, almost none of these allusions appear in the Arabic translations or the abridged English version. The allusions signify the historical context of the culture in which the novel was produced. Thus, Stowe's many allusions reflect the American cultural, literary, and political context during the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the use of allusions is aimed at linking a certain incident or character to a well-known previous one for the readers of the original text. Accordingly, using such allusions reflects "a diverse range of domestic values, beliefs, and social representations which carry ideological force in

serving the interests of specific groups” (Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation* 29). Thus, the Arab translator has to have a deep knowledge of what is being alluded to in the original text in order to understand the links between them and understand the original writer’s own intention of alluding to such reference.

Looking at some of the allusions in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, it could be stated that some of them could not have been translated due to the fact that many of them Stowe derives from Greek mythology, which is not widely known in the Arabic culture. Moreover, I believe that since the aim of the Arabic translations is heavily plot-oriented, the translators could have thought that the translation of such allusions is not important. Finally, I assume that since some of the allusions are done through proper names, they were not recognized by the Arab translators as allusions and accordingly were not translated.

Since *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is discussing slavery, the cultural allusions are mostly related to the institution of slavery and the abolition movement. Unfortunately, not much information regarding these two elements of the American culture is widely known among Arab readers. Despite that America’s political engagement in the Arab world is viewed negatively, America’s national history is known among Arabs as that of freedom and equality. Therefore, little is known about the culture of slavery and abolition, as is clearly illustrated both through the Arabic translations and the abridged English text.

A striking example is Stowe’s allusion to “Jim Crow” in Mr. Shelby’s sentence when calling little Harry: “Come here, Jim Crow” (50). Stowe assumes that most of the American readers will understand this cultural allusion. “Jim Crow” was a stereotyped name for any black person, referring to the clown or the singer from the folksong “Jim

Crow.” Arab translators’ lack of knowledge of the historical and cultural significance of the term “Jim Crow” made them recognize it as a proper name and thus they translated it in the following shocking way. Some translators presented “Jim Crow” as the proper name of the little boy. Other translators also dealt with it as the little boy’s name and furthermore literally translated the word “Crow” into the Arabic word “Ghurab,” which refers to the crow bird, and thus included it as the boy’s family name. Therefore, the stereotyping imposed on slaves by the word “crow” is not presented to Arab readers.

The misunderstanding of such cultural allusion made the Arabic translators unaware of the other stereotypical references Stowe includes with “Jim Crow.” Accordingly, none of the translations represent the amount of humiliation that is practiced upon the innocent little boy by his master Mr. Shelby and the slave trader Haley; that is, asking him to “walk like old Uncle Cudjow, when he has the rheumatism.... Show how Elder Robbins leads the psalm” (50). In the same vein, the abridged English text includes only the following: “Now, Jim, show this gentleman how you can dance and sing” (15). Such translation could be read in the following two ways: either it could be read as a comic scene, or it could be read as a display of the slaves’ artistic skills. Accordingly, read either way, Arab readers will never fully understand the stereotypical connotation of the name “Jim Crow” and what Stowe intended to achieve through this cultural allusion. Such misunderstanding and translation of the cultural allusion of “Jim Crow” did not reflect Stowe’s commentary on Mr. Shelby as a man not really different from the slave trader Mr. Haley. Mr. Shelby’s allusion to “Jim Crow” reflects that, despite his acceptable previous dealing with his slaves, he carries an amount of racism against them. As a result, Stowe’s indication that both men whether

slave traders or owners, dehumanize slaves and treat them in a stereotypical way is not conveyed through the translation.

In the same vein, not knowing the history of American abolitionism, I believe, had made the Arab translators decide not to include Stowe's reference to the British abolitionist William Wilberforce, which is another example of the cultural constraints relating to the translation of cultural allusions. Stowe uses the reference to mock Haley's description of himself as a "humane man," as if "considering himself a second Wilberforce" (51-52), and to mock all other slaveholders who defend themselves as being fair and kind with the slaves. Like the Arabic translations, the abridged English version also does not include Haley's comment at all concerning his treatment of slaves. Thus, Stowe's mockery of the slave trade is not fully considered by the Arabic readers.

Uncle Tom's Cabin is also full of classical allusions that mainly stem from Western history. Like the cultural allusions, none of Stowe's classical allusions appear in the Arabic translations and the accompanying abridged English text. In the following section, I will include some examples in which Stowe inserts some classical allusions and discuss Stowe's intention for such insertion. Then, I will discuss the reasons for excluding these allusions and the effect of excluding them from the Arabic translations and the abridged English version.

In narrating the episode of Sam and Andy's plan to delay Mr. Haley's search for Eliza, Stowe alludes to the King of England Richard 1 through the following:

Like the sword of Coeur De Lion, which always blazed in the front and thickest of the battle, Sam's palm-leaf was to be seen everywhere when there was the least danger that a horse could be caught;--there he would

bear down full tilt, shouting, “Now for it! Cotch him! Cotch him” in a way that would set everything to indiscriminate rout in a moment. (92)

Through comparing Sam’s palm-leaf to King Richard’s sword, Stowe is actually comparing Sam’s courage to that of King Richard 1, who is known for his strength in the battlefield. Since Stowe knew the amount of appreciation American readers could carry for King Richard’s strength and courage, she wants them to have the same feeling and appreciation toward Sam’s courage. Indeed, Sam fought the battle against a slaveholder and for the sake of another slave through the use of a very simple weapon, a “palm-leaf.” Sam is putting his life in danger if Mr. Haley and possibly Mr. Shelby knew of his intention for using this palm-leaf. Furthermore, through adding Sam’s colloquial dialect through the misspelling of the word ‘catch’ to ‘cotch,’ Stowe wants her readers not to judge the characters according to their dialect. Although being a slave with incorrect grammar, Sam holds the same amount of strength King Richard 1 has and was actually able to save Eliza’s and little Harry’s lives.

Although King Richard 1 is well-known in the Arabic culture as “Richard the heart of the lion,” I assume that Stowe’s use of the French language while alluding to King Richard could have made it hard for translators without knowledge of the French language to understand this allusion. Not only did the Arabic translations and the abridged English text exclude the allusion to King Richard 1, rather the whole incident is presented in a supposedly comic way. For example, the abridged English text includes Stowe’s comic description of Mr. Haley’s falling off his horse only through the following:

The instant Haley touched the saddle, the mettlesome creature bounded from earth with a sudden spring, that threw his master sprawling, some

feet off, on the soft, dry, turf. Sam with frantic ejaculations, made a dive at the reins, but only succeeded in brushing the blazing palm-leaf afore-named into the horse's eyes, which by no means tended to allay the confusion of his nerves. (65)

Excluding Stowe's allusion to King Richard 1 and condensing Stowe's episode of Sam's scheme to the previous paragraph will not give Arab readers the opportunity to acknowledge Stowe's effort of putting the slaves on an equal level with the whites and at times far superior despite their supposed inferior race and poor grammatical speech pattern.

Since the Arabic culture is not familiar with some famous Western figures, I also assume that the Arab translators could have thought that translating the stories of these Western figures is not important. In the following example, Stowe alludes to Marcus Tullius Cicero, a Roman statesman, orator, and philosopher (106-43 BC), whose story of deep sorrow over the death of his only daughter was widely known in the Western culture. Stowe alludes to Cicero's sorrow to enable readers to feel the amount of sorrow that Tom's heart carries after being sold. Since some readers at Stowe's time dehumanize the slaves to the extent of not being able to apprehend their feelings and sorrows, Stowe wanted to present a "white" figure that they could sympathize with in order for them to gradually sympathize with the slaves who experience a similar sorrow:

Cicero when he buried his darling and only daughter, had a heart as full of honest grief as poor Tom's,--perhaps no fuller, for both were only men;--but Cicero could pause over no such sublime words of hope, and look to no such future reunion; and if he had seen them, ten to one he would not

have believed,--he must fill his head first with a thousand questions of authenticity of manuscript, and correctness of translation. But to poor Tom, there it lay, just what he needed, so evidently true and divine that the possibility of a question never entered his simple head. It must be true; for, if not true, how could he live? (187-88)⁵

It is important to note that there is biblical religious reference here since Tom has his Bible which Cicero did not have; however, the Arab translators could have thought that Stowe included this allusion only to show the extent of Tom's sorrow, and therefore, I assume, could have decided that there is no need to include it in the translation. Excluding such reference will not give Arab readers the chance to acknowledge the strategies that Stowe has used to make her readers sympathize with the slaves. Thus, Arab readers will not be able to recognize Stowe's diverse efforts to convince white readers that slavery should be abolished.

Stowe's text is not only full of cultural and classical references but is actually rich with literary allusions that heavily stem from Western literature. Unfortunately, most of these literary allusions are neither translated into Arabic nor included in the English abridged version. In some examples, Stowe uses literary allusions in order to describe the physical appearance of some of her characters in the novel. Stowe describes the Quaker old John Van Trompe as "a great, tall, bristling Orson of a fellow" (136). This is an allusion to a well-known character from a medieval romance called "Valentine and

⁵ Cicero's statements are also related to religious references, to be discussed elsewhere.

Orson,” where Orson is a man raised by a bear.⁶ Both Orson and old John Van Trompe lived in the woods. However, since Orson is presented as a wild man of the woods, I believe that Stowe had referred to such allusion to show that despite old John Van Trompe’s strong physical appearance; still he holds a tender heart that feels for the slaves.

Furthermore, since the Quakers, as I have stated before, were either briefly presented as a religious sect who helped slaves or as being the family name of a previously slave-holding family, Stowe’s description of old John Van Trompe is nevertheless not included in the Arabic translations. The abridged English text only includes the following about old John Van Trompe: “[H]onest old John Van Trompe was once quite a considerable land-holder and slave-owner in the State of Kentucky” (105). By such a decision to exclude old John Van Trompe’s physical description and the allusion to the “Orson” literary figure, Arab readers will not be able to acknowledge Stowe’s critique of the possible stereotyped opinions regarding the Quakers that are held by many slaveholders.

Stowe also alludes to other Western works in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. In the following example, she alludes to the title character of the Spanish novelist Miguel de Cervantes’ picaresque novel *Don Quixote* through Mr. Shelby’s comment concerning Mrs. Shelby’s commitment to Aunt Chloe to buy Tom again: “but I think you had better think before you undertake such a piece of Quixotism” (296). Quixotism here refers to extraordinary idealism without regard to actual circumstances. Since Stowe’s novel is also to

⁶ For a complete discussion of the work refer to Arthur Dickson’s *Valentine and Orson: A Study in Late Medieval Romance*.

advocate for women's rights, I believe that Stowe included this allusion through the words of Mr. Shelby to show how men viewed women as not capable of thinking logically and acting according to their feelings. However, despite the fact that Mrs. Shelby and Aunt Chloe's efforts did not save Uncle Tom in time, still they succeeded in their attempt to save money to purchase Tom back. Therefore, not recognizing such allusion by the Arab translators and accordingly its exclusion from the translation, on one hand, will not make Arab readers aware of Stowe's display of the gender-based society where women were seen as incapable of logical thinking, and, on the other hand, will not make Arab readers aware of Stowe's effort to advocate for women's empowerment.

Stowe also alludes to some lines and passages of some literary works to explain certain conditions in the novel. Most important, Stowe alludes to many literary characters, lines, and passages from Shakespeare's literary works. In the following example, Stowe describes that the journey of taking the slaves "down river" is similar to Shakespeare's following description of the journey to "that undiscovered country, from whose bourn No traveller returns" (140). This allusion, which is not translated into Arabic nor included in the abridged English text, is from Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, where Hamlet discourses on death in his famous "To be, or not to be" soliloquy (III.1. 56-57), where he explains that death is a result of such journey. Indeed, many slaves never return to their families again and others actually die because of the brutal conditions in the plantations down river. So, since the term "down river," as I have stated before, is never translated correctly in the Arabic translations, and since the quote from Shakespeare is a well-known line in the Arab world and is widely used,

including such allusion in the translation could have helped Arab readers to understand the meaning and the intention of the allusion; that is, the slaves will face more miseries and possible death in the plantations “down river,” which is always down to the South.

Stowe also alludes to some literary works through quoting some of their lines in her epigraphs to most of her chapters. She uses these literary passages as a foreshadowing technique for the main theme of the chapter. Furthermore, I believe that Stowe wanted to gain her white readers’ sympathy for the slaves through first introducing literary passages that she assumes most of her readers are familiar with and are capable of sympathizing with. Thus, raising such sympathy in the hearts of her readers is a possible method for reflecting this sympathy on the slaves, who are having even more misery compared to what is there in the literary passage. I will comment on some examples in the following section.

Stowe uses lines from Lord Byron’s long poem *Don Juan* to describe the character of Eva as an introduction to the chapter titled “Evangeline”:

“A young star! which shone
O’er life--too sweet an image for such glass!
A lovely being, scarcely formed or moulded;
A rose with all its sweetest leaves yet folded.” (185)

However, such lines are not only to describe Eva’s character but could also be considered as a positive indication of the future events that are awaiting Tom. According to Stowe’s last narrating of Tom’s misery before this point in the story, readers are given the indication that Tom is yet to face more miseries with Mr. Haley, but such literary lines give a glimpse of hope to the reader concerning Tom’s future, especially after

reading the first paragraphs of the chapter which complete Tom's journey. Since neither the Arabic translations nor the abridged English text include these lines, Arab readers are not given any foreshadowing of future events.

The Chapter titled "Liberty" is another place in the novel where Stowe starts with a literary passage. Since Stowe will complete the story of George and Eliza, here she starts the chapter by quoting words of John Philpot Curran, an Irish statesman and lawyer, where he alludes to the famous case of James Somerset, an American slave who claimed and was awarded his freedom after his master brought him to England. Also in getting to Canada, George and Eliza are on English soil:

No matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery, the moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the God sink together in the dust, and he stands redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled, by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation.

(419)

Again here Stowe is linking her characters with well-known actual people who might have previously won the sympathy of the readers in order for her to prepare them to have the same amount of sympathy for her characters and their cause.

Stowe's chapter titled "The Tokens" starts with Stowe's following literary allusion:

And slight, withal, may be the things that bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside forever; it may be a sound,
A flower, the wind, the ocean, which shall wound,--
Striking the electric chain wherewith we're darkly bound. (407)

These lines are from Lord Byron's narrative poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*,⁷ and Stowe is alluding here to the effect of Tom's tokens on Legree's state of mind and feeling. The two tokens are mementoes given by George Shelby and Eva to Tom. Since both George and Eva share a similar religious attitude with Tom, their tokens resemble their religious nature as well. Therefore, they are of negative effect on those who don't carry any religion in their hearts. These tokens were comforters to Tom but they are presented as tools of psychological torture to Simon Legree.

Stowe's chapter titled "The Martyr," starts with this literary allusion from William Cullen Bryant's poem "Blessed Are They That Mourn":

Deem not the Just by heaven forgot!
Though life its common gifts deny,--
Though, with a crushed and bleeding heart,
And spurned of man, he goes to die!
For God hath marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every bitter tear;
And heaven's long years of bliss shall pay
For all his children suffer here. (445)

Through this allusion Stowe is presenting Tom as a Christ figure and paralleling his death with that of Jesus Christ. Since Islam states that Jesus did not die and was actually sent to Heaven, the translation into Arabic culture of such reference will not be possible. Thus, readers will not recognize Stowe's attempt to draw a parallel between Tom the slave and Jesus Christ, and accordingly, readers will not appreciate Stowe's

⁷ *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* 1812-18 Canto 4.23

efforts in abolishing the institution of slavery that have reached the extent of comparing a slave with Christ.

After discussing the importance and significance of most of the cultural, classic, and literary allusions used by Stowe in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* along with stating the possible cultural challenges that have prevented Arab translators from including these allusions in the translations and the abridged English version, it has become clear that Arab readers have missed the historical and cultural significance and importance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Indeed, through the exclusion of the cultural allusions concerning the institution of slavery and the abolition movement, Arab readers are not able to acknowledge the brutality of the institution of slavery and the important figures of the abolition movement. Through deciding not to translate the classical allusions, Arab readers will also miss the opportunity to acknowledge how Stowe equated some of the slaves with the highly praised classical figures of Western culture. Finally, through the translators' decision not to translate the literary allusions, Arab readers are not being introduced to Stowe's strategy of directing her readers' sympathy toward the slaves and their cause. Again, all of these exclusions emphasize that the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* along with the accompanying English version are mainly plot-oriented ones that do not take into consideration the historical context and cultural significance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

As I have previously stated in chapter two, the Arabic culture takes high pride in its rich linguistic features; the insertion of foreign words is not common. Furthermore, since Arabic literature is written through the use of the classical standard form, inserting foreign words faces a double layer of difficulty. I also believe that the fact the Arabic

language has a unique set of letters that is not used in other languages makes it hard to insert foreign words that are written with a different set of letters. Again since the process of literary translation follows the same rules, none of the foreign words found in Stowe's text were translated or included in the Abridged English version. Stowe uses many foreign words, specifically French, in her work. However, since these words are to a large extent written through using the same letters as English, this fact made it easier to insert within the text. Excluding these foreign words in the translation and the abridged English version weakens the significance of Stowe's intention in including these words in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Cultural Constraints related to the Translation of Colloquial Dialect

Any colloquial dialect is a representation of time and place. Furthermore, Lefevere explains that "the use of a certain sociodialect identifies members of the same social group" (*Translating Literature* 64). Indeed, as previously established in chapter two, the Arabic culture also has many dialects that identify its members, but in Arab nations this identification is broadly based on the place, that is, the country where a certain dialect is spoken.

Nevertheless, despite the numerous variations in the spoken form, a standard classical form of Arabic language is mainly used in the writing for all Arab countries. Thus, the writing of literature has always been performed through the use of standard Arabic, but there is a poetical category named 'alameeah' where a colloquial dialect is used. However, this type of poetry is not taught in academia. Accordingly, colloquial dialect is not used in literary translation. Furthermore, if translators decide to translate a colloquial dialect found in a literary work written in English into any Arabic colloquial

dialect, such literary translation will be faced by the challenging specificity of the Arabic colloquial dialect being representative of the Arabic country it is spoken in.

Before discussing the challenges facing the translation of the colloquial dialect in Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, it is important to note that there is scholarly disagreement concerning Stowe's representation and use of colloquial dialect. Tremaine McDowell, in his article titled "The Use of Negro Dialect by Harriet Beecher Stowe," published in 1931, critiques Stowe's inaccurate and inconsistent dialect writing. He explains that the dialect of "Mrs. Stowe's slaves closely resembles that of her lower-class whites, particularly her Ohio River folk" (322). Other critics praised Stowe's use of colloquial dialect. Michael Meyer in his article "Toward a Rhetoric of Equality: Reflective and Refractive Images in Stowe's Language," published in 1994, praises Stowe's use of colloquial dialect and explains that "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* acknowledges blacks as a race with its own speech patterns," and Stowe's representation of such pattern was never meant to be "derogatory or demeaning"; instead it was presented in a way that encouraged readers not to judge individuals they considered inferior on the basis of their language (237). I believe that Stowe uses a variety of dialects to differentiate among her characters and at times to unify some of them together since the dialects in the novel are not mainly divided between that of the slaves and the other of the masters. Stowe also uses different idiolects to differentiate her characters from each other. The idiolect indicates each individual's speech and pattern of life, which is shown through the individual's pronunciation, grammar, selection of vocabulary, idioms, and metaphors. Lefevere states that "as opposed to sociodialect, [idiolect] refers to the personal register, the individualized use each speaker makes of a language"

(*Translating Literature* 67). Through the use of different idiolects Stowe further indicates the character's level of literacy, social class, and religious beliefs. The dialect representation in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is through the use of misspelling to indicate dialectal pronunciations and through the use of incorrect grammatical structure. Indeed, all of these elements are hard to reflect in the Arabic translation since it has to be written in standard Arabic. Accordingly, the constraints facing the translation of Stowe's use of colloquial dialect into the Arabic culture will not allow Arab readers to acknowledge Stowe's intention in presenting different dialects, which I will discuss in the following section. However, I will compare Stowe's text to the abridged English text that accompanies two of the Arabic translations to see if the colloquial dialect is introduced to the Arab audience.

Closely looking at the dialects of the following three characters--Mr. Haley, Simon Legree, and George Harris--one could observe that George Harris's idiolect speech was the most fluent. His speech did not suffer from any grammatical mistakes, his pronunciation was always clear and correct; unlike some white characters in the novel, there was never a single instance of g-dropping in his speech. Examining the idiolects of the slave holders, Haley and Legree, we can see the amount of illiteracy and brutality of their characters and their lack of religious discipline. Both of the characters' speech reflects the degree of their illiteracy through Stowe's representation of incorrect grammatical structure, misspellings, and selection of words. In many incidents one sentence contains all of the three previously mentioned mistakes, but I will present each one separately in the following section.

Examining Mr. Haley's speech, we see that in the first paragraph of the novel, as I have previously mentioned, Stowe introduces him to her readers by specifically commenting on his speech, which she describes as "in free and easy defiance of Murray's Grammar" (47). Indeed there are many incidents where Stowe has shown these grammatical mistakes. For instance, Mr. Haley states the following when he describes his slave trading to Mr. Shelby: "[A]s I manages business, I generally avoids 'em [slave mothers] ... I al'ays hates these yer screachin' screamin' times" (51). Mr. Haley here adds an (s) to the verbs "manage," "avoid," and "hate." Stowe also misspells some of Mr. Haley's words to represent his pronunciation. For example, the following sentence has more than one spelling mistake: "I'm ready to do anything in reason to 'blige friends but this yer, you see, is a leetle too hard on a fellow--a leetle too hard" (49). The word "little" is misspelled "leetle," "your" is misspelled "yer," and "'oblige" is misspelled "blige." In one sentence there are three spelling mistakes. There are also other spelling mistakes throughout his speech. The word "girl" is always misspelled as "gal" in the following sentences: "Well, have n't you a boy or gal that you could throw in with Tom?" (49); "You might make your fortune on that ar gal in Orleans, any day. I've seen over a thousand, in my day, paid down for gals not a bit handsomer" (51). Unpleasant is misspelled "onpleasant" in the following sentence: "They are mighty onpleasant" (51). The following sentence has more than one spelling mistake: "You Kentucky folks spile your niggers. You mean well by 'em, but 'tant no real kindness, arter all" (53); "spoil" is misspelled as "spile" and 'it is not' misspelled as 'tant' and "after" also misspelled as "arter."

Looking at the abridged English text, I found that most of these sentences are not actually included; however, what has been included was written in the following way: “well haven’t you a boy or a girl that you could throw in with Tom” (13); “it is mighty unpleasant getting on with women”; “as I manage business, I generally avoid ’em”; “I al’ays hates these yer screechin’ screamin’ times” (13). Some of the grammatical mistakes have been corrected and what had not been corrected was left to indicate Mr. Haley’s mispronunciation.

Stowe also reflects Mr. Haley’s personality by his selection of words. In the following sentence, “By Jupiter,... there’s an article, now!” he swears through using the word “Jupiter” (51). He also frequently uses the word “nigger” whenever he talks about slaves, as in the following example: “You mean honest as niggers go” (48). His use of the word “throw” in the following sentence also reflects his brutal personality: “Well, have n’t you a boy or gal that you could throw in with Tom?”(49). The swearing sentence is not included in the abridged English version; however, the word “nigger” is included.

Like Mr. Haley, the incorrect grammatical structure, misspellings, and selection of words are present in the idiolect of another slave holder in the novel, Simon Legree, and as with Mr. Haley they reflect his illiteracy and brutal personality. “Where was you raised?” (374), the first sentence that he speaks in the novel, is of incorrect grammatical structure. Stowe did not need to state that his speech was “in free and easy defiance of Murray’s grammar” (47), as it was obvious from this first simple sentence. His first speech to his slaves on the boat is full of grammatical mistakes: “I does my own overseeing; and I tell you things is seen to ... ‘you ’s got to look chipper ... I don’t keep

none o' yer cussed overseers.... You 's every one on ye got to toe the mark.... Ye won't find no soft spot in me ... I don't show no mercy" (378-79). Legree's last speech in the novel was no better than his first one; talking to George Shelby about Tom, he states the following: "[W]hen I bid him tell me where they was, he up and said he knew" (453). The abridged English text includes all of Legree's speech and is an exact copy of Stowe's text (319). Stowe also includes a lot of spelling mistakes in Legree's speech to reflect his poor pronunciation. The following is a good example: "d' ye see this fist? Heft it!... Look at these yer bones! Well, I tell ye this yer fist has got as hard as iron knocking down niggers.... I don't keep none o' yer cussed overseers" (378); "you" is misspelled "ye," and "your" is misspelled "yer." In the following sentence, "None o' your shines, gal," "girl" is also misspelled "gal" and "of" is misspelled "o" (378).

Like Mr. Haley, Legree also always uses the word "nigger" for slaves as in the following sentences: "I never see the nigger yet, I could n't bring down with one crack" (378); "I have none o' yer bawling, praying, singing niggers on my place" (382); and he tells George Shelby, "After all, what a fuss, for a dead nigger" (457). It is true that some of the slaves use the word "nigger" among themselves, but it is not used in a negative way. In the previous section, I've included only some examples of the two slaveholders' grammatical and spelling mistakes along with their choices of word selection. I would have to include most of their speech if I were to include all of their speech mistakes.

In contrast, the slave George Harris is introduced in the novel as a "bright and talented" young man with "a good education" that he secured for himself (57). Therefore, Stowe equips George with an idiolect that makes him "talk so fluently" to an extent that "his master began to feel an uneasy consciousness of inferiority" (58).

Compared to the speech of the white slaveholders, George Harris's speech contained no grammatical and spelling mistakes. Furthermore, his selections of words reflect his high level of education. In both Mr. Haley and Legree's speech, the word "girl" is always misspelled "gal" whereas Stowe writes it correctly in George's speech: "There now, Eliza, it's too bad for me to make you feel so, poor girl" (61). George's pronunciation is always perfect, for example there is no g-dropping in his words. Stowe also reflects George's high level of education by making him use some biblical references in his speech. For instance, as I have previously mentioned, he states the following when he describes his miserable condition to his wife: "It is all misery! My life is bitter as wormwood; the very life is burning out of me" (61). He alludes to the previously mentioned proverb "For the lips of a strange woman drop as honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil; but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword."⁸ Stowe also reflects George's high level of literacy through the letter which he writes to his friends near the end of the novel. In this letter, George writes in a very rich language in which he reflects his opinion about slavery and race. For example, he writes, "My sympathies are not for my father's race, but for my mother's.... It is with the oppressed, enslaved African race that I cast in my lot ..." (468). Some of the Arabic translations don't include George's letter whereas the abridged English text includes only a short version of it, which reinforces the plot-oriented concern of the translation. Thus, Arab readers will not be able to fully acknowledge George's high level of education that Stowe had indicated in many places in the novel, including this letter.

Closely examining Mr. Haley and Legree's idiolect and George Harris's idiolect and comparing them, I believe that Stowe was aiming to show the superiority of the

⁸ Proverbs 5.3-4

slave compared to the white slave trader and slaveholder. Due to the cultural constraints facing the translation of the English colloquial dialect into Arabic, Arabic readers will not grasp Stowe's intention of using these idiolects. It is also important to note that only those who read English are able to see any difference between the characters' different dialects, though they may not recognize the effect of Stowe's use of the colloquial dialect. However, it is also important to note that Stowe may have had other intentions in her use and representation of the colloquial dialect. Despite Sam and Andy's poor speech patterns, Stowe represents them as clever characters who were able to play a scheme on Mr. Haley to help Eliza to gain her freedom. Michael J. Meyer, in the essay titled "Toward a Rhetoric of Equality: Reflective and Refractive Images in Stowe's Language," explains that "Sam's and Andy's speech may satirize the many whites who denied the possibility of black equality, choosing rather to judge individuals they considered inferior on the basis of their language" (243). Although their speech is far fuller of grammatical mistakes, still they were presented as smarter than the slaveholder.

Due to the standard rule of writing in the standard form, the Arabic translations are not able to present such intention of using the colloquial dialect. Instead the translations present Sam and Andy in a very comic way. Thus, their cleverness and scheme are not fully acknowledged. Furthermore, the abridged English text does not fully convey Stowe's intention of presenting clever slaves despite the poorly structured colloquial dialect since not the entire scheme got to be included. The conversation between Sam and Andy was presented in few sentences. Thus the abridged English text includes the following:

Halloo, Sam, -- Oh Sam mas'r wants you to catch Bill an Jerry" said Andy, cutting short Sam's soliloquy.

"Hi! What's afoot now, young un?"

"Why, you don't know, I s'pose, that Lizy's cut stick, and ran away with her young un?"

"Ah! But, Sam" said Andy, "You'd better think twice; for missis don't want her cotched, and she'll be in yer wool. (63)

After discussing the previous constraints concerning the translation of the colloquial dialect, I believe that it is impossible to cross through the literary translation from English to Arabic. For instance, the Arabic Egyptian colloquial dialect cannot be used to translate the African American dialect in Stowe's text since the African American dialect is presenting a racial group that is part of America, whereas the Egyptian dialect represents the people of Egypt.

The Religious Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* from English to Arabic

Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is full of biblical verses and religious discussions. There are nearly one hundred quotations from or direct allusions to the King James version of the Bible. Stowe uses these quotations for several reasons. She uses some of these quotations to illustrate how the Bible could be read to attack slavery or twisted to defend slavery during the mid-nineteenth century in America. Furthermore, Stowe uses these biblical verses to represent Tom and Eva as allegorical figures of Jesus Christ through making their journeys similar to the journey of the Christ told in the Bible and through making them cite from the Bible, especially during their conversations with

each other. Stowe also uses some of the biblical verses as epigraphs at the beginning of some chapters to justify the slaves' journey to freedom, making their journeys similar to those of some religious figures and through pointing to God's heavenly intervention in their journey.

Since Islam is the dominant religion in most Arab countries, any direct quotations from the texts of other religions are rarely presented in literature. Any mocking of religion is also prohibited. Any comparison of a person's journey to that of the prophets is also another prohibited subject in literature. Accordingly, most of the biblical quotations and religious discussions are not translated. Thus, Stowe's main use of religion to advocate for the abolition of slavery is not translated, and the representation of Eva and Tom as allegorical figures of Jesus Christ is not introduced as well. The translations briefly mention that Tom always reads from the Bible, translating some parts of the quotations that he had read. However, sometimes the translations only mention that Tom is discussing some religious matters with the other slaves without actually translating any element of that discussion.

Closely reading the Arabic translations and the abridged English text, I have found that the religious connotations and discussions that are either translated or included in the abridged English version represent the use of religion in a totally different way from Stowe's original use of religion in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Almost all of the translated biblical verses are the ones read by Tom. The use of Scripture by other characters to either defend or attack slavery is not included. Furthermore, all of the quotations instruct Tom to live under slavery and forgive the whites for their cruelty in order to be rewarded in Heaven. So, instead of using the rhetoric of religion to prohibit

slavery or even to show how it has been used by whites to reinforce slavery, the Arabic translations and the abridged English text convey to Arab readers that the slaves are the ones who have to follow the Bible and submit to all their miseries in life to get rewarded in the afterlife. So, religion is not used here to liberate the slaves; instead, it seems that it is what forces them to be in slavery but gives them a glimpse of hope through reminding them that they will be rewarded by God in heaven. Indeed, references to the Bible in the Arabic translations are mostly associated with Tom, and they reinforce that the reading of the Bible is the only thing that comforts Tom after the different miseries that he faces in the institution of slavery. In the following section, I will include all of the biblical verses read by Tom that are either included in the Arabic translations or the abridged English text to show the negative effect of including only these verses in the Arabic translation, which is contradictory to Stowe's use of religion as a rhetoric for abolishing slavery. Indeed, since most Arab readers are not familiar with the religious debate concerning slavery, reading only Tom's quotations from the Bible will make Arab readers assume that Christianity had legitimized slavery and that no religious debate existed concerning abolishing the institution of slavery. The Arabic translations along with the abridged English version present the following religious teaching concerning the institution of slavery: slaves have to accept slavery in order for them to be rewarded in heaven. Thus, Arab readers cannot acknowledge Stowe's use of religious rhetoric and satire to advocate the abolition of slavery because the translation is limited to some of the biblical verses and religious opinions and attitudes held by Tom and excludes other important Biblical verses and religious discussions that

Stowe included either through her sentimental messages and narration or through the conversations among other characters in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Since Tom's life in the Shelby plantation could be considered a decent one in the measures of the institution of slavery, his intense suffering starts after he is sold to the slave trader Mr. Haley. After he was sold to Mr. Haley and while in the wagon with him, Tom had these words running through his head: "We have here no continuing city, but we seek one to come; wherefore God himself is not ashamed to be called our God; for he hath prepared for us a city"⁹ (161). As Stowe's narrator says, these words were usually read by "ignorant and unlearned men" to give them power in times of despair. Most of the Arabic translations include this quotation as the first one read by Tom. Having this quotation as the first religious belief that Tom holds gives Arab readers the idea that slavery has been naturally assigned for blacks in this world and that they will only have their own city and country given by god in heaven.

The second translated biblical quotation, in some of the Arabic translations and included in the abridged English text, said by Tom is the following: "Fear not! For I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by my name. Thou art MINE!"¹⁰ Tom remembered these words after Legree's statement that he is Tom's church now since he is his master (377). However, only this part appears in the abridged English text "Fear not! For I have redeemed thee" (319). Again, including this biblical quotation suggests to Arab readers who have no knowledge of Christianity and the religious debate about slavery that as long as God has redeemed slaves' souls, their physical enslavement in the institution of slavery is not that harmful.

⁹ Hebrews 12.14-16

¹⁰ Isaiah 43.1

Another incident where Tom's citation of a biblical quotation is translated and included in the abridged English text occurs during Tom's effort to comfort one of the slave women after the hard work on Legree's plantation. Tom read, "Come unto ME, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (388). What Tom has read is similar to the following Biblical verse "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."¹¹ Again, since Arab readers are introduced only to such biblical verses, they will assume that such biblical reference is to legitimize slavery and that Stowe has included it to aid the slaves to resist the pains of slavery though praying to God. As if she is telling the slaves that they will not have the rest and comfort on Earth, instead they will gain comfort in Heaven. The only possible way for them to have rest on Earth is be good Christians and read the Bible.

Although this biblical verse is read by Cassy, still Tom is the one who requests her to read from his Bible. She read, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do"¹² (400). This citation has been translated in most of the translations and included in the abridged English version. Again, not having a deep knowledge of the Bible along with not being introduced to all of the biblical verses Stowe includes in her text, Arab readers could assume that Stowe is not advocating the end of slavery. Instead, Arab readers might understand that Stowe is not offending the institution of slavery but is actually only reminding the slaves that in order for them to be considered good Christians in the eyes of God they should forgive their masters. If this biblical verse was accompanied by other biblical verses that Stowe uses in the original text, Arab readers

¹¹ Matthew 11.28

¹² Luke 23.34

could recognize that Stowe is addressing white slaveholders and traders and telling them that if they had understood the Bible well, they would have not advocated the institution of slavery.

Additionally, the translation of Tom's singing from Isacc Watts's hymn "When I can read my Title clear" after being tortured by Legree could reinforce the assumption that the slaves are only rewarded in Heaven and thus it is acceptable and natural for slavery to exist in the world. Tom sings the following:

"When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.
"Should earth against my soul engage,
And hellish darts be hurled,
Then I can smile at Satan's rage,
And face a frowning world.
"Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall,
May I but safely reach my home,
My God, my heaven my all." (431)

Including this religious song could convey to Arab readers who don't have adequate knowledge of the religious debate concerning slavery that slaves are doomed to have misery on earth and that they will weep no more in heaven.

The Arabic translations include Tom's following religious advice to Cassy when she asked him to kill Legree: "No, ye poor, lost soul, that ye must n't do. The dear, blessed Lord never shed no blood but his own, and that he poured out for us to follow his steps, and love our enemies" (434). This is a reference to the following biblical verse: "You have heard that it has been said, You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy. But I say to you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you and persecute you."¹³ The abridged English text includes the following statement by Tom addressed to Cassy "No, no, no!" said Tom holding her small hands 'Lord, help us to follow his steps, and love our enemies'" (371). Including the first biblical verse in the Arabic translations and the second one in the abridged English text could make Arab readers understand that the Bible explains that since slaves are rewarded in Heaven they should forgive their slaveholders on earth.

Indeed, such possible reading is reinforced by the translation of Tom's last religious words to Legree: "Ye poor miserable critter! There an't no more ye can do! I forgive ye, with all my soul" (451). This is reference to the following biblical verse said by the Christ on the cross: "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."¹⁴ These are all of the biblical verses that had been introduced to the Arab audience either through some of the Arabic translations or the abridged English version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. As I have previously stated, since such translation could be the only source for Arab readers to be introduced to some biblical statements concerning slavery, they will not acknowledge the religious

¹³ Mathew 5.43-44

¹⁴ Luke 23.24

debate that was taking place in America from a religious perspective. Most important, Arab readers will not acknowledge Stowe's use of religion as rhetoric for abolishing slavery in America during the mid-nineteenth century.

Not only do the translated biblical verses and religious opinions reinforce such reading of the novel by an Arab audience; in fact, the exclusion of many important biblical references and discussions during the translation process has a huge impact on the reading of the novel from a religious point of view. Since there are more than one hundred direct quotations or allusions to the Bible in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, it would be impossible for me to discuss the effect of excluding them from the Arabic translations and the abridged English version. Therefore, I will locate some of the most important passages in Stowe's text and discuss the effect of excluding them.

Stowe uses religious references including citations from the Bible and Methodist hymns. Through closely examining some of those said by the slaves, I have found that they are presented in a way that shows God's intervention for the sake of the slaves in their journey to freedom. The slaves' many journeys to freedom are similar to the journeys of some of the religious figures as told in the Bible. For instance, Sam tells Mrs. Shelby of Eliza's miraculous escape from Mr. Haley and her crossing of the Ohio River; he states the following: "Wal, Missis, de Lord he persarves his own. Lizy's done gone over the river into 'Hio, as'markebly as if de Lord took her over in a charrit of fire and two hosses" (117). Sam here refers to the following Biblical verse: "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into

heaven.”¹⁵ Through referring to such biblical incident, Stowe here illustrates that Eliza’s miracle of crossing the Ohio river cannot have been done without Godly intervention which is similar to Heaven’s presence in Elijah’s miracle journey to Heaven.

Furthermore, Stowe compares Eliza’s crossing of the Ohio River to the Israelis crossing of the Jordon river: “An hour before sunset, she entered the village of T- , by the Ohio river, weary and foot-sore, but still strong in heart. Her first glance was at the river, which lay like Jordon, between her and the Canaan of liberty on the other side” (97).

Only one of the Arabic translations includes this reference. However, it does not correspond to the English text; rather it explains that her first glance was at the river, which lay like the Jordon River between her and her liberty without referring to the Canaan which reveals the significance of alluding to the Jordon River (72). So, through such biblical references and assimilations Stowe is attacking slavery and showing that God is intervening for the sake of the slaves and aiding them in their path as He had helped and aided some of the religious figures in their journeys to freedom. Such references could also be read as a warning to slaveholders and an admonition that slavery should be abolished.

Aunt Chloe also refers to one of the Biblical verses she used to hear read by George Shelby and Tom when she was justifying what has been happening to the slave trader Mr. Haley due to Eliza’s escape with her son. Aunt Chloe states the following:

“He desarnes it!... he’s broke a many, many, many hearts ,--I tell ye all!... It’s like what Mas’s George reads in Ravelations,--souls a callin’ under the alter! And a callin’ on the Lord for vengeance on sich!--and by and by the lord he’ll hear ’em--so he will” (99).

Through Aunt Chloe’s speech, Stowe is referring to the following verses in Revelation:

¹⁵ 2 Kings 2.11

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth. (Revelation 6.9-10)

Stowe here states that what had happened to the slave trader Mr. Haley is due to the innocent broken and metaphorically slain hearts of the slaves who were taken from their loved ones because of the brutal slave trade. God had heard their calls in the same way that He had heard the cries of those slain hearts under the altar! God will take revenge for those oppressed slaves by their oppressors, the white slaveholders and slave traders. Again Stowe here is justifying the cause of abolishing slavery and showing God's intervening for such cause. She is warning her white readers of God's revenge because of the sin of slavery and thus arguing that it should be abolished.

The epigraphs of some chapters also could be read as a proof to show God's intervening and aid for the slaves to reclaim their freedom. For instance, Chapter XXXVIII titled "The Victory" is introduced by the following epigraph: "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory" (425), which is from the following verse: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."¹⁶ Such reference could be read as God's will to intervene for the sake of the slaves and make them win over the slave owners who denied them their freedom. Although Tom did not get his freedom at the end, he had won his battle against Legree; Legree was not able to break Tom from his religion. Excluding the

¹⁶ Corinthians 15.55-57

biblical reference here will not give the readers the chance to see that Tom's death without breaking his tie to religion is considered victory against the slaveholder Legree specifically and the institution of slavery in general.

Furthermore, Stowe includes other epigraphs to associate the plantations and some slaveholders with Biblical references to darkness. For instance, Stowe introduces Chapter XXXII titled "Dark Places" with the following Biblical verse: "The dark places of the earth are full of habitations of cruelty,"¹⁷ which is from "Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of earth are full of habitations of cruelty" (382). Such description is to introduce Legree's plantation, where the cruelest conditions of the institution of slavery exist and where Tom is beaten to death. Stowe here is showing that these plantations are considered "dark places" from a religious perspective and therefore should not exist. In the same vein, Chapter XXXIX titled "The Stratagem" is also introduced by the following biblical verse: "The way of the wicked is as darkness; he knoweth not at what he stumbleth" (436).¹⁸ This reference is to describe the slaveholder Legree since he is the most brutal slaveholder in the novel and he is the most severely punished by God. Excluding such biblical references from the translations will also limit the Arab readers' chance to understand how Stowe used religion to advocate for the abolition of slavery.

There are other religious discussions that have been left out in the translations since they reflect different points of view to what is found in Islam. For instance, the biblical references to the story of the creation of Adam and Eve that are found in the incident where Miss Ophelia is teaching Topsy catechism in front of St. Clare are not

¹⁷ Psalms 74.20

¹⁸ Proverbs 4.19

translated and not included in the abridged English text. Topsy answers, “Our first parents, being left to the freedom of their own will, fell from the state wherein they were created” (293). This reference is to the story of Adam and Eve and more specifically to the catechism of the *New England Primer* (c. 1690): “Q: Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created? A: Our first parents being left to the freedom of their own Will, fell from the state wherein they were created, by sinning against God” (qtd. in Diller 293). The translators were probably aware that if such opinion was translated, their translation could not be accepted. The Islamic view concerning the creation of Adam and Eve is different. Islam presents Satan to be the one who deceived Adam and Eve and convinced them to eat from the tree. Many verses in the Holy Quran tell the story; here are some examples:

And We [God] said, “O Adam, dwell, you and your wife, in Paradise and eat therefrom in [ease and] abundance from wherever you will. But do not approach this tree, lest you be among the wrongdoers.” But Satan caused them to slip out of it and removed them from that [condition] in which they had been. And We said, “Go down, [all of you], as enemies to one another, and you will have upon the earth a place of settlement and provision for a time.” (2-35-36)

In another verse God states: “O children of Adam, let not Satan tempt you as he removed your parents from Paradise, stripping them of their clothing to show them their private parts. Indeed, he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you do not see them. Indeed, We have made the devils allies to those who do not believe” (7:27).

The long discussion concerning the origin of slavery in the Bible held as justification for slavery by some Christian ministers during the mid-nineteenth century is not translated. Although the institution of slavery is discussed in the Quran, the origin of it is never mentioned and the supposed religious explanation that it is “the curse in Canaan” is not held in Islam. Therefore, the following discussion that takes place among the ministers in the boat during Tom’s trip with the slave trader Mr. Haley has been excluded:

“It is undoubtedly the intention of the Providence that the African race should be servants,--kept in a low condition,” said a grave gentleman in black, a clergyman, seated by the cabin door. “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be,’ the scripture says.... It pleased Providence, for some inscrutable reason, to doom the race to bondage, ages ago; and we must not set up our opinions against that ... we must all be resigned to the decrees of Providence. Niggers must be sold, and trucked round, and kept under; it’s what they’s made for” A tall, slender young man, with a face expressive of great feelings and intelligence, here broke in, and repeated the words “‘All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them,’ I suppose,” he added, “*that* is scripture as much as ‘Cursed be Canaan.’” (166-67)

Excluding two such opposing opinions will not give Arab readers the chance to recognize the religious debate held concerning slavery during the mid-nineteenth century in America. Given the religious verses that have been included in the

translations, Arab readers might mistakably think that Christianity approves the institution of slavery.

Since Islam is the dominant religion in the Arab countries, any specificity concerning the different Christian sects is not seen as important to introduce to Arab readers. The Quakers are not fully introduced in the Arabic translations or in the abridged English version. As previously stated in the cultural challenges section, in some translations they are introduced as members having Quakers as their family name. In other translations they are introduced as people of strong religion. Therefore, Arab readers will not understand the importance and efforts of the Quakers in the freeing of the slaves in America during the mid-nineteenth century.

Religious challenges played a significant role in hindering an accurate translation of Stowe's text. Most important, Stowe's use of religion to advocate for the abolition of slavery has been presented in a contradictory way. The selection of translated biblical verses in the text and the exclusion of other important ones have reflected the legitimacy of the institution of slavery in the Bible and that the slaves have to accept this institution, forgive their slaveholders, and wait to be rewarded in Heaven.

The Geopolitical Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation of

***Uncle Tom's Cabin* from English to Arabic**

The geopolitical challenges facing an accurate translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, I believe, are related to the fact that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is a Western and particularly American work, and thus presenting it to Arab readers could be viewed as an attempt to impose the American culture on the Arabic one. As previously stated in chapter two, the history of colonialism of the third world by the first world had made some of the Arab

and Islamic countries view the West and America negatively. Moreover, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is associated with its huge impact on the Civil War between the Northern and southern states of America. Therefore, it could be feared that it might encourage a revolt against the ruling class in some Arab countries. Although *Uncle Tom's Cabin* discusses the oppression of enslaved people by the whites, it still could be allegorically read as an attack on any force of oppression. Indeed, the translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had been feared in many cultures and countries, not only the Arabic ones. For instance, John Mackay states that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* "was widely read in the 1850s (despite all the efforts by authorities) as an allegorical attack on and description of Russia's own serfdom-based society" (67). He further explains that the novel gave some Russian thinkers the opportunity to "disagree about their own long-isolated and unevenly developed country in global terms" (68). It also offered them another opportunity to "disagree about the very comparability of their society to any other arguing strongly for national specificity and radicals insisting on the relevance of Stowe's novel to Russian conditions" (68). So, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* could be feared to make the masses revolt against any oppressing conditions, especially in countries and cultures in which slavery does not exist since the oppressed are already free and thus the oppressors don't have any right to oppress in the same way the slaves are treated in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Indeed, Francis Claxton, an American consul in Moscow, stated in a letter to Secretary of State Lewis Cass concerning the possible effect of translating *Uncle Tom's Cabin* on the Russian masses,

The fear is freely expressed and appears to be generally entertained that serious trouble may arise and blood may be shed; as an indication of this feeling, remonstrances have been made that a translation into Russ [sic] of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* now in the press should not be permitted to be published, for as a French translation has for a long time been in the hands of the educated classes, the issue of the one in question is looked upon as purposely incendiary and calculated to mislead the peasantry into the idea that they are no better circumstanced and treated than slaves in America. (qtd. in Mackay 70)

According to Mackay, based on his close reading of the Russian translations, because of these political fears many parts of Stowe's novel were left out of Russian translations. He states that the chapters "Miss Ophelia's Experiences, Continued," "Henrique," and "Reunion," "with their references to European bondage and class unrest worldwide" (82), are places that experienced a high amount of exclusion during the translation process.

As I have previously stated, the first Arabic translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* appeared in 1953 and most of the other translations actually follow the first translation. I also stated before that I argue that these translators never returned to Stowe's original text; instead they made some minor changes to Al Ba'albaki's translation. Accordingly, I believe that it would be of importance to discuss the geopolitical challenges that took place during the 1950s in the Arab world, which could have played a role in hindering an accurate translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

The 1950s were a period of chaotic political upheaval throughout the Arab countries. Much of this turbulence was due to the Arab nations' disappointment caused by the foundation of the state of Israel and the loss of Palestine in 1948-49. Moreover, colonial powers also continued to exert their influence over Arab nations. Ira Marvin Lapidus states that from the 1920s to the 1950s many Arab states were "caught up in a double political struggle" since "each attempted to win independence from its French or British colonial overlord, and within each there was a growing struggle for power between the dominant older-generation conservative elite and rising younger elites" (540). He states that "out of these struggles came political independence in the late 1940s and a conjoined domestic and international crisis over political leadership and ideological identity in the 1950s" (*The History of Islamic Societies* 540). Therefore, the first translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* being produced in the midst of this political tension could have led to strict censorship concerning its political messages and also could have led Muneer Al Ba'albaki to exclude all of the political discussions that could influence the masses to revolt against their governments.

Indeed, closely looking at Arabic translations and the abridged English version, I have found that most of the following passages from Stowe's original text have been excluded and such exclusion could have been caused by the previously explained political tensions.

To start with, the discussions of slavery from a political and economic perspective have not been adequately translated. The following statement made by St. Clare to Miss Ophelia in their discussion about slavery has not been translated into Arabic and is not included in the abridged English text:

It takes no spectacles to see that a great class of vicious, improvident, degraded people, among us, are an evil to us, as well as to themselves. The capitalist and the aristocrat of England cannot feel that as we do, because they do not mingle with the class they degrade as we do. They are in our houses; they are the associates of our children, and they form their minds faster than we can; for they are a race that children always will cling to and assimilate with. (274)

Similarly, it takes no spectacles to acknowledge the dominant class system in the Arab world that took place in the early twentieth century and still to a certain extent exists today. Thus, some of the Arab masses after reading this passage could possibly associate themselves with the degraded classes and, therefore, revolt in order to get their rights that they deserve in their own country.

In the same vein, St. Clare's following critique on education is neither translated nor included in the abridged English text: "Our laws positively and utterly forbid any efficient general educational system, and they do it wisely, too; for, just begin and thoroughly educate one generation, and the whole thing would be blown sky high. If we did not give them liberty, they would take it" (275). Since many Arab governments promised their masses to grant them many rights but unfortunately did not keep their promises, such a passage could influence Arab readers to work toward gaining their rights themselves. Therefore, I assume that since there are no cultural challenges facing the translation of such passages, political challenges are the ones facing the translation of the previous passages from Stowe's novel. The political censorship on

translated literature must have played a significant role in excluding these references from the Arabic translations and the abridged English version.

Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* includes some references to revolts that happened in different parts of Europe and in Haiti; these references are neither adequately translated nor fully included in the abridged English version. For instance, the opinion St. Clare expresses during his conversation with his brother Alfred was not translated:

The noble in Louis XVI.'s time thought just so; and Austria and Pius IX think so now; and some pleasant morning, you may all be caught up to meet each other in the air, *when the boilers burst*.... [I]f there is anything that is revealed with the strength of a divine law in our times, it is that the masses are to rise, and the underclass become the upper one. (310)

Translating such references to the success of previous revolts throughout history and in different parts of the world could also be regarded as a political threat by the political censorship authority in the Arab world.

Miss Ophelia's questioning and critique after the tragic death of the female slave old Prue addressed to St. Clare, "How can you shut your eyes and ears? How can you let such things alone?" (262), is included in the translation, but the following response from St. Clare is neither translated into Arabic nor included in the abridged English text:

My dear child, what do you expect? here is a whole class,--debased, uneducated, indolent, provoking, --put, without any sorts of terms and conditions, entirely into the hands of such people as the majority in our world are; people who have neither consideration nor self-control, who

have n't even an enlightened regard to their own interest,--for that's the case with the largest half of mankind. (262)

Instead, the Arabic translations and the abridged English text limit St. Clare to the following answer: "I can't buy every poor wretch I see. I can't turn knight-errant, and undertake to redress every individual case of wrong in such a city as this. The most I can do is to try to keep out of the way of it" (221). Excluding all of St. Clare's critique on the society concerning the condition of slavery affects the presentation of the novel to Arab readers. Although it is introduced as a novel that played a role in abolishing slavery in America through its critique of the political circumstances during the mid-nineteenth century in America, neither the translation nor the abridged English version present this political significance of the novel.

The Gender-Based Challenges facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* from English into Arabic

Before starting the discussion about the gender-based challenges facing the translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, it is important to present a general overview of the importance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in advocating for women's empowerment during the mid-nineteenth century in America. Jane Tompkins, in her work, sees in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* a revolutionary agenda that calls for both the emancipation of slaves and the cultural empowerment of women. In the same vein, Lora Romero, in *Home Fronts: Domesticity and Its Critics in the Antebellum United States*, explains that "[t]he novel helped legitimate two historically momentous and politically progressive platforms: abolition and white middle-class women's intervention in putatively 'masculine' concerns" (86). Indeed, Stowe demonstrated for the white women of her time that they

are responsible for abolishing the institution of slavery from American society through the use of different methods, including the presentation of strong female characters in the novel and sentimentalism specifically addressed to women as a strategy to encourage women to participate in the abolition of slavery. Stowe presents her white female characters, Mrs. Shelby, Mrs. Bird, and to a certain extent Miss Ophelia, as the characters most strongly criticizing and opposing the institution of slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law. Although Mrs. Shelby could not stop the selling of Tom and little Harry, still she criticized the institution of slavery which she felt is against the Christian spirit. She also helped Eliza get away by hinting the slaves should slow progress in the pursuit of Eliza. Mrs. Shelby also promised to bring Tom back and actually helped Aunt Chloe in that matter although, unfortunately, it was too late. Mrs. Bird is the strongest and sharpest character in the novel in terms of critiquing and opposing the Fugitive Slave Law. She sharply criticizes her husband, the senator, for approving such a law and insists on helping Eliza and aiding her in her journey to freedom. Although St. Clare is to a certain extent easy-going with his slaves, Miss Ophelia still criticizes the institution of slavery and makes him feel his share responsibility in the continuation of slavery in the South.

Moreover, Stowe presents the most intense tragic scenes of slavery through narrating many stories of slave mothers, all pointing to the fact that the miseries of female slaves are more complex due to the loss and death of their children. In the Shelby plantation, there is the story of Eliza and her journey with her son over the Ohio River. During Tom's first journey in the boat, Stowe narrates the sorrowful story of the female slave Lucy, who desperately drowns herself after the selling of her son by Mr.

Haley. In New Orleans there is the tragic story of old Prue and the awful death of her son and finally her tragic death at the hands of her master. At Simon Legree's plantation we hear the dreadful story of Cassy, who had been unable to stop the selling and beating of her children.

Furthermore, Stowe advocates the empowerment of women through reinforcing the bravery and courageous efforts of the female slaves despite the harsh realities of the institution of slavery. The female slave Eliza supported her husband and encouraged him to go to Canada. Only through her courageous action is her son, Harry, saved from being sold to Mr. Haley the slave trader. Aunt Chloe, despite her illiteracy, used her talent in cooking to collect money in order to purchase the freedom of her husband, Tom. Through the courageous efforts of these two female slave characters, I believe that Stowe wanted to prove that since women were able to resist the institution of slavery and participate in gaining freedom for their male family members, then the white free women are capable of and responsible for abolishing the institution of slavery. Stowe further reinforces the capability of women to participate in abolishing the institution of slavery through presenting the characters of the female Quakers whose efforts helped in freeing many slaves.

Unfortunately, Stowe's empowerment of women is nowhere to be found in the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. I believe that there are many factors that have led to dismissing such an important focus of Stowe's novel. In the following section, I will discuss the gender-based challenges that have hindered or could hinder an accurate presentation of Stowe's call for women's empowerment. First of all, it is important to note that the Arabic culture is a male-dominated one, and women, to a

certain extent, suffer from gender discrimination. Accordingly, the literary field is no better for women since it is an extension of such gender discrimination. Indeed, all of the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are by men who may have regarded the sentimental messages that Stowe addresses to her women readers as not important and accordingly, not worthy of translation. Thus, most of Stowe's paragraphs through which she is advocating for women's empowerment are missed because Stowe's direct appeals to women are excluded.

Since the Arabic culture is a male dominated one, men are considered superior to women. Therefore, men are mostly praised for their accomplishments and any woman's efforts are suppressed when compared to those of a man. The literary field follows the same rule; most of the significant characters in Arabic literature are men. So, since Tom is considered by the translators the major character in Stowe's novel, the translators could have thought that his story should be the focus of the translation.

Furthermore, the images of women in Arabic literature are presented in a manner that is regulated by the demands of the male dominated society. Due to the strict cult of womanhood and forces of domesticity, which were discussed in chapter two of this study, female characters are presented as submissive and passive characters obeying their husbands and taking care of their children and, most important, they should not engage in "manly" political and economic spheres. Although the female characters in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* are confined by the forces of domesticity practiced on American women during the mid-nineteenth century, presenting them to the Arabic culture through translation demands more confinement. Therefore, the significance of many female characters has been weakened through the Arabic translation.

Furthermore, since introducing Western literature to the Arab culture could be seen as a force of westernizing the society, presenting any literary work that advocates for women's literature is viewed as a deliberate interference and attempt to Westernize the society. Therefore, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in translation, based on the different prefaces that accompanied most of the Arabic translations, is never presented as a literary work that advocates for women's empowerment. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* stands as a literary work about slavery in the United States during the mid-nineteenth century.

All of the previous gender-based challenges influenced the male translators of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to either exclude or modify certain passages and incidents that advocate for women's empowerment. Most important, Stowe's use of sentimentalism has been completely excluded from the translations and the abridged English version. Therefore, the Arabic text will not be able to show that women are specifically addressed by Stowe. Furthermore, excluding the use of sentimentalism will limit the possible assimilation and gradual sympathy with the stories of the women slaves in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Indeed, including Eliza's story without following it with Stowe's appeal for women to put themselves and their children in the place of Eliza and Harry does not achieve similar assimilation to that caused by reading Stowe's sentimental appeal.

In order to show the effect of the gender-based challenges on dismissing Stowe's advocating for women's empowerment from the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the abridged English version, I believe that it would be clearer to show the effect of these challenges on the presentation of some of the female characters. The presentation of Mrs. Shelby in the novel has been highly affected by the constraining

gender-based challenges. Mrs. Shelby's conversation with Mr. Shelby does not appear in three of the Arabic translations. However, it very briefly appears in the other translations and the abridged English text. Mrs. Shelby's opposition of slavery through her speech concerning "God's curse on slavery" has been excluded (80), as has her statement about her responsibility toward her slaves as a Christian woman and her critique of the abolitionists (79). The abridged English text presents the following part of the conversation. After Mr. Shelby tells her that he has sold Tom, Mrs. Shelby answers, "what our Tom? That good faithful creature? Been your faithful servant from a boy! Oh, Mr. Shelby you and I have promised him his freedom, too, you and I have spoken to him a hundred of times of it." After that Mr. Shelby tells her that he had to sell Harry as well because of his desperate situation. Then Mrs. Shelby states the following:

Why not make a pecuniary sacrifice? I'm willing to bear my part of the inconvenience. How can I ever hold up my head again among them, if for the sake of a little paltry gain, we sell such a faithful excellent, confiding creature as poor Tom, and tear from him in a moment all we have taught him to love and value? I have taught them the duties of the family, of parent and child, and husband and wife; and how can I bear to have this open acknowledgment that we care for no tie, no duty, no relation, however sacred, compared with money? (79)

Including only this part of her conversation with her husband does not do justice to her character, especially while excluding the whole conversation entirely in some of the translations. Arab readers will never recognize her religious perspective concerning her duty toward the slaves. For instance, in some translations as well as the abridged

English text Mrs. Shelby's following words have been excluded from the previous conversation: "O, Mr. Shelby, I have tried—tried most faithfully, as a Christian woman should.... I have talked with Eliza about her boy—her duty to him as a Christian mother, to watch over him, pray for him, and bring him up in a Christian way" (79). Most important, Arab readers will not sense her opposition to the slave trade and her husband's decision to sell Tom and little Harry. Limiting Mrs. Shelby's critique of slavery presents her as a woman who mostly cares about her reputation among the slaves and not the immorality of slavery itself.

The presentation of Eliza has also been affected by the gender-based challenges during the translation process. Some of the Arabic translations briefly summarize Eliza's story in three paragraphs while others exclude it from the translation. The abridged English version includes short paragraphs about her escape. Furthermore, as we go further in both the translations and the abridged English text, Eliza's presence is lessened; she is no longer alone in her journey, and the gender-based traditions could have made the translators decide to present George Harris as the caretaker of the family and the one that should be further introduced to Arab readers. Although, compared to the words of other female characters in the novel, Mrs. Bird's speech is by far the most accurately translated, and it is included in the abridged English version, still the presentation of one female character is not enough to render *Uncle Tom's Cabin* an effective advocate for the empowerment of women.

Miss Ophelia's presentation in the Arabic translations has also been greatly affected by the gender-based challenges facing the translation process. Indeed, Miss Ophelia's most significant discussions with her cousin St. Clare have either been

completely excluded or intensively summarized. For instance, one of their discussions concerning slavery is briefly limited to the following:

“Well,” said Miss Ophelia, “do you think slavery right or wrong?”

“I’m not going to have any of your New England directness, cousin,” said St. Clare, gaily.

“Then you don’t believe that the Bible Justifies slavery,” said Miss Ophelia.

“I would be very sorry to think it did.” (191)

In Stowe’s original work, both Miss Ophelia and St. Clare discuss the aspects of religion and politics in very great detail, but since the Arabic translations are governed by gender-based challenges concerning the representation of women, the translators may have decided to introduce Miss Ophelia within the limits of domesticity. Miss Ophelia in the Arabic translations appears to be obsessed with the cleanness of the place and its tidiness. Furthermore, Miss Ophelia’s relationship with Topsy has been presented in a comic way; Topsy disobeys most of Miss Ophelia’s instructions and reacts indifferently, and accordingly Miss Ophelia loses her temper. Thus, Miss Ophelia’s opinion concerning the religious debate about the institution of slavery and the differences among the Southern and Northern states concerning slavery have not been fully presented in the Arabic translations. Most important, Stowe’s empowerment of women through showing their capability of argument and discussion with men is not conveyed to Arab readers.

The Quaker women are not fully presented in some of the Arabic translations and are entirely excluded in other ones. If included they are presented within a framework that presents them as passive but talented housewives with nursing skills. Stowe

presents them as very influential figures who through their guidance and teaching in the house were able to affect George Harris positively, which Stowe narrates through the following:

This indeed, was a home,--home,--a word that George had never yet had a meaning for; and a belief in God, and trust in his providence, began to encircle his heart, as, with a golden cloud of protection and confidence, dark, misanthropic, pining, atheistic doubts, and fierce despair, melted away before the light of a living gospel. (184)

Through such description Stowe wants to show the effect of the American women when given the chance to guide and care for those around them. Elizabeth Ammons, in her essay titled “Stowe’s Dream of the Mother-Savior: *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and American Women Writers before the 1920s,” states that “Stowe provides a glimpse of the maternal paradise America might be in the Quaker community that harbors Eliza, Henry, and George Harris on their flight to Canada. The community is agrarian, nonviolent, egalitarian, and, above all, matrifocal. At its center is the ample, motherly form of Rachel Halliday” (168). Ammons further explains that “in Stowe’s portrait of the Quakers is that matriarchy not only creates a safe, humane stopping place for George, Eliza, and Harry in their flight from slavery, the nightmarish but logical extreme of patriarchal capitalism. It also represents America’s salvation” (169). Excluding these Quaker women from most of the Arabic translations and briefly mentioning them in the abridged English text do not reflect the importance of the Quaker women and accordingly Stowe’s call for women’s empowerment through showing the women’s successful guidance.

The stories of other female slave characters have been either excluded or briefly included in some of the translations. For instance, Cassy's story, including her marriage and the loss of her children, is never included. Some of the translations state that she sat with Tom and told him how she came to Legree's plantation without actually telling the reader her story. Old Prue's story was never mentioned in some of the Arabic translations. Some Arabic translations do not mention Lucy's story in the boat where she drowns herself after she knew that her son was sold. The tragic stories of some of the female slaves who were sold in the slave warehouse were also excluded in some of the Arabic translations. I assume that the omission of stories of these female characters in many of the Arabic translations could be due to the tradition of presenting Arabic literary works that portray the journey of a male character. Both the Arabic translations and the abridged English text specifically present the story of Tom and present him as the major character in the novel.

Due to the gender-based challenges, a message of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has been partially presented to Arab readers. Indeed, the presentation of female characters in the novel had been greatly affected and accordingly Stowe's empowerment of women. As a result, I assume, that Arab readers could find it confusing to consider *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a text that advocates women's rights since neither the novel nor the preface reveal Stowe's intention to empower women through the presentation of strong female characters and her own critique of the institution of slavery.

Challenges Related to the Translation into Arabic of Stowe's Use of Sentimentality in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Studying the life of Harriet Beecher Stowe and surveying her literary production indicate her enormous contribution and efforts in social reform. However, due to the limitations of domesticity concerning women's public participation in such reform, she chose the literary device of sentimentality in her works to directly speak to the public and convey her message. Joan Hedrick in *The Oxford Harriet Beecher Stowe Reader* states that Stowe "used the written word as a vehicle for religious, social, and political purposes.... Had she been a theologian or philosopher--occupations effectively denied her because of her sex--she would have poured her ideas into different molds" (1). Stowe explains in a letter to her brother George that she cannot stop herself from stating her opinions while writing:

You see my dear George that I was made for a preacher--indeed I can scarcely keep my letters from turning into sermons.... Indeed in a certain sense it is as much my vocation to preach on paper as it is that of my brothers to preach viva voce--I write note after note every day full of good advice & am used to saying 'but you must consider' & 'I wish you to remember'-& 'think my dear' etc. etc. that you need not wonder to find me exhorting you. (qtd. in Hedrick 309)

Indeed, this was the approach that she had followed not only in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* but in most of her other works: she addresses her readers in her works in the same way she addresses her brother in this letter. Stowe always states her opinion and draws the readers' attention to the message she would like to convey.

So, it is obvious that Stowe wanted her writing to have an effect on her readers in order for social reform to take place. Stowe believed that “[t]here is a ladder to Heaven, whose base God has placed in Human affections” (*The Minister’s Wooing* 579).

Therefore, sentimentality, which is based on human affection, was the appropriate device for the cause of her writing and for the effect that she wanted to gain in issues such as slavery and women’s rights. Nevertheless, it is important to note that Stowe’s use of sentimentalism was not always viewed positively, since sentimental literature in general was negatively critiqued by some critics during the nineteenth century.

Catherine O’Connell in her essay titled “The Magic of the Real Presence of Distress”: Sentimentality and Competing Rhetorics of Authority” states that “discussions of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, whether friendly or hostile, tend to set up an opposition between the novel’s sentimentality and its antislavery message” (14).¹⁹ Joanne Dobson explains that the core of sentimental literature is the “desire for bonding and it is afflation on the plane of emotion, sympathy, nurturance, or similar moral or spiritual inclination for which sentimental writers and readers yearn” (267). Indeed, such recent explanation could be applied to Stowe, since it seems that Stowe believed that the device of sentimentality is the best tool for arousing the readers’ sympathy concerning the dehumanized conditions slaves had to endure. Furthermore, Robyn Warhol states that Stowe purposely engaged readers in her text in order for them to “sympathize with real-life slaves, workers, or ordinary middle-class people” (811). So, looking at *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, we find her addressing her readers either by the pronoun “you” or “reader” before stating the message she wants to deliver. Her literary language tends to be a conversational one with the reader; she narrates a story but at the same time starts a

¹⁹ For complete discussion refer to Jane Tompkins’s *Sensational Designs*.

conversation with him/her through the sentimental messages that require the reader to take part in the conversation in actions rather than words, that is, through participating in social reform. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe addresses men and women, while emphasizing women, and calls on them to participate in ending the institution of slavery.

Since the literary device of sentimentality depends on arousing the readers' sense of social responsibility, Stowe, in some of her works, calls her readers to take responsibility. In her work titled "An Appeal to the Women of the Free States of America, On the Present Crisis in Our Country," Stowe asks American women to take responsibility and participate in the social reform of abolishing slavery through evoking their "holier feelings, which are peculiar to womanhood." She actually defines their responsibility through the following statement: "The first duty for each woman, for herself thoroughly to understand the subject, and to feel that as mother, wife, sister, or member of society, she is bound to give her influence on the right side." Through such statements, Stowe is keen on appealing to all women regardless of their position. Therefore, no woman can exclude herself from such a social responsibility. Catherine O'Connell states that "[a]gainst the authority of (male) sacred and secular institutions, Stowe invokes the rhetoric of sentimentality, the appeal to the authority of emotional experience" (13). Indeed, since some white male religious figures and politicians to a certain degree justified and strengthened the existence and continuation of slavery, Stowe chose to address women through sentimentality, which she was hoping could achieve the goal of making them sympathize with the slaves and accordingly revolt against the brutal institution of slavery.

Since sentimental literature aims to arouse readers' sympathy, it concentrates on the most intense tragic and dehumanized conditions of the characters. Joanne Dobson explains that in the sentimental vision, "the greatest threat is the tragedy of separation, of severed human ties: the death of a child, lost love, failed or disrupted family connections, distorted or unsympathetic community, or the loss of the hope of reunion and/or reconciliation in the hereafter" (267). Applying this "vision" of the sentimental approach, long before sentimentalism as a term is used in the literary field; Harriet Beecher Stowe chooses to address the readers after the most intense scenes in her works. Indeed, in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* most of the sentimental passages were placed after the miserable stories of slave women, particularly mothers, and are specifically addressed to white mothers.

Venuti explains that best-selling fiction depends for its success on the readers' sympathetic identification with characters who confront contemporary social problems (*The Scandals of Translation* 126). Indeed, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was one of the bestselling works in which Stowe was aiming to arouse and gain the American people's sympathy, and to a high degree she was successful in arousing it. Accordingly, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is full of these sentimental messages that are addressed to different members of American society. Furthermore, by using the rhetoric of sentimentality Stowe was also calling for women's empowerment through specifically addressing women in the chapters of the novel and specifically in the "Concluding Remarks," which she had written as a response to what she received from readers after the novel's presentation in the *National Era*. This chapter is heavily embedded with sentimental

messages in which Stowe critiques American society and pleads with them to abolish and stop the institution of slavery

Unfortunately, none of these sentimental messages are translated into Arabic. Most important, all of the Arabic translations and the abridged English text don't include Stowe's "Concluding Remarks" chapter.. I believe that many challenges could have played a role in dismissing Stowe's sentimentality from the Arabic translations as well as the abridged English text introduced to Arab readers. Again, I will also categorize these challenges as follows: cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based ones. Therefore, in the following section, I will discuss these challenges and locate the sentimental passages that are not included due to these challenges. I will also discuss the effect of excluding Stowe's use of sentimentalism. However, it is important to note that more than one challenge can exist during the translation which could hinder the translation of a single episode of sentimentalism in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, but for the purpose of analysis I will discuss each challenge separately and analyze one challenge for each example below.

There are many cultural factors related to both the American and Arabic contexts that have led to the exclusion of some of Stowe's sentimental messages. On one hand, the institution of slavery in Arabia was abolished with the rise of Islam fourteen hundred years ago. Thus the translators could have believed that there is no need to include Stowe's plea to abolish the institution of slavery through her use of sentimentalism since it has been already abolished in the Arabic context and culture. On the other hand, the institution of slavery also was abolished in American culture long before the first translation of the work into Arabic in 1953. Accordingly, the translators might have

considered that use of sentimentality has achieved its goal in abolishing slavery and thus there is no more need to include it. These cultural factors could have led the translators to exclude all of Stowe's sentimental passages in which she urges her readers to acknowledge that slaves are as human as they are and thus should not be enslaved. After describing Tom's reaction to the news of him being sold to Mr. Haley, Stowe addresses both her men and women readers through the following lines:

Here he turned to the rough trundle-bed full of little wooly heads, and broke fairly down. He leaned over the back of the chair, and covered his face with his large hands. Sobs, heavy, hoarse and loud, shook the chair, and great tears fell through his fingers on the floor; just such tears, sir, as you dropped into the coffin where you lay your first-born son; such tears woman, as you shed when you heard the cries of your dying babe. For, sir, he was a man,--and you are but another man. And, woman though dressed in silk and jewels, you are but a woman, and, in life's great straits and mighty griefs, ye feel but one sorrow. (84-85)

Here we can see that Stowe first describes Tom's miserable feeling since he will be parting from his family forever. After that, she addresses the readers and calls on them to sympathize with Tom through noting that Tom's feelings are exactly similar to the feelings of any white man and woman who are parted from their young ones by the force of death. It seems that Stowe knew that white readers will not fully appreciate the humanity of the slaves and their suffering unless she reminds them of similar feelings that they could experience through different episodes and happenings in their lives. Indeed, the whites cannot stop death from taking away their children; slaves also have

no power to stop the slave trade that parts them from their children. Like death to the whites, the slave trade is death to the slaves since they are parted from their loved ones forever; although still alive, many slaves are parted from their families forever in the same way that death separates whites from each other forever. So, since slavery no longer exists in both the Arabic and American cultures, Arab translators could have thought that such sentimental message is not important to include. However, such exclusion has prevented Arab readers from realizing the strategy that Stowe had used to make white people feel the pains of slavery.

Arab translators have also excluded the following example of Stowe's use of sentimentalism in which she warns her readers of the possible effect of slavery on them. She first narrates the story of Lucy, the slave mother whose little son was sold without her knowledge: "'Why, why, where?' She began, in a bewildered surprise. 'Lucy,' said the trader, 'your child's gone; you may as well know it first as last. Ye see, I know'd you couldn't take him down south; and I got a chance to sell him to a first-rate family, that'll raise him better than you can'" (172). After narrating the brutal incident where the slave trader Mr. Haley sells Lucy's son with cold hearted indifference, Stowe includes the following sentimental cry to her readers:

The trader had arrived at that stage of Christian and political perfection which has been recommended by some preachers and politicians of the north, lately, in which he had completely overcome every humane weakness or prejudice. *His heart was exactly where yours, sir, and mine could be brought, with proper effort and cultivation.* The wild look of anguish and utter despair that the woman cast on him might have

disturbed one less practiced; *but he was used to it*. He had seen that same look hundreds of times. *You can get used to such things, too, my friend*; and it is the great object of *recent efforts* to make our whole Northern community used to them, for the glory of the union. (174; emphasis added)

Here, Stowe warns her readers that without necessarily being slave traders, still the existence of slavery in America will lead most American people to consider slavery with indifference. The Arab translators' exclusion of this statement from their translations could be due to their lack of knowledge of the historical context of the work, since Stowe was probably referring to the Fugitive Slave Law by her phrase "*recent efforts*." Since slavery no longer exists in both the Arabic and American cultures translators might have also thought that such warning is not needed, and probably makes no sense, since its leading cause does not exist anymore. However, such exclusion prevents Arab readers from realizing the work's significant historical context and also prevents them from understanding that these warnings from Stowe are important factors that could have made some Americans revolt against the institution of slavery at the time of the novel's publication.

Stowe also through the use of sentimentalism wanted to point out that the entire American people are responsible for the existence of the institution of slavery. After describing the brutal character of the slave trader Mr. Haley, Stowe addresses the readers through the following: "He's a shocking creature, isn't he,--this trader? So unfeeling! It's dreadful really!" But who, sir, makes the trader? Who is most to blame? The enlightened cultivated, intelligent man, who supports the system of which the trader

is inevitable result, or the poor trader at home” (175-76). Through such statement, in which Stowe holds the entire American nation responsible for the institution of slavery, she indirectly notes their responsibility to revolt against the institution of slavery. Again, since slavery no longer exists in both Arabic and American cultures, translators might have thought that there is no need for including Stowe’s sentimental plea to revolt against the slavery system.

Furthermore, since the institution of slavery no longer exists in both the Arabic and American cultures, then such condition could be a factor that had made Arab translators exclude Stowe’s use of sentimentalism where she equates the white men’s definition and right of freedom to that of the slaves. Thus she states,

Is there anything in it glorious and dear for a nation that is not also glorious and dear for a man? What is freedom to a nation, but freedom to the individuals in it? ... What is freedom to George Harris? To your fathers, freedom was the right of a nation to be a nation. To him, it is the right of a man to be a man, and not a brute; the right to call the wife of his bosom his wife, and to protect her from lawless violence; the right to protect and educate his child; the right to have a home of his own, a religion of his own, a character of his own, unsubject to the will of another.

(421)

Since slavery does not give these normal rights to the slaves, Stowe explains that slaves right to such normal freedom is exactly similar to that of the founding fathers of the United States who fought for the right to have a free nation. Such comparison that equalizes the slaves’ right to freedom to that of the founding fathers reinforces Stowe’s

belief in the slaves' rights. So, excluding such statement from both the Arabic translations and the abridged English text will prevent the Arab readers from understanding the importance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in its historical context and Stowe's strong criticism of the institution of slavery.

There are also some religious challenges that could have constrained the translation of Stowe's use of sentimentalism. Since Islam considers Jesus Christ as a prophet, referring to him as God is not translated. Furthermore, Arab translators may have realized that Stowe was aiming to arouse the readers' religious feelings or critique the religious authority; therefore, some sentimental messages in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* have not been translated. That Stowe's critique of the Christian church is not included in the Arabic translations and the abridged English version could be due to the fact that Islam is the most dominant religion in the Arabic culture. Therefore, questioning a religious authority that rarely exists in the Arab world could have been considered unnecessary. For example, the following religious appeal is neither translated nor included in the abridged English text:

O, Church of Christ, read the signs of the times! Is not this power the spirit of HIM whose kingdom is yet to come, and whose will to be done on earth as it is in heaven? ... Christians! Every time that you pray that the kingdom of Christ may come, can you forget that prophecy associates, in dread fellowship, the *day of vengeance* with the year of his redeemed?
(484)

By excluding such religious cry and appeal, Arab readers will not be able to realize Stowe's use of religion as rhetoric to call for the abolition of slavery and thus will not

recognize that Christianity does not advocate the institution of slavery. In the previous example, Stowe reminds her Christian readers that the “*day of vengeance*” will come and they will be judged for the wrongs of slavery.

In the same vein, Stowe questions the religious authority’s silence despite the shocking reality of slavery. After describing Legree’s brutal beating of Tom, she states the following:

Scenes of blood and cruelty are shocking to our ear and heart. What man has nerve to do man has not nerve to hear. What brother-man and brother-Christian must suffer, cannot be told us, even in our secret chamber, it so harrows up the soul! And yet, oh my country! These things are done under the shadow of thy laws! O, Christ! Thy church sees them, almost in silence. (450)

Again the previous passage has not been translated nor included in the abridged English version. The translators could have thought that such religious critique is not relevant to Muslim Arab readers. Excluding this passage will prevent Arab readers from recognizing Stowe’s critique of the American society, especially the religious authority. Accordingly, Arab readers will not acknowledge Stowe’s courage in questioning the religious authority at a time when women were not given the full chance to speak in public about political and religious topics.

There are also geopolitical challenges that could have played a role in excluding some of Stowe’s sentimental messages. Since the revolt of the masses in most of the Arabic countries was strictly prohibited during the 1950s, any literature that calls for revolt is banned. In *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Stowe calls the readers to revolt against the

legalized institution of slavery through her sentimental messages. Therefore, her sentimentality is the most important part of her novel that could lead to the banning of her novel in the Arab world. For example, after narrating the incident of Haley agreeing with Tom Loker to look for Eliza, Stowe addresses her readers through the following statement:

If any of our refined and Christian readers object to the society into which this scene introduces them, let us beg them to begin and conquer their prejudices in time. The catching business we beg to remind them is rising to dignity of a lawful and patriotic profession. If all the broad land between the Mississippi and the Pacific becomes one great market for bodies and souls, and human property retains the locomotive tendencies of this nineteenth century, the trader and catcher may yet be among our aristocracy. (116)

Stowe specifically addresses readers who sympathize with slaves and, most important, who oppose the institution of slavery to revolt against such condition in order to abolish it. She urges them not to be passive viewers of the brutal conditions existing in the society. Therefore, the Arab translators may have excluded that passage because they could have realized that translating such passage could prevent their translations from being published in the Arab world.

Furthermore, since the Arabic culture is a gender-based one that is governed by forces of patriarchy, many of Stowe's sentimental messages are not included in the Arabic translations and the abridged English version. It would be interesting to know whether sentimentality could have been translated if it was primarily addressed to men.

As I have previously stated, almost all of Stowe's sentimental messages are addressed to women. Therefore, one last reason that I assume could have led the translators to decide not to include Stowe's sentimentality is related to the fact that the Arabic culture is a male-dominated one both in the public sphere and the sphere of literature. Some men might find it embarrassing to read works that are addressed to women, and specifically addressing the women readers could also mean excluding the men readers. Accordingly, since most of the sentimental messages in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* follow the narration of tragic stories of slave mothers and are addressed to women, the translators could have felt that there is no need to specifically address women through literature. Another possible gender-based reason could be related to the fact that all of the translators are men; therefore, they could have viewed sentimentality as unnecessary or could not have been actually affected by it.

In this section, I will include Stowe's special appeal to the white mother reading her text. For example, after narrating the scene where the barefooted Eliza crosses the River to save her child, Stowe applies her view on such a tragic scene in a way to arouse the sympathy of her mother readers. Stowe knew that mothers are the appropriate group who would identify with Eliza and ultimately answer Stowe's call for the abolition of slavery. Therefore, she directly addresses them through the following lines:

If it were your Harry, mother, or your Willie, that were going to be torn from you by a brutal trader, tomorrow morning--if you had seen the man, and heard that the papers were signed and delivered, and you had only

from twelve o'clock till morning to make good your escape,--how fast
could you walk? (95)

This sentimental message that has been considered by many critics one of the important passages of Stowe's text has not been translated nor included in the abridged English text. Again excluding such an important passage will not allow Arab readers to sense the effect of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* on American readers during the Antebellum period.

After carefully describing Mrs. Bird's opening of the drawer and taking out her dead son's clothes to give to Eliza's son, Stowe addresses her mother readers who could possibly experience or already had experienced a similar tragedy:

His wife opened the little bed-room door adjoining her room, and, taking the candle, set it down on the top of the bureau there; then from a small recess she took a key, and put it thoughtfully in the lock of a drawer, and made a sudden pause, while two boys, who, boy like, had followed close on her heels, stood looking, with silent, significant glances, at their mother. And oh! Mother that reads this, has there never been in your house a drawer, or a closet, the opening of which has been to you like the opening again a little grave? Ah! Happy mother that you are, if it has not been so.
(132)

Due to the gender-based challenges of the Arabic culture, the entire section is not found in any of the Arabic translations and the abridged English version. Stowe had written this section about a mother's feeling and addressed it to all of the other reading mothers to move them to stop the brutal institution of slavery where slave mothers every day are

legally separated from their children. Stowe also includes the following sentimental message to her readers after narrating Cassy's tragic story of being separated from her children:

Poor Cassy! When she recovered, turned her face to the wall, and wept and sobbed like a child,--perhaps, mother, you can tell what she was thinking of! Perhaps you cannot,--but she felt as sure, in that hour, that God had mercy on her, and that she should see her daughter,--as she did, months afterwards,--when--but we anticipate. (464)

Again the Arab translators did not include Stowe's sentimental appeal where she tells her mother readers that they are the ones who should feel most for the slaves since they will sympathize with a mother's tragedy in losing her children.

In the final chapter Stowe also specifically addresses the white free mothers through the following:

And, you mothers of America,--you, who have learned, by the cradles of your own children, to love and feel for all mankind,--by the sacred love you bear your child; by your joy in his beautiful, spotless infancy; by the motherly pity and tenderness with which you guide his growing years; by the anxieties of his education; by the prayers you breathe for his soul's eternal good;--I beseech you, pity the mother who has all your affections, and not one legal right to protect, guide, or educate, the child of her bosom! By the sick hour of your child; by those dying eyes, which you can never forget; by those last cries, that wrung your heart when you could neither help nor save; by the desolation of the empty cradle, that silent

nursery,--I beseech you, pity those mothers that are constantly made childless by the American slave-trade! And say, mothers of America, is this a thing to be defended, sympathized with, and passed over in silence?
(479-80)

Here Stowe specifically and directly addresses the “mothers of America” and asks them to sympathize with all of the slave mothers who lost their children under the institution of slavery. Excluding such direct sentimental message will not give the Arab readers the opportunity to understand and acknowledge Stowe’s specific appeal to the mothers of America through arousing their motherly instinct which will enable them to sympathize with the slaves and accordingly call for their freedom.

Finally, some of Stowe’s sentimental statements are not translated due to the fact that they are specifically addressed to certain members of the American society. For instance, Stowe in certain cases specifically addresses the people of the Southern states and other times people of the Northern states. In the following example, Stowe critiques the brutality of the Fugitive Slave Law by arguing that some of the Southerners would not have the heart to follow it. However, it is important to note that this example could be faced by cultural challenges related to the translator’s lack of knowledge that Stowe is critiquing the Fugitive Slave Law.

And you need not exult over him, good brother of the Southern States; for we have some inklings that many of you, under similar circumstances, would not do much better. We have reason to know, in Kentucky, as in Mississippi, are noble and generous hearts, to whom never was tale of suffering told in vain. Ah, good brother! Is it fair for you to expect of us

services which your own brave, honorable heart would not allow you to render, were you in our place? (134)

The decision to delete this sentimental address would not give the Arab readers the chance to fully understand the opinion that some of the Northerners held about the people of the South.

The chapter titled “Concluding Remarks” is full of sentimental messages that are addressed to the American people and at certain times specifically addressed to Northerners or Southerners. Stowe pleads for her readers to revolt against the institution of slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law through the following: “And now, men and women of America, is this a thing to be trifled with, apologized for, and passed over in silence” (479). She also states in another passage,

“[T]o you, generous, noble-minded men and women, of the South,--you, whose virtue, and magnanimity, and purity of character are the greater for the severe trial it has encountered, to you is her appeal. Have you not, in your own secret souls, in your own private conversing, felt that there are woes and evils, in this accursed system, far beyond what are here shadowed, or can be shadowed? Can it be otherwise? (478)

Excluding all of the sentimental messages in Stowe’s text, whether those following the narration of certain tragic incidents and the entire “Concluding Remarks” chapter, the Arab translators have omitted an important aspect of Stowe’s antislavery novel when conveyed to the Arabic culture. Indeed, it would be hard for Arab readers to appreciate the significance of Stowe’s text in the antebellum period of American history. Stowe’s voice had been limited to a narrator serving logistic and mechanical functions linking the

parts of the novel with each other. Stowe's significance as a writer who participated in social reform is not conveyed to the Arab readers at all.

Conclusion

After critiquing the different translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the abridged English translation introduced to Arab readers and examining the different cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges, it is fair to say that any translation that dismisses the work's period-specific cultural significance is an effort in vain. Being constrained by the previous cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges could have made the translators decide to limit themselves to a simple plot where Tom the slave suffers through slavery but forgives his masters till the minute of his death. Finally, since the translations are plot-oriented, the translators' decision to exclude Stowe's use of religion, use of sentimentalism, call for women's cultural empowerment, critique of the society, and political critique will not affect the simple plot they have translated.

Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is a work that is deeply embedded in the historical context in which it is written. Therefore, any translation effort that excludes its historical context will be in vain. Therefore, it is important to approach its future translations from a cultural perspective. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is known among the Arab audience for its importance as a text that played a role in ending the institution of slavery in America, and I believe that they have chosen to read this novel with high expectations to see the effect of such a work. However, through the present existing translations it is hard for them to believe that this work had any significance at all. Indeed, the cultural constraints have weakened the significance of Stowe's use of cultural, literary, and classical

allusions and use of dialect to call for slavery's abolition. The religious constraints have also dismissed Stowe's use of religion to attack the institution of slavery and her critique of using religion to defend slavery, and also her use of Biblical allusions to justify the slaves' right to freedom. Furthermore, the geopolitical challenges have prevented Arab readers from acknowledging Stowe's call for revolt to abolish the institution of slavery. The gender-based challenges have also played a vital role in misrepresenting Stowe's call for women's empowerment in America during the nineteenth century. In the same vein, all of the previous challenges could have also influenced the translators to exclude Stowe's use of sentimentalism. Stowe's critique of her society and her plea addressed to it are not included. Accordingly, during plot-oriented translation the text is robbed of its historical context, and thus its cultural significance is lost.

Through using Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a case study to investigate the challenges of cross-cultural translation of literary works from English into the Arabic culture, I believe that the call for a culturally-oriented literary translation should be answered. However, as I have previously stated in chapter two of this study, such an approach will not be easy to handle but at the same time not impossible to undertake. Therefore, in the following chapter, I will start with discussing the importance of cultural translation, especially in our global community where cultures and civilizations are seeking mutual understanding and respect for each other. After that, I will explore some of the possible solutions for the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges facing the literary translation from English into the Arabic culture while using *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as an example.

CHAPTER FOUR

ADDRESSING THE CULTURAL CHALLENGES FACING THE CROSS-CULTURAL TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH LITERARY TEXTS INTO THE ARABIC CULTURE: *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN* AS A CASE STUDY

In this current era of globalization, cultural translation of literary texts from and into different cultures is more important than it once was. Indeed, cultural translation of English literary texts into the Arabic culture is highly demanded by the current status of globalization that reinforces the need for individuals to have a multicultural knowledge and perspective. In this chapter, I will discuss the importance of multiculturalism in the global era, which I believe stresses the need of cultural translation. I will also include some current cultural and translation projects taking place in the Arab world which reinforce the need for cultural translation of literary texts. After that, I will discuss both the possibility and importance of addressing the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that hinder the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into the Arabic language and culture. However, it is again important to note that these challenges intersect each other and accordingly the possible strategies of addressing them intersect as well. For the purpose of my study, I will discuss each challenge separately. Furthermore, it is important to state that I will be addressing the cultural and religious challenges through providing some possible solutions, whereas I will be addressing the geopolitical and gender-based challenges through discussing the current changes in the Arab world, which, I believe, can pave the way for Arab translators to include subjects previously considered taboo. In addressing these

challenges I will also use *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a case study and present possible strategies for addressing some of its challenges.

The Importance of Multiculturalism in the Global Context

Currently it is not only important for individuals to be bilingual or multilingual, but it is crucially more important for individuals to have multicultural perspectives. Kevin Avruch in his essay titled "Cross-Cultural Conflict" states that because of the "increasing transnational exchanges [in the global context], the coming century will see many more encounters among individuals of all backgrounds that are intercultural in nature" (www.eolss.net). Thus, these many encounters reinforce the importance of multiculturalism among individuals of different cultures from different parts of the globe. Indeed, according to the 2009 MLA *Report to the Teagle Foundation on the Undergraduate Major in Language and Literature*, "[m]ultilingualism and multiculturalism have become a necessity for most world citizens" (10). The report further states that "[b]oth the global economy and our ethnically diverse society need citizens who understand the languages, traditions, and histories of other cultures as well as their own" (4). Accordingly, there is also continuously increasing awareness of the importance of approaching literary translation from a cultural aspect since "translations are one of the primary means by which cultures travel" (Dingwany, "Translating 'third world cultures'" 36). Translated literary texts are one of the major sources through which individuals' knowledge of other cultures is constructed. As a result, many researchers and organizations continuously give great attention to the field of literary translation since new issues of translation arise in the global context. Indeed, the 2009 Modern Language Association presidential forum was titled "The Tasks of Translation in the

Global Context.” Furthermore, the field of literary translation has now grown closer to the field of “Cultural Studies,” which further reinforces the need to approach translation from a cultural perspective and accordingly demands locating and addressing any cultural challenges facing the cross-cultural literary translation process.

Cultural Approaches of Literary Translation

Since the beginning of the “cultural turn” shift in literary translation in the 1970s, cultural translation of literature was either approached through domestication or foreignization. In general, the domestication approach in literary cultural translation mainly focuses on making changes to the literary text in order for it to be similar to the target culture’s own literary texts. On the other hand, the foreignization approach in literary cultural translation does not make any changes or modifications regarding the content of the literary text. It rather tends to maintain most of the features of the foreign text. However, since that time and until now during the current era of globalization, many literary translators and critics are still asking to what extent literary translation should “reflect the foreignness of the original, and how far it should adapt to the host country’s literary norms” (David Damrosch, *How to Read World Literature* 75). Before I answer the question concerning which approach to use in the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into the Arabic culture, I believe it is important to give a general overview of both the foreignization and domestication approaches used in the cultural translation of literary texts.

Susan Bassnett states that “[f]or a translation to survive, it has to cross the boundaries between cultures and enter the literature into which it is translated” (*Essays and Studies* 8). Thus, entering the culture into which it is translated demands

domesticating the literary text during and throughout the translation process.

Furthermore, according to the domestication approach, for that foreign literary text to gain significance in the receiving culture it has to be domesticated in a way that forms the “impression that it is not a translation but written in the original language” (Kuhiwczak 83). So, the domestication approach “entitles [sic] translating in a transparent, fluent, ‘invisible’ style in order to minimize the foreignness of the [translated text] ... which includes an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target culture values” (Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation* 71). These cultural values are mainly shaped by the society’s religious beliefs, cultural tradition and customs, and political and gender-based ideologies.

Translators adopting such approach in translation tend first to translate texts that don’t dramatically conflict with the cultural norms of the culture they will translate into. Nevertheless, if the chosen literary text contains some points and ideas that differ from the receiving culture, translators tend to omit and modify the parts of the literary text considered challenging during the translation process. As a result, through the domestication approach adopted in literary translations many works of foreign literature become dehistoricized since they lose their significance which is shaped by their original cultural context. Furthermore, the domestication approach presents the translator as a manipulator of the reality of the culture he or she translates from in favor of the culture being translated into. Consequently, the readers of such translations “remain trapped in the cultural stereotypes created and nurtured through translated texts” (Sengupta 172). Indeed, that condition is more negatively influential if translated literature is the only source from which the image of the “other” is constructed.

Furthermore, such literary translation will not aid the reader to have a multicultural knowledge of other cultures since what is being presented in the translation has been modified to be similar to the literary works of that receiving culture.

Contrary to the domestication approach in literary cultural translation, other translators decide to resist the cultural norms and ideologies of the culture they chose to translate to through the use of the foreignization approach during the literary translation process. Indeed, Venuti states that the foreignization approach “entitles [sic] choosing a foreign text and developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target culture” (*The Scandals of Translation* 242). Accordingly, the work is regarded as a work of translation through reinforcing the “foreign” identity of the original text by making it resist the cultural norms and ideology of the target culture. J. Levy, a famous Czech translation scholar in favor of the foreignization approach insisted that any “contracting or omitting of difficult expressions in translation was immoral” (qtd. in Bassnett, *Translation Studies* 22). So, the foreignization approach maintains the “ethnocentricity” of the literary text being translated.

Like the domestication approach, the foreignization approach also carries some disadvantages. Antoine Berman, in *The Experience of the Foreign: Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*, explains that “[i]f the translator chooses the author, the work, and the foreign language as exclusive masters, aiming to impose them on his own cultural realm in their pure foreign form, he runs the risk of appearing to be a foreigner, a traitor in the eyes of his kin” (3). Furthermore, I believe that although this foreignization approach, if not culturally censored, will give the reader a sense of

another foreign culture, still it will not fully give the reader the chance to emotionally understand certain parts of that foreign culture. In the same vein, such foreignization approach will not fully promote a multicultural perspective, which, I believe, demands the understanding and recognition of the common grounds and differences among cultures.

After discussing both approaches, it is clear that using only one approach during the cross-cultural translation involves some negative effects on both the source text and translated one and the original and receiving cultures. As a result, many researchers and critics including David Damrosch still ask, “should a translation read smoothly and fluently, hardly feeling like a translation at all, or should it preserve some unusual verbal flavor, respecting the original’s foreignness?” (*How to Read World Literature* 66).

However, through discussing the heavily linguistic focus of the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into Arabic and exploring the different cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges that face the translator, it is obvious that neither the domestication approach nor the foreignization approach were favored by Arab translators. As we have seen in chapter three of this study, the Arabic translations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* neither replaced any of the foreign cultural elements by Arabic domestic ones nor maintained the foreign ones; instead they omitted most of the cultural and historical context of Stowe’s novel. Both the Arabic translations and the abridged English text present a simple plot of the slave Tom who continuously forgives his white masters.

I believe that it is important, possible, and beneficial to use a mixed period-specific cultural translation approach consisting of both foreignization and domestication during the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into the Arabic culture. Such mixed approach will address the different domestic challenges of the receiving culture as well as maintain the cultural significance of the translated text. Thus, this cultural translation approach demands that the literary translator act as a mediator between the two cultures, the one being translated from and the other being translated into. The translator has to have a deep knowledge of both cultures, and that knowledge should also, I believe, be presented to the readers of the translation. Since the global era demands that people of different cultures develop a cultural awareness of other cultures and have a multicultural perspective, the translated literary texts, then, should offer such knowledge through maintaining the foreign context of the literary text being translated. Furthermore, the translators should add in the form of footnotes any cultural elements similar to the foreign ones in the text. Through this process of linking the foreign to the domestic, Arab readers will have an opportunity to build a multicultural background and a chance to observe how much their culture has in common with English-speaking cultures. Such multicultural knowledge will also help readers to link similar events and thus learn from the experiences of other cultures. Most important, Arab readers could have the possibility of understanding the reasons and factors behind current Western thinking and positions.

Addressing the Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Translation of Literary Texts from English into the Arabic Culture

Translation studies in the academy are gaining recognition, especially in the current global context. Much research is concerned with critiquing existing literary translations and locating the problems of literary translation. However, some researchers have the opinion that solutions should not be suggested for existing challenges and problems which literary translators face during the translation process. For instance, Andre Lefevere, toward the end of his essay and after discussing the problematic areas of literary translation, states that

I firmly believe that I (or anyone else, for that matter) should not offer solutions imposed to harden into yet another kind of translation poetics. Rather what I have tried to do is to show how existing translations really affect readers.... Yet they are tremendously important in the world of translation. ("Translation and the Creation of Images" 78).

According to Lefevere, offering solutions could be considered an additional constraint that the translator has to face when translating the literary text. However, although I agree with Lefevere in many of his critiques concerning the literary translation field, I disagree with his statement about not offering solutions for translators. I believe that critics have to help translators by offering solutions for the existing challenges, and it is left for the translators themselves to examine the validity and benefits of such suggestions. Furthermore, it is important to note that when offering solutions both critics and translators have to acknowledge that these offered solutions will not produce an exact replica of the text being translated. Zlatko Gorjan in the essay titled "On

translating Joyce's *Ulysses*" states that "[t]ranslators can strive to come as close to the original as possible, but they never can or will achieve complete identity in their translations.... [C]omplete adequacy to the original does not exist" (201). So, the offered solutions are only to help the translators to be as close as possible to the original.

Furthermore, there are many factors that, I believe, make it both possible and important to address some of the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges specifically facing the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into the Arabic culture which is the focus of my study. Most important, globalization, the establishment of non-government organizations, and recent mass revolutions in some Arab countries are some of the most dominant factors since they have played a vital role in reducing the amount of censorship on literary production in the Arab world and accordingly, to a similar extent, on literary translation. The Arab world, like many other parts of the world, is greatly affected by the current era of globalization and its demands for multiculturalism and dialogue among different cultures and religions. To participate in the cultural and religious dialogues, some of the Arab countries established several cultural and translation projects. The establishment of non-government organizations in the Arab world also influenced change in the geopolitical and gender-based conditions in the Arab world; citizens in general became more aware of their rights, and women started movements toward their empowerment. Since globalization and the establishment of non-government organizations intersect in making change within the cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based society, I will discuss their effect while discussing each challenge separately. However, since the cultural and translation

projects are the most important for my study, I will discuss them in detail in the following section.

Cultural Translation Projects

The importance of translating English literary works into Arabic from a cultural perspective is best illustrated through discussing the current translation projects, held in both Western and Arab worlds, which mainly promote cultural exchange and bridging the gaps between these two worlds. Indeed, if such projects are to meet the goal of cultural exchange, then cultural translation should be adopted. It is important to note that there are also current projects that specifically deal with translating Arabic literature and introducing it to the Western world, such as the project of establishing the Library of Arabic Literature sponsored by New York University. However, due to the focus of my study, which is translating from English into Arabic, I will discuss only the projects that mainly focus on translating English literature to the Arab world, some of which, to a certain extent, encourage the translation of Arabic literature to the West.

The Franklin Book program was established in the United States and existed from 1952 until 1978. It helped in the translation of many American literary works including Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, Edith Wharton's *Ethan Frome*, and Thornton Wilder's *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* into the Arabic language. Although this project no longer exists, I have included it to show that since its cultural and political purposes were poorly achieved, another translation project that I will discuss below has been currently initiated to achieve cultural and political goals. Louise Robbins in the essay titled "Publishing American Values: the Franklin Book Programs as Cold War Cultural Diplomacy" explains that the selected literary works for translation aimed to

promote “the Western ideals of the dignity and freedom of individual men” and to “minimize the difficulty of Arab-Western collaboration” (639). However, since the translations of these literary texts, similar to the translations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* that were done around the same period, were through adopting a linguistic-oriented approach and accordingly faced some of the cross-cultural challenges that I have discussed in chapter two, they did not achieve much success in the Arab world. In fact, it is important to note that many of these literary works were translated by Muneer Ba’albaki, the first translator of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and thus he had used the same translation method and was confined by the same challenges.

Acknowledging the shortcomings of the previous efforts of the Franklin Book program, another project was recently established in the United States. The privately sponsored “Global Americana Institute” was established in 2006 since

the classics of American thought and history have been little translated into Arabic. Worse, even when they have been translated, they have appeared in small editions and fairly quickly go out of print. Worse still, the distribution system for Arabic books is poor, and there are few public libraries, so that many books that have been published in the past are no longer available to most readers. [Global Americana Institute] therefore had begun a project to translate important books by great Americans and about America into Arabic. (<http://www.globam.org>)

The founder of the project, Juan Cole, explains that in general the project “aims at making key works of American thought, culture and history available, especially in the Arab and Muslim worlds ... [and] seeks to enhance American understanding of the

Middle East” (www.globam.org). The project intends to translate the works of some of the American founding fathers, Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, Washington, and Paine. The translation process will start with a selected set of essays and passages by Thomas Jefferson on “constitutional and governmental issues such as freedom of religion, the separation of powers, inalienable rights, the sovereignty of the people” (www.globam.org). The project also intends to translate American works that promote democracy and multiculturalism, and the history of the United States, including the major speeches and letters of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the works of Susan B. Anthony. Furthermore, the project also seeks to convey the American perspective on Middle Eastern issues, including the war in Iraq and the Arab-Israeli conflict (www.globam.org). Although this project does not yet include translations of novels and other literary genres, still in order for Global Americana Institute to succeed in its cultural mission, I believe that the translations of these works, accordingly, also should be approached from a cultural angle. Indeed, many of the works specifically discuss the historical and cultural elements pertaining to American history. The American texts chosen for translation were a result of a certain historical, cultural, and political time and were also considered important shapers of the historical and cultural contexts preceding their publications.

Arabic Projects for Cultural Translation

The United Nations Development Program’s (UNDP) Arab Human Development Report published in 2003, titled “Building a Knowledge Society,” shockingly showed that in one year Spain translates 10,000 books, which is the same number of books that have been translated into Arabic in the last thousand years; and Greece, with a

population of 11 million, translates five times more books each year than the Arab world, which has a population of over 300 million. However, in reaction, during the last five years the Arab world has, I believe, witnessed the rise of a “Golden Age” concerning literary translation. Currently, the Arab world has three leading internationally-scaled projects concerning translation with a focus on literary translation that promotes cultural awareness for both Arab and Western readers. In this section, I will discuss the currently initiated projects and I will reinforce the importance of adopting a cultural translation approach in order to accomplish the desired goals, including raising Arabs’ cultural awareness of Western cultures and also bridging the existing gap between the Arab and Western cultures.

The first is the “Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Award for Translation,”²⁰ established in Saudi Arabia in 2006 to embrace “the King’s initiatives and appeals for more understanding and brotherhood among nations” (www.translationaward.org). Believing that translation is a prominent tool in vitalizing cross-cultural communication, the founders of this award aim to promote cultural exchange among peoples of the world, to advocate cultural, ideological, and intellectual dialogue among civilizations, and to narrow the gap separating nations. One of its objectives is to “promote translation into Arabic” (www.translationaward.org).¹ However, since English is the most dominant language in the publishing industry and the Arabic culture is the most targeted for “enrichment” through translation efforts, then I assume that most of the translated projects will be mainly from English into Arabic. Furthermore, I would assume that more challenges exist when translating into the

²⁰ Abdullah bin Abdulaziz is the current King of Saudi Arabia.

Arabic culture since the censorship on literary production has been higher than that existing in the West. Therefore, it is important to initiate a shared practical project among translators and critics to find solutions that facilitate addressing the challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of foreign and mainly Western literary texts into the Arabic culture.

Through appreciating the different works of translation into and from the Arabic language and culture, the award encourages opportunities for dialogue of civilizations and rapprochement among cultures. Furthermore, the award's interest in translation is also illustrated through its participation in different seminars and conferences, including the Conference and Exhibition of Translation and Arabization in Saudi Arabia, which was hosted by the Saudi Association for Languages and Translation at the Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in 2009. After acknowledging some aspects of this project, I believe, it is now the role of the translators and critics to approach the literary translation process from a cultural perspective, which is the only literary translation approach that will make this project achieve its main goal of promoting cultural awareness among different cultures, especially the Arabic one.

The second project taking place in the Arab world is Sheikh Zayed Book Award,²¹ established in the United Arab Emirates in 2007 to disseminate the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan's "set of noble values, remarkable tolerance and peaceful coexistence among nations, and to embrace the wider horizons of the Arabs and all nations" (www.zayedaward.com). One of its objectives is to "promote translation initiatives and support distinguished works" (www.zayedaward.com).² Similar to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz's international Award

²¹ Sheikh Zayed is the founder of the United Arab Emirates.

for Translation, the objectives of the Sheikh Zayed book award reveal its cultural focus through appreciating both the production and the translation of works that promote cultural awareness in Arabic society. Furthermore, the award specifically promotes the translation initiatives of distinguished works which empower “an open-minded, enlightened and cultural interaction with all nations” (www.zayedaward.com). The award’s focus on literary translation is further reinforced through some of the seminars that it holds. For instance, the Sheikh Zayed Book Award held a seminar about “Translation from and to the Arabic Language” parallel to the Award’s participation in BookExpo America in New York in 2009. Researchers discussed the problematic areas of translation from and into Arabic; however, the focus was mainly a linguistic one. I believe that it is important to discuss the linguistic challenges, but that focus has been discussed over and over again, and linguistic translation will not achieve any cultural awareness in the readers. Therefore, it is important to reinforce the importance of discussing the cultural challenges of literary translation.

The third cultural translation project that has been currently initiated in the Arab world, also in 2007, is “Kalima” (meaning “word” in Arabic). It was initiated by Abu Dhabi Authority for Heritage and Culture in the United Arab Emirates, which is the largest organization in the Arab world regarding translation. It was mainly founded “to address a thousand year old problem--the translation drought in the Arab world which has resulted in few great pieces of foreign writing being translated into Arabic” (www.kalmia.ae). It focuses on “[s]electing quality titles across all genres, [to translate into Arabic] and encourage more and better quality translators [and translations] in the future” (www.kalmia.ae).³ So, in general, Kalima’s main task is the translation of Western

literary titles into Arabic. More important, its focus of “encourag[ing] more and better quality translators [and translations] in the future” reinforces my argument that the existing linguistic-focused translation of literary works is not successful. The focus also shows the current need for approaching literary translation from a cultural perspective that will help promote cultural awareness and multiculturalism, which is highly important in the current era of globalization.

Kalima in its first year has selected one hundred Western works for translation, and its future plan is to translate five hundred titles on an annual basis.⁴ Although these titles “comprise a mix of literature, academic texts and other writing such as business books” (www.kalima.ae), literature as a category and English as a language is the main focus since thirty of the selected works are literary ones and more than half of the one hundred titles are translated from English. Since literary texts comprise the biggest share in the translation process, then these translations should be translated through a method that establishes multiculturalism and a mixed approach that maintains most of the important cultural factors that made the text significant in its own culture and whenever possible adds similar cultural factors of the domestic culture.

Another cultural project that has been established in the Arab world is the Arab Thought Foundation, an international, independent and non-governmental organization established in 2000 to promote cultural dialogue in the Arab world and among the Arabic culture and other world cultures (www.arabthought.org). Through its different cultural development activities, it aims to advocate for reform in intellectual, cultural, and social domains in the Arab world. The Arab Thought Foundation has many culture-focused units. The most important are the Translation Unit and the Culture Dialogue

Unit.⁵ Through the Translation Unit many books are being translated into and from Arabic in order to promote intercultural relations among the Arabic and other cultures of the world. Accordingly, in order for this foundation to achieve success in the domain of translation, I believe that it is important to approach literary translation from a cultural angle. Since it also addresses the challenges affecting the Arab world, including the cultural, political, and economic challenges, I believe it could initiate a project that discusses the cultural challenges facing the literary translation process from the different cultures into the Arabic one. Such a project will help in producing adequate cultural translations that will also help in starting a productive dialogue among people of Arab and other cultures.

After discussing the Western and Arabic translation projects, it is important to state that a new Western and Arab joint cultural project of translation has been initiated between the English Penguin Classics and the Egyptian Dar Al-Shorouk publishing houses. According to the *Wall Street Journal* coverage, the Penguin-Shorouk project will translate into Arabic twelve English-language titles from the Penguin Classics series, in addition to publishing up to eight original Arabic classics. The first titles will be available in 2011 (online.wsj.com).

Put in an international scale, all of these projects are aiming toward contributing to the advocacy of intercultural dialogue and respecting and sharing various cultural traditions and experiences. Such a focus of these projects on translation, literature, and culture gives importance to my study since it addresses the cultural challenges of the cross-cultural translation of literary works from English into the Arabic culture. Furthermore, Kalima specifically states that “in some cases, where a translation exists,

but the quality is poor, [Kalima] will fund a new, high quality translation” (kalima.ae). Therefore, I think that discussing existing translations of English literary works is beneficial since it will evaluate current literary translations and lay out the possible solutions for existing challenges for future translations of the work. So, I hope that my study will help in the future translations of any literary works in English, and specifically *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, into the Arabic culture.

Given the different efforts initiated by the translation projects discussed above that are focusing on introducing English and American literature to the Arabic culture, the cultural literary translation that combines foreignization and domestication should be adopted. Using the foreignization literary translation approach alone will not aid these translation projects’ initiatives. Although this approach may produce a highly accurate translation of the literary text being translated, still it will not fully aid in highlighting the common grounds between the two cultures, which is an important demand of globalization--bringing cultures closer to each other. Using the domestication approach alone will further lessen the possibility of gaining a multicultural perspective since it will either delete some of the foreign elements or replace some of them with domestic ones. Indeed, Arab readers will not have any access to the elements of a new culture; instead the translated text will be similar to any literary text originating from the Arabic culture. However, adopting a mixed approach will benefit the readers in this age of globalization and meet the growing demands of multiculturalism and dialogue among people of different cultures and religions. The foreignization approach will introduce them to new cultural elements, and then whenever possible the domestication approach will help them acknowledge the common cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based

features they have in common with the foreign culture, which will help in initiating a cultural dialogue among the English-speaking and Arabic cultures.

Addressing Cultural Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Translation of Literary Texts from English into the Arabic Culture

After discussing the different translation approaches in the previous section, I will now discuss the possibility of addressing some of the cultural and religious challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of English literary texts into the Arabic culture through using a mixed cultural translation approach that involves the domestication and foreignization of English literary texts presented to Arab readers. I will also use Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and address some of the cultural and religious challenges that have been previously discussed in chapter three of this study. Concerning the geopolitical challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into the Arabic culture, I will specifically discuss some of the factors such as globalization, the establishment of non-government organizations, and current mass revolutions in some Arab countries that make it possible to overcome the previous geopolitical challenges discussed in chapter three of this study. Concerning the possibility of addressing the gender-based challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into the Arabic culture, I will discuss various factors such as the establishment of women's movements and the establishment of women's studies institutes in the Arab world that reinforce the empowerment of women in the Arab world. I will also use *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a case study.

As previously stated in chapter three, there are many cultural challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of English literary texts into the Arabic culture. The cultural constraints are related to the translation of culture-bound words, the translation of foreign words, the translation of classical, cultural, and literary allusions, and the translation of colloquial dialect. Either unable or unwilling to address these challenges, many Arab translators tended to exclude most of the cultural elements found in foreign literary texts that did not exist in the Arabic culture. As a result most of the translated literary works do not present their cultural significance, which is what drew the translators to translate the texts and introduce them to Arab readers. In the following section, I will examine the possibility of addressing the cultural factors through adopting a cultural translation approach that both maintains some of the foreign cultural elements and adds some of the domestic cultural elements.

The first steps for addressing culture-bound words are the translator's ability to recognize the word, understand its meaning, and acknowledge the original author's intention for using such a word. Indeed, Lefevere states that "[s]ome [problems of translating culture-bound words] could be solved with more knowledge of the context of a given passage, or even the whole text from which the passage has been taken" (*Translating Literature* 17). Most important, all these steps require the translator to have a deep knowledge of the culture of the original text, especially if the text presents a previous historical and cultural period so that its culture-bound words are no longer used. After that, it is important for the translator to have a deep knowledge of the culture being translated into to the extent that makes her or him able to find similar culture-bound words and include them in the form of footnotes that also explain their use and

function. Although some translators have previous knowledge of both cultures, culture-bound words, as Mona Baker explains in her book *In Other Words*, are commonly translated in one of the following ways: using an idiom of similar meaning and form; using an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form; translation by paraphrase; translation by omission (71-78). Such translation methods, I believe, do not fully promote cultural awareness for the readers of translated literary texts. Therefore, in the following section, I will give an example of how to translate some of the culture-bound words found in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Stowe describes Mr. Haley's poor command of English grammar through putting it into comparison with Murray's grammar in the following sentence: "His conversation was in free and easy defiance of Murray's grammar" (47). Murray's grammar is a culture-bound term that was, using Baker's words, "translated by omission"; that is, it was left out during the translation process into Arabic. In a cultural translation that both maintains the foreign element and adds a domestic one, I propose that it should be approached through the following way. The culture-bound term "Murray's grammar" should be kept during the translation process and the translator should add a footnote that marks this word as similar to the Arabic culture-bound word "Seebaway's book." Seebaway is the most famous Arab grammar expert who was the first to write a book containing most of the Arabic language grammatical rules. His book is one of the major references in Arabic language courses. So, through such a translation Arab readers will learn something about the American culture through knowing Murray's grammar book. Furthermore, like the American readers, the Arab readers will understand Stowe's intention of denigrating Mr. Haley's command of English.

Concerning the translation of allusions, Lefevere states that the “[t]ranslator should recognize the allusions and decide whether to include them in the translation or omit them or replace them” (*Translating Literature* 22). However, I strongly believe that the era of globalization and the call for cultural awareness and dialogue have made it both important and possible to translate almost all of the cultural, classical, and literary allusions during the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into the Arabic culture. Indeed the translation projects have already translated and are willing to translate many of the classic and literary texts that are alluded to. Including these allusions during the translation process will make Arab readers aware of other literary works and the amount of intertextuality among these texts and enable them to recognize the author’s intention in alluding to such works. For instance, some of the works alluded to in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, including most of Shakespeare’s works, are being translated by some of the translation projects. The Global American Institute is currently translating most of the political and historical documents written by the founding fathers of America, including the Declaration of Independence, and they are also translating later documents including the Fugitive Slave Law. The Penguin and Shorouq project is also currently translating some of the literary works that Stowe has alluded to in her text, including most of Shakespeare’s works and the Spanish novelist Miguel de Cervantes’s picaresque novel *Don Quixote*. Knowing that these translation projects are hoping to achieve cultural awareness for the Arab audience, it is then important to include the allusions during the translation process of any literary works in order to strengthen this cultural awareness through linking the works with each other and also knowing and acknowledging the significance of the cultural, classical, and

literary allusions. Furthermore, the Arab translators should also refer in the form of footnotes to any similar cultural, classical, or literary allusions found in Arabic culture and literature, which will also allow Arab readers to trace any possible similarities that the Arabic and American culture have in common. Referring to Arabic allusions will also provide readers with a similar setting to that found in the original, which will further reinforce the Arab reader's emotional response and understanding of the author's making such allusions.

The translation of foreign words could be one of the difficult areas to address during the cross-cultural translation of literary works from and into different cultures. Many researchers have proposed solutions for addressing such challenges. Lefevere states that "an expedient solution used fairly often, is to leave the foreign word or phrase untranslated and then to append a translation between brackets or even to insert a translation into the body of the text a little later, where it would be expedient to do so" (*Translating Literature* 29) Such solution, I assume, is possible when the two languages share similar sets of alphabets. For instance, most of the foreign words found in literary texts in English including *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which has many foreign words, e.g, *morale*, *Coeur De Lion*, *de novo*, *bonhomie*, *feu de joie*, *en passant*, and *La Belle Riviere* (76, 92, 99, 120, 149, 150, 153, 165), include a number of English letters. Since the Arabic language has a different set of letters, it is hard to include these foreign words in translation and then offer the meaning between brackets. However, I propose that the Arab translators could transliterate the foreign or English pronunciation of the foreign word in Arabic letters. After that, the translator should give the meaning of the foreign word either in parenthesis or within the context. Through such method, the Arab

reader will recognize the foreignness of the word since its exact foreign pronunciation will be read in Arabic. For instance, in translating the foreign words in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, translators could either provide the original transliteration of the word or provide its English transliteration to keep the foreign effect.

The challenge of translating the colloquial dialect exists not only between English and Arabic but in translation generally. María T. Sánchez in *The Problems of Literary Translation* discusses the challenges facing the literary translation. She specifically explains that one out of the three following possible strategies should be chosen by the translator to translate a colloquial dialect:

to attempt some form of non-standard variety out of those which are to be found in the TL [target language]; to use standard language only, with occasional indicators of the type "he/she said in his/her regional dialect"; to ignore completely the non-standard language and to stick to the standard norm in the TT [target text]. (202)

Accordingly, since Arabic literature is mainly written through the use of standard form, the use of the English colloquial dialect is currently impossible to address. Therefore, most of the Arab translators follow the third strategy which is to completely ignore the non-standard language and translate in the standard form of the Arabic language. However, the future might carry a possible solution of the colloquial dialect challenge. But for now translating the various African American colloquial dialects of some slaves and the dialects of the slaveholders and traders will still be a hard challenge to address.

From all of the previous discussions of the possible approaches that could be followed to address the cultural challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of

English literary texts into the Arabic culture, it is fair to say that it is impossible to accurately address all of the cultural aspects of the foreign text. However, it is important to note that “[e]ven if the translation cannot transfer everything in the source text, it still brings benefit to the target culture ... if there is loss, there may be gain” (Neubert and Shreve 2). Through adopting such a mixed cultural translation approach for future translations of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Arab readers will be able to acknowledge some of the most significant cultural elements used by Stowe to advocate for the emancipation of slavery. They will also recognize the similarities or differences that exist between the American and Arabic cultures.

Addressing Religious Challenges Facing the Cross-Cultural Translation of Literary Works from English into the Arabic Culture

Mehmet Okuyan, in his essay titled “Interreligious Dialogue as a Way of Establishing a Peaceful World Order: A Muslim Perspective,” argues that although the followers of different religions have been in contact throughout history, still “[t]he opportunity for genuine dialogue and mutual understanding was rarely possible before the twentieth century” (41). He further explains that this was due to the cultural and political dominance of certain religions in particular regions of the world (41). However, he claims that globalization made the personal contact between people of different religions very common. Accordingly, Okuyan further explains that “thus the days when ‘religion’ was associated only with one’s own beliefs have passed” (42). So such condition made some people question other religions. Therefore, it became important to start a dialogue among people of different faiths.

Specifically discussing the Arab world in which Islam is the dominant religion, it is important to note that during the last decade Islamist extremists purposefully twisted the true meaning of Islam to serve their own political agendas. As a result, Islam is to a certain extent viewed negatively in the West, and some Muslims stand in opposition to other existing religions and beliefs. Indeed, after the tragic events of September eleventh in 2001, Islam came under attack, and tensions between some Islamic and some Christian organizations increased. These tensions were discussed in Samuel Huntington's theory of "clash of civilizations," in which he generally argues that religious and cultural differences are the cause of the current tensions in the post-Cold-War world. He specifically states,

Civilizations are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition and most importantly religion. The people of different civilizations have different views on the relations between God and man, the individual and the group, the citizens and the state, parents and children, husband and wife, as well as differing views of the relative importance of rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy.... [A]s people define their identity in ethnic and religious terms, they are likely to see an "us" versus "them" relation existing between themselves and people of different ethnicity or religion. ("The Clash of Civilizations" 25)

Regardless of either agreeing or disagreeing with Huntington's theory, but rather acknowledging the danger of such opinion and realizing the growing religious tensions, different initiatives took place in both the Islamic and Western worlds to start a religious

dialogue among the holders of different beliefs to reinforce the humanity of all religions and beliefs and to argue against the “clash of civilizations” theory. However, Huntington’s clash of civilizations theory was further discussed after the tragic events of September eleventh. The United Nations also named the year 2001 as the year of Dialogue Among Civilizations (www.unis.unvienna.org). During the United Nations roundtable discussion in 2001, representatives of different civilizations discussed the importance of initiating a culture of dialogue among different religions and cultures. Marking the launch of the United Nations “Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations” 2001, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) confirmed that “[o]nly dialogue could bring about reconciliation and peace,” and thus it should be based on universal acceptance and respect of basic human rights (www.unis.unvienna.org). Furthermore, initiating a dialogue will assure every culture, religion, and civilization that it will be heard and acknowledged by other cultures, religions, and civilizations. As a starting point for religious dialogue, many researchers started making the point of the importance of understanding and acknowledging the huge difference between religious theology and violent practices done in the name of religion. Asghar Ali Engineer in his article titled “Some Thoughts on Interfaith Dialogue” explains that “[r]eligion resides in the theological domain whereas religious communities exist in secular space with secular interests, and what conflicts are not religious theologies but the secular interests of these communities” (51). Nevertheless he also states that “the clashes of communal interests are projected as clashes of religions or religious theologies” (51). Indeed, many organizations in different parts of the world, accordingly, advocated a dialogue mentality to overcome present and

prevent future interreligious tensions in different parts of the world including the Institute of Interfaith Dialog (IID),⁶ King Abdullah's Center for Contemporary Studies and Dialogues of Civilizations,⁷ and the Annual World Conference Series on Dialogue.⁸ All of the previous efforts for advocating dialogue among people of different religions and cultures can further be reinforced through literature and emphasized during the process of cross-cultural literary translation. Therefore, I argue that translation and specifically cultural literary translation stands as the most significant and of the most permanent effect. Particularly discussing the literary cultural translation, I believe first of all, since it is the least direct approach of dialogue it will be more affective. Indeed, many people feel offended by the idea of their beliefs or religions being discussed and critiqued. Furthermore, literary books are of the most circulating books among a larger number of people of different cultures and religions since it does not require a prior academic knowledge. Additionally, literary books will be read by different generations a condition that will assure the both the continuity of dialogue and respect of other religions and cultures among the younger generation of different religions and cultures. Furthermore, I believe, that current and future Arab translators will not be faced by the same extent of censorship that previous translators had faced when translating English literary texts that include the teachings of other religions. Concerning advocating for religious dialogue through literature, Ruth Illman, in her essay titled "Curiosity Instead of Fear: Literature as Creative InterReligious Dialogue," states,

Coming to terms with difference is not just a question of knowledge—it touches us on a deeper level as complex, interpreting, and insecure human beings. Therefore, many researchers today advocate more holistic

approaches to dialogue in order to meet the challenges set forth by our contemporary circumstances. Dialogue, it is argued, is not merely a cognitive capacity, but also an emotional engagement striving towards empathic recognition of the other as having a different but equally legitimate perspective on the world. (9)

The previous efforts calling for religious dialogue can be reinforced through literature since readers could appreciate other religions and acknowledge the similarities among the different religions through actually emotionally engaging with literary characters and incidents found in literary texts.

However, since the linguistic barrier will prevent many readers from reading those literary works of people of different religions and cultures, cross-cultural translation of literary texts should focus on maintaining and reinforcing the emotional engagement among readers belonging to a religion different from that of the literary characters. This engagement cannot be fulfilled if the translators either totally exclude the religious references or only replace them with verses of the religion practiced in the culture being translated to. Accordingly, in the specific focus of this study, the cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into the Arabic culture, Arab translators should translate the texts in a way that shows the similar perspective held by Islam and the religion practiced in the culture of the literary text being translated. Arab translators should show the foreignness of the literary text through conveying the Biblical verses during the translation and at the same time further appeal to the readers through the approach of domestication by including similar Quranic verses in the form of footnotes accompanying the translation. Biblical verses in some English literary works have been

widely used to advocate for human rights and equality, to elevate morals, and to allude to religious figures and stories. Thus, in response and to further promote the previous calls and efforts of religious dialogues, I believe that Arab translators should maintain the Biblical verses within the body of the translated text and include similar Quranic verses. So, both foreignization and domestication approaches are followed to address the religious challenges.

As previously examined in chapter three of this study, religious challenges have made the Arab translators exclude most of the Biblical verses and allusions used by Stowe. Since Stowe had used these verses to advocate for the equality and freedom of the slaves, which is a view that is also found in the Quran, future translations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* should maintain the Biblical verses that are equivalent to some Quranic verses. Indeed, such translation which maintains the foreign Biblical verses and includes the domestic Quranic verses will accomplish some of the goals and objectives of the previously discussed centers and conferences that call for showing the unity of all religions concerning human rights and freedom.

Similarly to what has been stated in chapter three of this study, since *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is full of Biblical verses and allusions, it is impossible to show how each example could be translated into the Arabic culture. Therefore, in the following section, I will include a number of Quranic verses that carry calls for slaves' equality and freedom similar to what Stowe called for either through the use of Biblical verses or through her religious critique in her novel.

Islam considers the humanity of all humans, and God in the Quran clearly states, “And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference” (The Holy Quran 17:70). So slaves are as human as their masters. For instance, including such Quranic reference as a footnote to Stowe’s religious critique of the Fugitive Slave Law, which regards slaves as objects and animals, also reinforces that religions have granted humanity equally to both blacks and whites.

Moreover, according to the teachings of Islam, everyone is equal to one another regardless of their gender and race. Concerning the issue of equality and freedom, the Quran reads, “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted” (The Holy Quran 49:13). Since slavery existed in the Arabic culture before the existence of Islam, the teachings of Islam, as has been stated previously in chapter three of this study, have gradually put an end to the institution of slavery. After the declaration that slaves are equal to their masters, many Muslims directly freed their slaves. Including such Quranic verse along with the Biblical verses included by Stowe concerning the equality and freedom of slaves will reinforce the humanity of all religions that grant the rights of equality and freedom to all mankind. For instance, Arab translators could include the following biblical verse, “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them,”²² that is cited by one of the characters in the novel opposing slavery (167). Translators should also include the

²² Matthew 7.12

following verse read by St. Clare: “Then shall he say unto them, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me” (351).²³ Future translators of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* should also include Eva’s following biblical reference when she asked her father “[d]on’t the Bible say we must love everybody” (314), “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust (314).²⁴ Including all of these verses will give Arab readers the chance to recognize the universal morals that both Islam and Christianity share.

Addressing the Geopolitical Challenges Facing Cross-Cultural Literary Translation from English to Arabic

Addressing the geopolitical challenges facing cross-cultural translation of literary texts from English into Arabic is not approached through presenting solutions, since what had previously prevented the political content in English, especially American, literary texts from being translated into Arabic was the political censorship practiced in most parts of the Arab world. Therefore, I will include some of the changes taking place in some parts of the Arab world that have significantly decreased the amount of political censorship and accordingly give the chance for more political freedom in the area of literary writings and literary translation.

²³ Matthew 25, 31-45

²⁴ Matthew 5, 43-45

The era of globalization, the external pressures for building civil democratic societies in the Arab world, the establishment of non-government organizations in the Arab world, mass revolutions in some Arab countries, and the current translation projects are main factors, I believe, that make it both important and possible to overcome the geopolitical challenges that have hindered previous cross-cultural translation of Western, mainly American, literary texts into the Arabic culture. According to the Annual Arab Human Development Report published in 2009,

the last decade witnessed several attempts by Arab governments to address the question of reform. At the same time, the role of political movements and civil society increased noticeably. And, in the aftermath of 9/11, some Arab countries came under external pressure from Western powers to embark on political reform. All three actors have played different roles in pursuing reform efforts in the Arab countries. (69)

One of the major effects of globalization on Arab politics is that it has lessened and weakened governmental censorship. Technology and access to the internet are among the main factors that enabled globalization. Eleanor Abdella Doumato and Marsha Pripstein Posusney state that

[n]ew communications technologies that defy government attempts at censorship are promoting political activism by bringing news and information to regions where access previously had been tightly controlled, allowing people to communicate with each other in ways never before possible and creating higher expectations for individual participation in the political process. (4)

Concerning the literary field, due to the different technologies that cannot be fully censored, Arabs are now able to read Western literary books that are banned in some of the Arabic countries. Accordingly, since censorship has also been reduced in the Arab world regarding the freedom of speech and opinion, some literary Arabic works critiquing some politics of the Arabic society emerged. Indeed, Naguib Mahfouz, an Egyptian literary writer who critiqued the political conditions in the Arab world is one of the most celebrated and effective pioneers in the Middle East. He received the 1988 Nobel Prize in Literature. In most of his works, he masked political commentary under allegory and symbolism. Among his titles are *The Thief and the Dogs* (1961), *Autumn Quail* (1962), *Small Talk on the Nile* (1966), and *Miramar* (1967). So, contrary to their counterparts in the past, who were seen as offenders to their governments and sent into exile and their books were banned, current Arab political writers are no longer viewed as offenders to their governments and their books are not banned in many of the Arab countries. Therefore, it is now possible to start translating English literary texts that are embedded with political commentary since such works are now written in Arabic by Arab writers.

Similar to globalization, external forces that advocate for building democratic and civil societies have affected the political conditions in the Arab world. Shean L. Yom, in his essay titled “Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World,” traces how the “American strategy for endorsing Arab democratization turns on ‘gradualist logic,’ consisting of numerous small programs that channel resources towards reformist groups within the legislative, judicial, economic, and civil sectors. Over time, civil society has come to receive the most attention” (17). He further explains that “between 1991

and 2001, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) allocated \$150 million to projects classified as ‘civil society strengthening’” and that in “2002, the State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative has targeted Arab civil society through millions of dollars of direct financial assistance, as well as sponsorship of high-level conferences between leading CSOs [Civil Society Organizations] and their state counterparts” (17). Accordingly, many Arab individuals participated through different channels to reinforce their opinions on political issues.

The tragic events of September eleventh also caused the Arab world to be globally politically viewed, to a certain extent, as “an incubator of fundamentalism and a seedbed of terrorism” (*Arab Human Development Report 2005* 212). The Arabic governments were criticized for their low levels of democracy, minority rights, and citizen’s public participation in politics. As a result, many of the Arab governments started “reform issues” which, to a certain extent, paved the way for the beginning of political critique. Sarah Ben Néfissa, in the introduction of her work titled *NGOs, Governance and Development in the Arab World*, explains that “the Arab countries have been called upon to reform their public sectors, to give more freedom to their civil societies, and respect human rights as well as fundamental public freedoms” (1). Accordingly, people’s discussion of politics was viewed as a democratic sign that presents a democratic view of the country and its government. Such change could encourage the translation of literary texts that both present and critique political issues.

The establishment of non-government organizations also paved the way for people’s political participation in the Arab world. Most important to mention is the Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), a regional network initiated in 1997 working in

eleven Arab countries with seven national networks. Most important, the ANND is “committed to the International Convention on Human Rights, freedom, respect of the individual, respect of diversity, equality of resource division, and the protection of cultural heritage in the region and to the developmental priorities of the local societies” (www.annd.org). Its main goal is enhancing the empowerment of effective and democratic civil society organizations (CSOs), through facilitating their participation in “monitoring and formulating public policies at the national, regional and global levels” to have civil Arab societies that “respect and protect the dignity and freedom of the individual and their political, social, economic, civic, and cultural rights” (www.annd.org). Fortunately, the NGOs are now actually called upon to participate in the political effort of development with the governments in some of the Arab countries. Furthermore, according to their vision on an international scale, the ANND would like to help Arab societies “to be open to and interact with other cultures and societies” (www.annd.org). Therefore, I believe that cultural translation of English literature which portrays subjects of political and civil freedom and individuality would help Arab readers to be introduced to different cultures whose people fought for their freedom and individuality.

However, the work and effect of NGOs in setting the grounds for a better civilized Arab society could be measured through practical studies. “The Arabic Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies is one of the centers that measures and evaluates political conditions in the Arab world. It explains in its annual report published in 2004, and most important, titled “Civil Society and Democratization in the Arab World,” that it had conducted a survey to get a general picture of the political rights and civil liberties in the nineteen Arab countries. According to the results of the survey,

a new political reality is taking shape in many Arab countries. Pro-democracy activists are becoming more aggressive, speaking more openly and taking to the streets in demonstrations demanding radical changes in terms of democracy and individual freedoms. On the other hand there have been significant liberal gains in most Arab countries: a greater measure of liberalization that involved greater freedoms of speech and association. (<http://www.eicds.org/english>)

Indeed, many reforms have taken place in the Arab world in different domains.

Concerning the public domain, elected parliament happened for the first time in some of the Arab countries during this last decade.⁹

However, it is important to note that despite these encouraging changes, still political activism has a long way to go until complete democratization is established in Arab countries, a condition that is similar to many other countries around the world. Ibn Khaldoun's 2007 annual report states that

it cannot be denied that in all Arab countries semi-authoritarianism still remains firmly entrenched and resilient. Although multiparty competitive parliamentary elections have taken place their effectiveness in terms of leading to regime change is practically nil. Nevertheless, these elections have opened a space for expression by opposition forces and democracy activists. (15)

Such current conditions should not be completely disappointing, acknowledging from the experience of other cultures that political conditions take more than a decade to

reform. These conditions will, one can hope, become better, especially, with spreading the awareness for human, civil, and political rights in the Arab world.

One of the venues to spread human, civil, and political awareness is literary writings. Indeed, the changing political atmosphere encouraged literary writers to discuss politics more freely in their works. Many literary books dealing with political issues that were previously censored and banned are seen in Arabic libraries. More important, in order for the Arab governments to be viewed as democratic, writers discussing political issues and spreading readers' awareness of their human and political rights are rarely being classified as working with foreign agencies. Instead of being sent to exile, imprisoned, or stripped of their nationalities, as previously discussed in chapter two of this study, some Arab writers are being classified by their governments as "reformers" participating in the broader reform project held by the government itself.

Current Mass revolution that took place in some Arab countries has significantly affected political freedom. Egypt's, Syria's, Tunisia's, and Algeria's recent mass revolutions have succeeded in removing the Emergency law that had previously threatened writers, including literary ones, when discussing any political issues that critique the political conditions in the Arab world, and that had also banned many American literary works from being translated into Arabic. In fact, it is important to note that during these revolutions a specific poem by the late Tunisian poet Abu Alqasim Alshabi has been remembered. The poem is a political one that advocates the masses to revolt against dictator's regimes and optimistically informs readers that one day the masses will defeat these regimes. The first lines of the poem are the following:

إِذَا الشَّعْبُ يَوْمًا أَرَادَ الْحَيَاةَ فَلَا بُدَّ أَنْ يَسْتَجِيبَ الْقَدَرُ
(www.adab.com). وَلَا بُدَّ لِلَّيْلِ أَنْ يَنْجَلِيَ وَلَا بُدَّ لِلْفَيْدِ أَنْ يَنْكَسِرَ

The English translation for these lines is the following:

If one day the masses wanted to live then destiny will answer the call

The darkness will surely disappear and the chain will surly break at the end

This poem had been remembered to encourage the masses and assure them that their demands will be achieved and that they are the strongest only if they believe in themselves and fight for their freedom. Therefore, referring to this poem in the Arab revolutions reinforces the role of literature in advocating for political freedom.

Furthermore, looking at the different political titles that are being translated into Arabic through the Kalima project is, I believe, a very encouraging point to start translating English literary texts that deal with political issues. For instance, future translators of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* will be able to translate the text more accurately since it will not be allegorically read as a revolutionary attack on a party of oppressors, especially since most of the Arab governments are presenting themselves as democratic ones. For instance, translators will be able to include the conversation between St. Clare and his brother Alfred about the French revolution, social class, and rights of workers and slaves (308-13). Therefore, I think that the current political conditions in the Arab world could make it possible to start the literary cultural translation process of English literary works.

Addressing the Gender-Based Challenges facing the Cross-Cultural Literary Translation from English to Arabic

Similar to the geopolitical challenges, addressing the gender-based challenges of the cross-cultural translation of English, especially American, literary texts into Arabic is not through presenting solutions, since what had prevented the translators from translating literary works or parts of other works that advocate women's rights are the attitudes toward women in the Arab male-dominated culture. Therefore, I will discuss some of the factors that have positively changed and are changing attitudes toward women and advocating for women's empowerment in the society in order to reinforce my argument that it is now possible to translate literary texts that advocate women's rights and reinforce their significant roles in society.

The last two decades witnessed a huge development concerning women's empowerment in the Arab world. Indeed, the 2005 Arab Human Development Report published by United Nations Development Program was titled "Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World." Many factors, I believe, played and are still playing a role in this promising rise of women's empowerment, which I will discuss in the following section. However, it is important to start with discussing some research conducted on the Arab world which shows the optimistic changing public opinion toward women's rights and equality. James Zogby in *What Arabs Think: Values, Beliefs and Concerns* states that a 2002 survey of social attitudes conducted in seven Arab countries by the United States company Zogby International, a private company concerned with research on the Middle East and American Arab relations, found that half of 3,800 respondents regarded the improvement of women's rights to be a high priority (76).¹⁰

The positive public opinion regarding women's empowerment was also accompanied by some factors that significantly paved the way for a women's empowerment project to start. First, the presence of non-government organizations in Arab society played a major role in women's empowerment. The 2005 Arab Human Development Report explains that since the early 1990s there has been a significant spread of activist and nongovernmental organizations in the Arab world that specifically deal with issues of empowering women politically, economically, legally, socially, and in regard to literature. Women were and still are the major participants in these organizations, whose activities are voluntary social-oriented ones. According to the United Nations development report, women's participation in the administration of NGOs is very high in most of the Arab countries. For instance, they participate compared to men "at a rate of 45 percent in Lebanon, 42 percent in the occupied Palestine territory and 18 percent in Egypt" (96). Through the NGOs, women were able to have a collective voice concerning local social issues, including the conditions of poverty and orphanage, and they were able to make some positive changes regarding these issues. Such experience and success led women to call for their own empowerment. As a result, some NGOs adopted a gender-based focus which encouraged academic projects and research that analyzes the condition of women in the Arab world and presents some solutions for some of the challenges that women face in the Arab male-dominated society from a feminist perspective.

Some Arab women began to call for their rights and equality through different channels. For instance, since the male-dominated society referred to religions to justify the sexual discrimination practiced against women, some women took the initiative to

justify their equality through religion by rereading its most sacred text, the Holy Quran.

One of the first is Amina Wadud, who wrote a book titled *Quran and Women: Rereading the Sacred Text*, first published in 1992, to “establish a definitive criteria for evaluating the extent to which the position of women in Muslim cultures accurately portrays the intention of Islam for women in the society” (ix). Proudly, Wadud states,

The more research I did into the Quran, unfettered by the centuries of historical androcentric reading and Arabo-Islamic cultural predilections, the more affirmed I was that in Islam a female person was intended to be primordially, cosmologically, eschatologically, spiritually, and morally a full human being, equal to all who accepted Allah as Lord, Mohammad as prophet and Islam as din [religion]. (ix-x)

Indeed, after such research many other women’s rights advocates began considering the findings of such research “as legitimate grounds for contesting the unequal treatment that women have experienced historically and continue to experience legally in the context of Muslim communities” (Wadud x). For instance, Sondra Hale in her article “Gender, Religious Identity, and Political Mobilization in Sudan” reinforces female equality through the following statement: “We know our rights; we have learned the Quran and Shariah; we know what Shariah gives us . . . we are standing up for our sex. we are as equal ...as efficient ...as educated ...as good ...and as great as men” (qtd. in Hamdi 160). Women were keen to falsify the notion that Islam is the major source for the inequality they face and which accordingly they are supposed not to question let alone argue against.

Therefore, further research was conducted by Muslim feminists regarding gender inequality. The Iranian feminist scholar Ziba MirHosseini states that Islamic feminists are explaining that the claimed Islamic inequalities toward women are actually due to false interpretations by Islamic fundamentalists who interpret the Quran and the Prophet's sayings in a way that guarantees them control over the society in general and women specifically (641). According to MirHosseini, Muslim feminists claim that the source of gender inequality is not Islam but rather the "cultural norms of early Muslim societies" that assume that

women are created of men and for men; women are inferior to men; women need to be protected; men are guardians and protectors of women; and male and female sexuality differ and the latter is dangerous to the social order. These assumptions and theories are nowhere more evident than in the rules that define the formation and termination of marriage, through which gender inequalities are sustained in present-day Muslim societies. (643)

All of these cultural norms of gender inequality were formed by a patriarchal perspective that shapes most of the attitudes toward gender-based relationships in the Arab world.

Furthermore, Islamic feminists are also showing that the oppression and inequality toward women contradict divine justice in the Quran. MirHosseini explains that Islamic feminists show that men's claimed rights to freely divorce and unconditionally marry multiple wives "were not granted to them by God but by Muslim male jurists" (642). So, we are able to see here that women-feminists are actually

aware of their rights that have been given to them through Islam but are stolen by men. Therefore, they are trying to retain them through their own channels.

Local voices and local non-government organizations were not the only factor that played a role in the call for women's empowerment in the Arab world. International calls for human rights and women's empowerment in the last two decades specifically critiqued the conditions of women in the Arab world. Arab countries made reforms concerning the conditions of women. The 2005 Arab Human Development Report explains that the

empowerment of women in Arab countries has lately intersected with the political objectives of dominant world powers in the region that are reflected in externally initiated reform initiatives. These initiatives focus on empowering women, possibly as a type of reform tolerable to despotic regimes as an alternative to abolishing the structures of oppression. (61)

However, it is important to note that these reforms still did not result in huge changes regarding the conditions of women in the Arab world. For instance, the report further explains that women's political empowerment has often been "limited to cosmetic empowerment in the sense of enabling notable women to occupy leadership positions in the structure of the existing regime without extending empowerment to the broad base of women" (50-51). Such limited empowerment will not aid women in their call for gender equality in the public and political spheres.

Besides the non-government organizations, women's studies programs and institutes were established in some parts of the Arab world. The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) was established in 1973 at the Lebanese American

University, which was first established in 1924 by the Presbyterian Mission as the American Junior College for Women, the first women's college in the Middle East. Some of the institute's "feminist" missions are to "[e]mpower women in the Arab world through development programs and education [and] serve as a catalyst for policy changes regarding the rights of women in the Arab world" (<http://www.lau.edu.lb/centers-institutes/iwsaw/index.html>).¹¹ The institute also publishes *Al-Raida*, a quarterly journal. Its mission is to further enhance networking between Arab women and women all over the world. It also aims to promote research on the condition of women in the Arab world, especially with respect to social change and development. Each issue of *Al-Raida* features a specific theme, including the empowerment of women in the Arab world, women and sexuality in the Arab world, women and literacy, women and activism in the Arab world, women and masculinity, women and civil rights, Arab Diaspora women, women in the performing Arts, and Arab women's writings in English.

The Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) was established in 1993 in Tunisia as an independent regional institution. It advocates for women's participation in the development process, promoting gender equality in the Arab world through research, training, networking, and advocacy.¹² So, it seems that women are working toward their empowerment through different channels. Despite the existing gender discrimination in the Arab world, the rise and empowerment of women is developing.

Not only are NGOs, feminist institutions, and centers promoting women's empowerment in the Arab world; fortunately, Arab women literary writers are also participating in women's empowerment through forming new images of women in their

literary writings, which had been previously confined by the patriarchal stereotypes concerning the female gender. The Arab feminist critic Bothayna Sha'ban in her work *Voices Revealed: Arab Women Novelists, 1898–2000*, published in 2009, states that “[i]t is in literature more than in any other domain that Arab women have an identity, a recognizable voice, and a long history, albeit intermittently recorded, of excellence” (1). Despite the existing and continuous oppression practiced on women, in the last two decades Arab women literary writers began to destroy the stereotypical image of the Arab woman in literature, which I discussed in chapter two of this study. “In attempting to build new perceptions of women in fiction, the Arab novel has not only attacked female stereotypes; it has also shed light on aspects of women’s oppression and their role as accessories in perpetuating male dominance” (*2005 Arab Human Development Report* 153). Arab women literary writers are beginning to write novels that represent women as individuals who still appreciate familial unity but reject patriarchal confinement and oppression. Sha'ban in her study of Arab women’s literature explains that four images of women occur in recent writings of Arab women writers. According to Sha'ban, images of women presented in women’s novels are the woman deprived of her rights, the controversial woman, the rebellious woman, and the multiple-identity woman. These four images represent the different courses of women’s lives under similar forces of patriarchy.

Furthermore, some women’s literature was either presented in English or translated into it. The anthology titled *Arab Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide, 1873-1999*, edited by Radwa Ashour, Ferial Jabouri Ghazoul, and Hasna Reda-Mekdashy and another anthology titled *Seen and Heard: A Century of Arab Women in*

Literature and Culture edited by Moa Mikhail includes some literary works of female Arab writers. Accordingly, it is fair to state that a feminist approach is starting to emerge in the Arabic literary field through forming the category of women's literature, which paves the way for literary feminist critique.

Since Arab women writers have begun the initiative to introduce the images of oppressed women who fight the forces of patriarchy both, through the Arabic and English languages, and also are forming the body of women's literature as a category standing on its own, it is then, I believe, both important and possible to translate English literary works that present similar female images. Through translated English literature Arab women readers are able to expand their horizon and knowledge of the different approaches that other women had followed in their journey to self-empowerment. However, in order to assure the translations of such images, I believe that it is important that Arab women themselves translate these literary texts which present the female experience. Indeed, women translators are capable of highlighting the female experience. The feminist critic Simon states the following in an introduction to a translation of Lise Gauvin's *Letters D'une Autre* by the feminist translator Susanne de Lotbiniere-Harwood: "My translation practice is a political activity aimed at making language speak for women. So my signature on a translation means: this translation has used every translation strategy to make the feminine visible in language" (15). Such a feminist approach is indeed important for the literary translation of English texts into the Arabic culture where women are working toward the empowerment of their gender. Fortunately, some Arab literary critics have started the call and research for a feminist translation approach. Samia Mehrez in her article titled "Translating Gender" explains

that gender and translation are both fairly new fields with international and interdisciplinary thrusts and implications. In her article she “uses theoretical tools from the field of translation studies in order to understand some of the challenges [specifically religious discourses] that face [Arab translators] in translating terms and concepts involved in gender studies as a discipline that links an international body of scholars and activists.” Most important, she focuses on developing the field of gender studies to “elaborate, develop, and disseminate translations of gender that enable agency” (106). Such perspective will also enable fair translations of female thoughts and characters found in English literary works, especially those which are considered feminist ones.

Through examining Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in chapter three of this study, we can see the amount of loss that resulted concerning the presentations of Stowe’s female characters and the presentation of Stowe as an author advocating women’s empowerment. Although Stowe’s novel is known for the advocacy of female empowerment, neither the Arabic translations nor the abridged English version presented such a feminist aspect of the novel. Indeed, I believe that the male translators were not capable of acknowledging Stowe’s feminist message. Accordingly, Arab female translators should translate *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in a feminist approach that does not neglect the feminist aspect of Stowe’s text and her call for women’s empowerment both in the public and private spheres. Such translation should include Stowe’s sentimentalism, highlight the female characters found in the novel, and include what has been left out. For instance, translators should reinforce the role of Mrs. Shelby and restore her words that have been purposefully translated in a way that indicates that these words have been said by Mr. Shelby. In translating the Shelbys’ conversation

concerning the selling of Tom and little Harry, most of Mrs. Shelby's words and advice have been translated but put in the mouth of Mr. Shelby. Furthermore, future translations should highlight the role of the Quaker women in freeing the slaves.

Therefore, I believe that the current cultural, social and political conditions in the Arab world make it to a certain extent possible for Arab translators, and specifically women, to translate the feminist experience that exists in the West. It is true that these translations will continue to face challenges, to a certain extent, but it is still important and possible to cross the gender-based challenges and translate English literary works that promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Most important, Arab women have to work toward being visible in the Arabic culture through showing their role in literary translation as a process and product. Since public opinion toward the rise and empowerment of women is increasingly positive and since some Arab women writers have started to present independent and individual images of women in Arabic literature, it is possible and important to present similar images through literary translation. Toward the end of this discussion, it is important to note that the gender-based challenges are not easy to overcome since despite all of the previous efforts Arab women still experience gender inequality that requires a long and challenging journey.

Conclusion

Factors including the current era of globalization and the growing demand for multiculturalism made the Arab world realize that it needs to work toward exporting its culture to the West and importing Western culture through translation. Indeed, as I have discussed in this chapter, this is the "golden age" of translation in the Arab world due to

the many different translation and cultural projects that have been established in the Middle East. However, it is important for these projects to approach the translation of literary works from a cultural perspective that mixes both foreign and domestic elements to achieve the goal of strengthening multicultural awareness among Arab readers and to bridge the existing gap between the Arabic culture and other existing cultures, particularly Western ones. Furthermore, although cross-cultural translation of English literary works into the Arabic culture previously faced cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges, I believe that the changing conditions in the Arab world could allow Arab translators to face fewer challenges and censorship during the literary translation process.

Setting out different possible solutions for addressing some of the cultural and religious challenges and discussing the current changes in the geopolitical and gender-based challenges in the Arab world through this study may result in more discussions concerning literary translation. Indeed, I would like to end my study with Lefevere's statement that I have started with, that still there is, once again, much work to be done in the study of literary translation by literary scholars whose expertise allows them to undertake it (*Translating Literature* 146). Furthermore, even if cultural translation is adopted still much work remains to be done in the study of translation. New translations need to be made, existing translations need to be analyzed, and the role played by translations in the development of literature and cultures needs to be further elucidated. (Lefevere, *Translating Literature* 142). This study is only a start in the research concerning literary translation from English into the Arabic culture.

In discussing the importance of a cultural reading of American literary texts, in this dissertation I have attempted to demonstrate how some translations of several American literary works do not give the readers the opportunity to read from a cultural angle. Specifically, focusing on the Arabic translations of some literary works written in English, especially American ones, I found that most of the translations were linguistic-oriented ones. Furthermore, most of the research critiquing the Arabic translations of English and American literary works focused on the linguistic difficulties and proposed solutions for these difficulties.

Therefore, in this study, I began to explore the challenges facing the cross-cultural translation of American literary texts into the Arabic culture. I categorized the challenges into cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based ones. To test the validity of my argument, I undertook a close reading of seven Arabic translations and an abridged English text of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* introduced to Arab readers. Through my research, I have found that, indeed, cultural, religious, geopolitical, and gender-based challenges have prevented the translators from producing a faithful translation of Stowe's novel. Realizing that the historical context and cultural significance of many American literary works is lost when such a linguistic-oriented approach is followed, I have proposed through this dissertation the need for a period-specific cultural translation of American literary works into the Arabic culture that maintains the cultural context including the religious, cultural, geopolitical, and gender-based norms.

There are currently many factors that have encouraged me to reinforce the need and possibility of translating American literature through a culturally oriented approach.

First, as I have discussed in chapter four, is the current importance of literary translation which is advocated through the 2009 Modern Language Association presidential forum that was titled “The Tasks of Translation in the Global Context.” Indeed, it is now more important than ever that a cultural translation of literary works should be approached in this current era of globalization that not only demands multilingual but more important multicultural individuals. Furthermore, the field of literary translation has now grown closer to the field of “Cultural Studies,” which further reinforces the need to approach translation from a cultural perspective and accordingly demands locating and addressing any cultural challenges facing the cross-cultural literary translation process.

Since I specifically discuss the cross-cultural challenges facing the translation of literary works from English into Arabic, I have also found that there are many current factors in the Arab world that make it both important and possible to approach the translation of literary works from English into Arabic from a cultural perspective. As I have discussed in chapter four, the changing political conditions in the Arab world have lessened the amount of censorship on literary production and accordingly literary translation since the emergency laws that have previously prevented literary writers and translators from introducing many political critiques have been abolished. Literary writers and translators have now more freedom in presenting politically oriented literary works to Arab readers.

The changing conditions regarding the status of women in the Arab world have also encouraged me to reinforce adopting cultural translation of literary works from English into Arabic. Indeed, Similar to their counterparts in the west and, especially nineteenth century American women writers, Arab women writers are now advocating

for their rights through literary writings. Therefore, adopting a cultural oriented approach in translating literary works which call for women's empowerment could be a factor that encourages women to continue calling for their rights.

Translation projects of literary works, especially American ones, taking part in both the Western and Arab worlds, which I have discussed in chapter four, have also encouraged me to call for the importance of translating American literary works into Arabic through a cultural-oriented approach, investigate the challenges, and propose possible solutions. Indeed, many American works especially nineteenth century works demand a cultural translation due to their political and cultural contents. For instance, since Frederick Douglass's *Narrative* is of political and cultural focus a cultural translation into Arabic is greatly important to reveal the importance of its cultural and historical contexts in American history.

Many researchers concerned with literary translation have called for more research investigating literary translation into different cultures. As I have stated previously, Gayatri Spivak in her essay titled "Translating in a World of Languages" states that "whereas much is published on the westward translating arm of the Arabs, little is published on the eastward arm. Let us begin, then, with an appeal for a person with knowledge not only of Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit but also of Pahalavi" (35). Furthermore, as I have discussed in chapter two, both Bassnett and Lefevere's plea in their work titled "*Constructing Cultures*" for a "pooling of resources" that links translation studies and cultural studies, since they explain that

in these multifaceted interdisciplines, isolation is counter-productive....

The study of translation, like the study of culture, needs a plurality of voices. And similarly, the study of culture always involves an examination of the processes of encoding and decoding that comprise translation.

(138-39)

Therefore, I hope through this dissertation starts a conversation concerning the challenges and solutions concerning the cross-cultural translation of literary works from English, especially nineteenth century American ones, into Arabic. Accordingly, the largest concern that I hope this dissertation addresses in the field of literary translation is the importance of a period-specific cultural translation that maintains the historical context of American literary works when translated into the Arabic culture. I also hope that my research will encourage others to explore the different translations of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* into different languages and cultures.

Notes

¹ Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Award for Translation's objectives are "to contribute to the transfer of knowledge from and into Arabic; to promote translation into Arabic in the various fields of science; to enrich the Arab archive by publishing distinguished works of translation; to recognize the achievements of institutions with outstanding contributions in the field of scientific translations from and into Arabic; to establish standards of excellence in translation with regard to originality, scientific value, and text quality (www.translationaward.org).

To broaden the participation of individuals and institutions in different scientific and humanitarian domains, the award has established five categories which are the following: translation award for institutions, translation award in the humanities from Arabic into other languages, translation award in the humanities from other languages into Arabic, translation award in the natural sciences from Arabic into other languages, and translation award in the natural sciences from other languages into Arabic (www.translationaward.org).

² Sheikh Zayed's Book Award has the following objectives: encourage outstanding writers and intellectuals in the fields of knowledge, fine arts and Arab and humanitarian culture, honor scholars who have made a remarkable contribution to Arab culture, celebrate and motivate young writers, scholars and intellectuals, boost the Arab publishing industry so that publishers can play a proactive role in enhancing Arab intellect, contribute to the advancement of technologies in the educational and cultural fields, promote translation initiatives and support distinguished works, support children's

literature, and elevate the competitiveness of outstanding Arab writers and intellectuals (www.zayedaward.com).

³ Kalima's objectives are selecting quality titles across all genres [to translate into Arabic], funding quality publishing houses across the Arab World to translate, print, and distribute the selected titles, supporting marketing and distribution initiatives for books by introducing new and effective distribution channels and upgrading existing ones, investing in new translators to encourage more and better quality translators in the future, and becoming the first marketers of books in Arabic on a major scale (www.kalmia.ae).

⁴ According to the Kalima translation project, the title selection process consists of the following five steps: create a long list based on credible sources of works, e.g., Prize winners, Publisher Series and Bestsellers, cross-check these against existing translated works to begin building a database, define filters, e.g., Classic/Modern/Contemporary, Genre Balance (literature, bibliography), apply those filters, and group and select titles to be translated. Some of the literary English translated works by Kalima are the following: George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, and John Milton's *Paradise Regained* (www.kalmia.ae).

⁵ The Arab Thought Foundation's cultural dialogue unit publishes a quarterly report that includes discussions among Arab and Western intellectuals on different cultural topics in a global context. The Arab Thought Foundation also holds an annual conference where selected Arab leaders, intellectuals, and pioneers in culture, media,

development, youth, and government discuss with their international counterparts current political, cultural, and economic challenges affecting the Arab world (www.arabthought.org).

⁶ The Institute of Interfaith Dialog was one of the first projects established in the United States after the tragic events of September eleventh by people of different religions. It was established in 2002 as a non-profit educational organization by “Turkish-Americans and their friends” to address the question “how can citizens of the world live in peace and harmony?” (www.interfaithdialog.org). According to the institute’s website, the institute aims to eliminate or reduce false stereotypes, prejudices and unjustified fears that people carry for other people of different religions. Therefore, many conferences where dialogue takes place are held in many states in America and other countries, including Turkey. The Institute of Interfaith Dialog once presented a panel discussion on the “Clash” and “Dialog” of Civilizations to promote the teachings in Islamic, Christian, and Jewish religions that might help to create peaceful, non-violent, and respectful living among people of different religions and beliefs (www.interfaithdialog.org).

⁷ Similar to what is taking place in America, other dialogue centers have been established in the Arab and Islamic worlds. King Abdullah’s Center for Contemporary Studies and Dialogues of Civilizations was established in 2007 in Saudi Arabia, which is one of the most conservative Islamic countries, with many objects including the following: “implement[ing] and promot[ing] the culture of dialogue, and identify[ing] contemporary civilizations and implement[ing] agreements of continuity of dialogue

among the Islamic civilization and other civilizations”

(http://www.imamu.edu.sa/sites/en/supporting_deanship/dialogue_civilizations/Pages/default.aspx). These objectives, I believe, are very important concerning advocating for religious dialogue among different cultures of different religious beliefs. However, more importantly, are the hoped practical implementations of agreements that maintain the respect of all religions that will result from the dialogue among the different religious civilizations.

Furthermore, the center has six research units, including the human rights unit, the antiterrorism unit, and the dialogue of civilization unit. The human rights unit has many tasks including the following ones:

Carry[ing] out research on the different existing systems of Human Rights. Review[ing] all agreements and laws related to Human Rights. Organiz[ing] international conferences and seminars that deal with issues of Human Rights. Coordinat[ing] with other centers and institutes specialized in Human Rights all over the world. Prepar[ing] and promot[ing] research on Women’s Rights in Islam.

(http://www.imamu.edu.sa/sites/en/supporting_deanship/dialogue_civilizations/Pages/default.aspx).

These tasks also reveal the human rights unit focus on showing the shared humanity of different religious beliefs regardless of one’s religion, gender, and culture. Believing in and respecting human rights is the supposed base of any human relationship.

Furthermore, any effort for dialogue will be in vain if it is not based on respecting the

human rights for everyone regardless of their religion and belief. The center also has the “Dialogue of Civilizations Unit,” which has the following tasks:

Carry[ing] out research on the dialogue among cultures. Carry[ing] out research on the position of Islam towards the dialogue among cultures and religions. Review[ing] all agreements and laws related to dialogue among cultures. Organiz[ing] international conferences and seminars that deal with issues related to dialogue among cultures and attend[ing] regional and international similar conferences. Publish[ing] books that would raise awareness on the importance of dialogue among cultures. (http://www.imamu.edu.sa/sites/en/supporting_deanship/dialogue_civilizations/Pages/default_.aspx).

⁸ Toward the end of my discussion of the different dialogue projects, it is important to discuss an actual important result of one of these projects. One of the important projects and conferences that King Abdullah’s Center for Contemporary Studies and Dialogue of Civilizations called for was the “First World Conference on Dialogue,” which was held in Madrid Spain, from 16-18 July 2008. Muslims, Christians, Jews, and religious figures and thinkers from all cultures and religions were present and confirmed the declaration known as the “Madrid Declaration”; some of its principles regarding religion and dialogue are the following:

Religions, while they call for obedience to the Creator, are aware of their capacity to offer a valid contribution in promoting moral values; fighting against crime, terrorism.... Dialogue is one of the essentials of life ... the

most important means for peoples to become acquainted with each other, to foster cooperation and mutual benefit and to search for truth, contributing, therefore, to the happiness of humankind. Respecting human dignity, promoting human rights, fostering peace, honoring agreements and respecting the traditions of peoples as well as their right to security, freedom and self-determination, are the basis for building good relations among all peoples. Achieving this is a major objective of all religions and prominent cultures. Reject[ing] theories that call for the clash of civilizations and cultures and to be aware of the danger of campaigns seeking to create and deepen conflicts, so destabilizing peace and security. (<http://www.world-dialogue.org/Madrid/english/events/final.htm>)

The conference also called for adopting many methods to achieve its previous principles and goals. Here are some examples:

Forming a working group to study the problems which hinder dialogue ... preparing a study that provides a vision for the solutions to these problems. Promoting cooperation among religious, cultural, educational, and media institutions to consolidate ethical values, to encourage constructive social practices and to confront immoral behavior....

Organizing inter-religious and inter-cultural meetings, conducting research, executing media programs and using Internet and other media for the dissemination of the culture of peace, understanding and harmonious coexistence. Promoting the practice of dialogue among

religions, civilizations and cultures through educational, cultural and media activities, taking into consideration particularly younger generations.

(<http://www.world-dialogue.org/Madrid/english/events/final.htm>)

The conference is held annually and each year a certain theme is adopted to discuss how to bring religion into dialogue for the best of the human community.

⁹ In 2005 Egypt held multi-candidate presidential elections. In 2006 Saudi Arabia for the first time had partial local elections. Both Algeria and Morocco adopted a code of personal status law in 2006. The Justice and Reconciliation Commission in Morocco was also established in 2006. The United Arab Emirates, in 2006, held its first limited elections to select half the members of the Federal National Council.

(<http://www.eicds.org/english>).

¹⁰ The respondents were asked to grade their concern from one to five with one being "not important" and five being "extremely important." Age, gender, and level of education play a significant role in people's attitudes towards women's empowerment in the Arab world since younger Arabs, specifically women and college-educated Arabs, are more supportive of this aspect. (*What Arabs Think: Values, Beliefs and Concerns* 76)

¹¹ The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) feminist missions: engage in academic research on women in the Arab world, develop and integrate women's studies in the Lebanese American University curriculum, empower women in the Arab world through development programs and education, and serve as a

catalyst for policy changes regarding the rights of women in the Arab world
(<http://www.lau.edu.lb/centers-institutes/iwsaw/index.html>).

¹² CAWTAR's mission is "to generate knowledge and enhance the capacity of Arab institutions to use this knowledge in ways that enable Arab women to become fully empowered and to exercise their rights to share in the development of their communities" (www.cawtar.org).

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