

## Mohammad Abdul-Wali's *They Die Strangers*: A Stylistic Approach to Translation

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**Abstract:** Translation is an act of re-reading, re-phrasing and re-creating the original text for the readers of a foreign language. During the process of translation, the translators often insert subtle and minor changes in the view of their understanding of the text and of the expectation of the readers of the foreign language. The following study seeks to find out such revisions of *Yamotona Ghoraba* [يموتون غريبا] and the consequent impact on the text. The analysis is conducted from the methodological perspective of Translation Stylistics. The study argues that the translation has revised the original text on several grounds such as structure, information, theme, semantics and lexicon. The structural modification affects the dramatic motivation of the text which is built over three divisions of the Aristotelian plot, i.e. beginning, middle, and end, and fails to register the rising and falling action of the story in the target text.

**Keywords:** Mohammad Abdul-Wali, stylistic translation, *They Die Strangers*, *Yamotona Ghoraba*, *يموتون غريبا*

### 1. Introduction

Mohammad Abdul-Wali's *They Die Strangers* is an internationally celebrated novella. The fame and acknowledged literary merit of the text in Yemen and among Arabic speakers all around world have inspired an English translation by University of Texas, USA, in 2001. Translation is essentially a movement of rendering literary texts across languages. Translators are committed to keep the literary style and sense of text untouched in the process of interpreting and re-writing in another language. All languages have a system of formation, arrangement, and inscription of ideas and expression and so the linguistic limits often incur unintentional modification. Besides, readers of a particular language belong to a particular social, cultural and political environment and writers often comply with readers' preferences. When the texts travel across languages, these preferences differ and to adjust with such preferences writers of different languages re-create texts for an improved aesthetic appeal for readers of a given language. The present study evaluates the nature and scope of re-creation of Mohammad Abdul-Wali's *يموتون غريبا* [Yamotona Ghoraba] with regards to its target text *They Die Strangers*. The evaluation is conducted in the manner of comparison between two texts, the original and the target text. The study quotes the Arabic text whenever necessary and provides an instrumental translation of the Arabic quotations for the English readers of the article. The parallel comparison between the texts draws out structural, informational, thematic,

semantic and lexical revisions that re-work the aesthetic and literary merits of the source text يموتون غرباء [*Yamotona Ghoraba*].

## 2. Literature review

The Arabic source text يموتون غرباء [*Yamotona Ghoraba*] was first published in the late 1960s and early 1970s in Yemen (Johnsen 2004:194). It was serialized in the newspaper "Al-Sharara" in 1971 and then printed in Beirut in Dar Al-Awda in 1973. The text was not translated until 2001. For almost three decades, the text remains uncirculated to the vast global readers in English.

There exist many reasons behind the texts' non-circulation of which the most vital one is censorship. Abdul-Wali had to face strong censorship in 1970s which objected to the claims of a character from *Sana'a: An Open City* that "God is unjust" from the Islamists under the leadership of Abdul-Majid al-Zindani (Johnsen 2004:195). The censorship was soon challenged by many Yemeni writers and novelists whose united effort issued a volume on *They Die Strangers* in 2002 by Yemeni Centre for Studies and Research and an article on Abdul-Wali in *al-Mawsu'ah al-Yamaniyyah* (The Encyclopedia of Yemen) in 2003 by Al-Afif Cultural Center in Sana'a (p. 195). *Yamotona Ghoraba* (henceforth called *YG*) was first translated by the center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas at Austin and its publication was supported by the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington D.C. Abubaker Bagader and Deborah Akers translated *YG* as part of a collection entitled *They Die Strangers: A Novella and Stories from Yemen*.

The literary readership in Yemen is yet to mature. There is an evident historical relation between literary production and readership; and in Yemen, this phenomenon is an exemplary occurrence. The literary readership is definitely a class-based phenomenon and the putative class is the educated financially stable middle class. In Yemen, the rise of middle class can be traced back to the post-Civil war period of the 1970s. The emergent Yemeni middle class during 1970s is "an audience acutely aware of the political and economic difficulties...for centuries...advocate[s] of a new national literature that could attract worldwide attention... (and) break out of its cultural isolation" (Al-Jumly and Rollins 1997:41). Even in the Twenty-first century, there is a dearth of informed readership of literature in Yemen. This concern is particularly highlighted and clearly manifested in a sincere confessionary note by Walid Al-Mutawakkil on 22 January 2017. At the close of the first decade of the present century, Al-Mutawakkil narrates his close encounter with Abdul-Wali's text *They Die Strangers* (henceforth *TDS*) by an Iraqi doctor who seemed to be interested in Abdul-Wali's novels. At his surprise and introspection, Al-Mutawakkil points out some crucial points that can briefly respond to the underdeveloped literary readership in Yemen: naïve but ignorant worship of the national writers, stories chiefly limited to hostages rather than other cultural and political concerns, teaching on Egyptian writers in school, unknown status of the Yemeni history, and a focus on universal rather than national forms of

entertainment. Therefore, the neglect of national interest can be held as the primary cause of underdeveloped readership of Yemeni literature.

The act of translation takes the native text to the foreign readers by removing verbal incomprehensibility of a foreign language. The word-by-word literal translation helps a reader like Silvia Chelala (2002) in "a busy city with crowded subways" of New York with "reading Mohammad Abdul-Wali's book, [and finding] ...a woman ... reading over my shoulder". Chelala realizes the "strong autobiographical feel" and concerns in the lives of Yemeni people (Weir 2001:4). But the translation leaves out other aspects of the Arabic text, *YG*. In "When Stylistic Features Are Overlooked in Translation: The case of Mohammed Abdul-Wali into English", Al-Mansoob (2017) discovers the case of "manipulation of the present simple tense within past events and the reported speech" (p. 215). She concludes that the manipulation of the present tense and the reported speech results in "damage" to "the genuine aesthetics of the writer" and obscures "his [Abdul-Wali's] apparent and individual style" (p. 226). The English translation also burdens the Arabic texts with orientalist stereotypes (Alawi Alheshami and Aba Sha'ar 2018:977-985). Furthermore, there exist conditions which determine the Arabic texts' getting published in English language: first, the western culture has little interest in Arabic language; secondly, the limited criteria of modernist, experimental, and woman-centric approaches in the texts; thirdly, the sub-standard quality of translation (Nash 2017:2). Besides, there are socio-cultural differences between the languages of Arabic and English which impede a natural flow of messages across languages. The difficulty in interpreting colloquial terms and allusions constitutes "the source of many translational problems ... [that] hamper faithful translation" (Al-Mansoob 2014:127).

### **3. Methodology**

Style is the manner of verbal expression which is often perceived and distinctive (Wales 2001:371). The perceived and distinctive manner forms the centre of concern for the construction and interpretation of texts. Understanding style offers a crucial contribution towards interpretation and reproduction of texts, in particular the literary ones, because style encapsulates "attitude and not just information" that constitutes the germ of literature (Boase-Beier 2014:112). The analysis of stylistic features unfolds "author's choices ... the speaker's meaning, both conscious and unconscious, and ... a particular cognitive state ... embodied in the text" (p. 114). Texts which travel across different languages, incorporate eventual modifications in regards to style at three fundamental levels: one, the original style of the author affects the translator's reading; and two, the re-creative process of the translator determines a distinctive "sorts of choices" that inform the translator's style; and three, interpretation of the translator's style motivates the reader-critic's understanding of the text (pp. 1-3).

The stylistic modification originates from three sorts of interferences: lexical, grammatical, and cultural (Parks 2017:1-2). Furthermore, the translation-stylistic analysis considers two texts, the source text and the target

text, at a glance in the manner of comparison between them to find out the style or manner of verbal expression in relation to the writer and the reader-critic-translator (Boase-Beier 2014:4-6).

The comparative reading of the source text and the target text depends on the factors of universality and objectivity that constitute literary tropes such as metaphor, iconicity or ambiguity. The concerns of universality and objectivity also engage such reading with contextual, pragmatic and cognitive aspects of the texts. Such aspects reveal differences in the domain of meaning. Meaning is "the total network of relations...by any linguistic form – text, item-in-text, structure, element of structure, class, term in system"; and "if we translate from Standard English to Scots we can't 'transfer meaning'" (Catford 1965:35-37). The contextual relations within texts also showcase the literary effect of the texts on the readers of different cultures and languages. The cultural variety of communities often imposes ideological constraints because "writers, producers of texts, all kinds of texts, ...seem to be 'processed' by the society...long before they start writing...[and] they cannot altogether erase their education and other pressures...subjected to form their mental make-up" (Lefevere 1986:223). The ideological make-up of the writer and readers, in turn, projects cognitive dimension of the "text worlds (that) result from the interaction between the language of texts and the knowledge that readers apply to them" (Semino 1997:9).

The writer-translators often try to overcome the untranslatability of the texts by adapting an "experimental" and heterogeneous practice of mixing "universal and language specific meanings" (Boase-Beier 2014:24-25). Besides, "the distinction between literary and non-literary texts" affects the method, degree, function, and instrumentality in preserving the style of the source text (pp. 26-30). The preservation of the source text varies with "translators [and] according to situation, translation aims, and approach" (p. 50). Difference in its approach between the source text and the target text occurs for two reasons: one, the translator enjoys a limited scope of creativity in relation to the writer of a source text; and two, the target text comes into existence as a third kind in the loop of productions of the text (Malmkjær 2004:15). The translator's approach manifests itself as "Translator's voice, as an index of the Translator's discursive presence" in three cases: firstly of "text's orientation towards an Implied Reader...as a medium of communication...directly at issue"; secondly, of "self-reflexiveness and self-referentiality involving the medium of communication itself; thirdly, of "contextual over determination" (Hermans 1996:27-28). However, the varying stylistic features are noticeable in all of the three successive phases of textual (re)production: communicative phase, translating process or analysis phase, and reverbalization phase (Reiss 1981:121-131).

يموتون غرباء [Yamotona Ghoraba] is an exemplary piece of Yemeni classic fiction. Pertaining to the discourse of fiction, the text inherits stylistic features such as figures of speech and models of narrative which are the indispensable components of the text's aesthetic effect and underlying meaning. Yet, from socio-cultural perspectives, literary texts do not differ from non-literary texts

because both of such texts are "verbalizations of sociocultural and political values" (Verdonk 2002:74). However, the act of translation faces differing approach on the basis of literary-aesthetic manner of textual composition. This primary difference is constituted by a concern "to maintain a close stylistic link with the source text, whereas a non-literary translation can opt simply to report or reproduce the function (as in the translation of a tourist brochure)" (Boase-Beier 2017:394). The present study of translation-stylistics in *Yamotona Ghoraba*, evaluates the stylistic link between the source text and the target text that is maintained in the domain of meaning at three semantic levels of the language: lexical, grammatical and cultural. At the lexical level, the study considers the selection of words that cast significant impact on the context of the story at large. Investigation on the grammatical meaning informs the linguistic feature of textual composition that is peculiar to the languages of the source text and the target text. Furthermore, the difference in cultural meaning adds the socio-political value of the meaning to such cognitive and linguistic peculiarities of the text.

#### **4. Problematic of translation-stylistics in يموتون غرباء (*Yamotona Ghoraba*)**

Translation at times re-creates the source text in its aim to reach the larger readers of the target language. Likewise, *TDS* undergoes numerous modifications that heighten the aesthetic appeal of the text to the English readers. In the following discussion, the paper looks into such structural, informational, thematic, semantic and lexical modifications.

##### **4.1 Temporality**

The narrative is divided into past and present time frames. In *YG*, the transition between these two time frames is implicit: (29) "كان ذلك قبل اثني عشر عاما.. أنه لا (29) يعرف في قريته سوى القليل..". [That was twelve years before, he knows only little about his village]. In *TDS*, however, the translators have rendered the division explicit by introducing the adverb 'now': "Now, twelve years later, he knew very little about home" (27). The adverb not only registers the temporal shifts in the chronology of the story but also directs the readers' attention on the events which are organized in succession of days from the fifth section onwards.

##### **4.2 Structure**

The text of *YG* is divided into six segments while *TDS* is formed out of twelve sections. An analysis of this structural re-formation is crucial in order to understand how the texts project the plot. Each two of the six segments forming three parts of the story, i.e., beginning, middle and end, *YG* reflects the Aristotelian plot-structure of dramaturgy. In *YG*, the first segment accounts for the setting of the story: the African village and the general gossips out of which the narrator builds an image of Abdou Sa'id through his history, identity and personality. This account is told in the first five sections in *TDS*. The second segment of *YG* begins the crisis or rising action of the story which involves the village prostitute Ta'atto's vehement appeal to Abdou to take charge of a child

whom Abdou has allegedly fathered and her slap on Abdou's face in an emotional fit. It is cast in the sixth section of *TDS*. The first two segments of *YG* together unfold the events in Abdou's story. The third segment of *YG* clubs together the seventh and eighth sections of *TDS* to dramatize Ta'atto and Hajji Abdul-Latif's meetings with Sayyid Amin. In the fourth segment of *YG*, which is followed in the ninth section of *TDS*, Hajji Abdul-Latif takes Saleh Saif to his religious mission of convincing Abdou of acknowledging and taking responsibility of the child. These two segments accomplish the middle or climax of the plot. The fifth segment of *YG* is adapted for the tenth section of *TDS*. In this segment the Secretary of the Hajji Abdul-Latif agrees to adopt the child as his brother. The final segment of *YG* narrates the tragedy of Abdou's death on a wintry night and the aftermath on the following day which are described separately in eleventh and twelfth sections in *TDS*. The concluding two segments resolve the plot with two events: one, the adoption of child by the Secretary and two, Abdou's death. These events together form the end of the story. However, the twelve part structure of *TDS* does not comply with the plot-structure of the original text and in its structure it seems to divide the entire length of the story on the basis of events.

### **4.3 Information**

*TDS* begins thus: "The only thing people of Sodset Kilo and the Marqatah in Addis Ababa knew about Abdou Sa'id was that he had opened his little store more than ten years earlier" (Bagader and Akers 17). The opening line draws the attention of readers in the target language at two points: one, the 'only thing' and two, 'Addis Ababa'. The 'only thing' is the exclusive piece of information about Abdou Sa'id in relation to the existence of his shop. However, the present discussion focuses on the second point which is Addis Ababa. The second point highlights the most crucial objective of the present study which is to draw scholars' attention to the significant changes which the original text *YG* has undergone in the translation by Abubaker Bagader and Deborah Akers. Addis Ababa is the example of such change. The commencement of *YG*,

"كان كل ما يعرفه - سكان" سدست كيلو" عنه هو أنه قد فتح دكانه الصغير منذ أكثر من عشرة أعوام" (13).

can be anglicised thus - All that was known by people of Sodest Kilo citizens about him was that he had opened his small shop more than 10 years ago. Abdul-Wali, the author of original text, has set the story in Sodset Kilo, a small locality of Addis Ababa. *YG* mentions Addis Ababa to denote a larger geographical area which includes Sodset Kilo. The first reference to Addis Ababa is made when the narrator reflects upon the habit of the Yemenis' chewing qat:

" قد تجده يمضغ القات بكثرة كما يمضغه بقية اليمنيين الذين يعيشون في المراكات أو في منطقة أخرى من أديس أبابا" (YG 17)

[..you would find him chewing a lot of qat like the rest of the Yemenis who live in Marqatah or in any other place in Addis Ababa] (YG 17). Although Bagader and Akers have retained the reference in the translation of this sentence, "one might find him chewing qat, as did all the Yemenis living in Marqatah and the other neighbourhoods in Addis Ababa" (TDS 20), they also reiterate the reference in the opening line. The mention of Addis Ababa in the opening line may not affect the aesthetic effect of the text but downplays the geographical importance of Sodest Kilo and its function as a local setting. The tone of the story and the affinity of the narrators with the characters impress upon the fact that the events of Abdou Sa'id only concerned the local inhabitants of an area whose smaller dimension have made it possible that the narrator and other characters are acquainted with each other in the daily course of social interaction. The translators' reference to Addis Ababa disrupts the local setting of the narrative which the author Abdul-Wali seems to have intended when he has ignored the reference to Addis Ababa. However, the translators seem to have another motif in such act of modification. The reference to Addis Ababa in the opening line helps the readers, who are unfamiliar with the places of Africa, to locate Sodset Kilo in the horizon of imagination. Addis Ababa is the capital of Ethiopia and therefore, easy to find on map. Addis Ababa serves not only as a cartographical but also as a realistic anchorage of the seemingly folk narrative on Abdou Sa'id.

In YG the main character, the protagonist was plunged into the narrative by the name Abdou Sa'id after a very long narrative that extends up to two pages of fine details of his personality, neighbourhood, shop and surroundings, where no reference to his name was given earlier; and when it was introduced, it was almost like anything in the background and in utter passing:

وكان هناك باب صغير في الخلف .. صغير إلى درجة أن عبده سعيد يحني ربع طوله ليعبره إل حوش صغير (YG 14).

[In the back of the shop there was a door so small that Abdou Sa'id bends a quarter of his height to pass through it into a small yard.]

In TDS the translation falls victim and ignored this significant opening as it emphasizes the notion of strangeness and unknownness: The target text opens the first line of the story declaring the name of the protagonist Abdou Sa'id from the very beginning [The only thing people of Sodest Kilo and the Marqatah in Addis Ababa knew about Abdou Sa'id was that he opened his little store more than ten years earlier] (17); hence introducing the main character to the readers leaving no room for readers to wonder, feel sympathy or stress the idea of strangeness.

YG is more informative and factual about the description of events which are ignored in the narrative of TDS. The first sexual encounter in TDS does not include the temporal reference of the occasion: "At fifteen, she finally went to him. It was night time; a full moon hung in the sky, blurred around the edges after a light rain", whereas the occasion in YG transpires at mid-nine o'clock:

"أنها تتذكر جيداً كل شيء. كان الوقت مساء - والساعة منتصف التاسعة ، والليله مقمرة بعد مطر خفيف. وريح تهز أشجار الشارع" (21).

[She remembers everything well. It was evening - It's mid nine in the morning. The night is moonlit after a light rain. And winds shake trees of the street] (21).

In the sixth section, Ta'atto refers to Fatima, the mother of Abdou's bastard child: "Fatima died yesterday....when she died she left a young boy....Fatima had no family" (35). The description does not disclose the last days of Fatima's life. But *YG* includes a reference to Fatima's protracted suffering before her death:

"لقد ماتت بعد أن عانت المرض أكثر من ستة أشهر" (44)

[She died after suffering for more than six months] (44).

At the end of the story, Abdou is interred in a graveyard. The surrounding of Abdou's grave is less attractive in *TDS* because the description excludes many scenic details: "a simple grave.... [with a] tree [nearby]" (64-65). But the grave is more picturesque in *YG*:

"ونظر إلى الشجرة الباسقة التي تربض بالقرب من القبر بجانب حافة النهر الذي تغطيه أشجار لا متناهية الخضرة والجمال." (95)

[The tall tree lying near the grave next to it. The edge of the river covered with endless green and beautiful trees] (95).

The graveyard is surrounded by the fragrant Eucalyptus trees whose sweet scent distracts the Secretary, Ta'atto, and the child during their last glance at Abdou's grave.

"وقبل أن يذهبا التفتا لياقيا نظرة أخيرة إلى المكان الذي تظله أشجار الكافور الباسقة برائحتها الزكية" (96)

[And before they leave they turned to have a last look to the place that is shaded by the high eucalyptus trees with their fragrant scent] (*YG* 96).

However, the description in *TDS* neither mentions eucalyptus nor the effect of its smell over them: "they took one final glance around the place, standing in the shadows cast by fragrant trees" (65).

#### 4.4 Semantics and lexicon

In *TDS*, the translators have reworked literariness of the text. In the opening lines of *TDS*, there is a comment on the social status and practice of inhabitants of Sodset Kilo and Marqatah: "hundreds of labourers and unemployed men sat guzzling Taza, the local alcoholic drink, while ogling prostitutes who had spent at least forty years in the business" (17). The picture of the inhabitants is drawn out metaphorically where men are unskilled and unemployed while women run



business. With the sentence the translators have introduced a heightened sense of human depravity which is absent in *YG*:

"وحيث يجلس مئات من العمال والمتعطلين أمام أقداح- الطجا – تغازل عيونهم مومسات تعدين الأربعين من العمر" (13)

[Hundreds of workers and unemployed are sitting in front of cups - Taja - flirting their eyes as they go through the prostitutes of mature age] (*YG* 13).

The sentence is prosaic as it states the interaction of drunkards with prostitutes. In the second section of *TDS*, there is a description of Abdou's physique: "Despite his huge physique, he had a baby face, smooth and supple" (21). The sentence employs hyperbaton, an inversion of word order. This rhetorical composition emphasizes the sexual appeal of the face. The face looks innocent like that of a baby but at the same time gives cues of promiscuity. The adjectives 'smooth and supple' suggest that forming liaison is an easy accomplishment. In *YG*, Abdou's face is compared to that of a child but the comparison is attributed to the proportion of face to body. The face is childlike because it is smaller. The face is smaller because the body outsizes the face by its width and fat:

"كان وجهه بالرغم من عرضه وسمنته .. وجه طفل .. بل كان وجهه فوق جسمه العملاق يبدو جذاباً" (18).

[His face despite his width and his fatness was one of a baby ... rather his face above his giant body was attractive] (18).

Similarly, Ta'atto state after physical union with Abdou is described with an erotic appeal which involves a visually tantalizing posture of her lips: "the next morning, she slipped out the back door, satisfaction creasing her lips into an indelible smile". In *YG*, Ta'atto's state is dealt in plain verbiage:

"فتاة سمراء تقفز إلى الشارع .. وعلى شفثيها ارتواء أعوام عشرة" (22).

[A brown girl jumped to the street ... with relieved lips after ten years of thirst] (22).

Besides, there are many semantic differences which significantly alter the thematic and perceptual impression of the protagonist Abdou Sa'id.

#### 4.5 Theme

The comparative evaluation of structural, informational, semantic and lexical re-working of the original text indicates a specific cultural and social tendency in the target text. The tendency is to portray the characterization with a specific perspective. The perspective in question is gender stereotyping. Men including Abdou Sa'id have been cast into the stereotype of libidinous animal while women are portrayed prudent, emotional, sensible, loving and practical. The contrast on the scale of moral value between men and women is introduced with the translators' re-working on the sentence

"وحيث يجلس مئات من العمال والمتعطلين أمام أقداح- الطجا – تغازل عيونهم مومسات تعدين الأربعين من العمر" (13).

[Hundreds of workers and unemployed are sitting in front of cups - Taja - flirting their eyes as they go through the prostitutes of mature age] (YG 13).

The sentence "hundreds of labourers and unemployed men sat guzzling Taza, the local alcoholic drink, while ogling prostitutes who had spent at least forty years in the business" depicts moral corruption of the inhabitants in general on the one hand but on the other it explicitly implies corruption of men in greater magnitude (17). Men are more ignorant and incapable in contrast to women who despite of being in the corrupt role of prostitution are associated with a business and material security. Among the men drawn out in the story only the character of Secretary is an exception to the perspective. The suggestion of outweighing prudence of women is a distinctive contribution by the translators. In YG, women's characterization is given lesser attention. Women are passive role-players who succumb to Abdou's charming physical appeal. The sole instance of women's resistance to Abdou's disgraceful advances is Ta'atto's slap on Abdou's face. But the act of hitting is described from the point of view of narrator:

"وشعر عبده بيدها تهوي على وجهه" (48).

[And Abdou felt her hand falling on his face] (48).

Instead of Ta'atto's slapping the description notes Abdou's feeling of her hand. The act is presented passive and downplays the act of resistance by focusing on Abdou's reaction to the act. In TDS Abdou Sa'id is a typical Oriental character. Al-Wadhaf and Omar are accurate to contend that the characterization of Abdou Sa'id both complies with and resists the colonialist discourse of the hyper-masculine Oriental men (13). Like Oriental men Abdou Sa'id is keen to form liaison with women regards of age: "they said he even made love to a fifty-year-old woman" (TDS 22). However, this hyper-sexuality is at odds with his sensitivity to women. The women of Sodest Kilo appreciate his company in sexual encounters: "how passionate, how sensual he is!" (21). The sexual encounter between Abdou Sa'id and Ta'atto exemplifies this sensibility (22-23). Ta'atto approaches Abdou at night. Abdou does not take advantage of the situation. Rather he tries to understand Ta'atto's intention. By complying with her amorous advances, he pleases her. The animal sexuality and human sensibility perhaps reflect in the physical description "he had a baby face, smooth and supple" (21). But in YG Abdou Sa'id is not a sexual animal. His amorous intrigues with women are the extension of his characteristic sensitivity:

"ومثلما كان يحب الأطفال كان أيضاً يحب النساء" (20).

[As much as he loved the children, he loved women] (20).

Whereas in TDS Abdou is a promiscuous man as "he never rejected any woman who came to him" (21), he is described chaste in YG:

" فالواقع يدل على انه يرفض مضاجعة اية امرأة أتت اليه" (20).

[The reality signifies that he refused to sleep with any woman who came to him] (20).

*TDS* continues to hint at Abdou's sexual desire adding phrases not there in the *YG* like 'particularly women' "Her dreams were fed by what people said about him, particularly by the women who said frankly that they had 'known' him" where the *YG* reads only "her dreams were torturing her as she see the people talk about him- though they sometimes say frankly that they know him" where no reference for "particularly women" was mentioned the *YG*.

In *YG* his promiscuity is implied either in his jokes or the gossip about him:

ويقال أنه ضاجع امرأة في الخمسين .. أما هو فيقول أحياناً على سبيل الضحك.  
يا جماعة. كل النساء متشابهات. كلهن يملكن نفس الشيء..  
لكنه يتردد كثيراً - هذا ما يقولونه - عندما يكون الأمر متعلقاً بعذراء (20).

[It is said that he slept with a woman, fifty.. As for him, he sometimes says:  
Laughter.

- Hey guys. All women are the same. They all have the same thing.  
But he hesitates a lot - this is what they say - when it has to do with a  
virgin] (20).

Furthermore, the blatant evidence of Abdou's lustful character, that he had a physical intimacy with Ta'atto, can be ruled out with the fundamental knowledge in Islamic religious practice. The evidence is broadly stated by the ambiguous act of not bathing at midnight: "they saw a woman jump the fence and enter the store through the back. In the morning, Abdou did not take a shower, but performed ablutions and prayed over a rectangular stone in the yard" (23). The reference to the rectangular stone alters the present interpretation of Abdou's alleged sexual act. The allegation owes to the confusion with the act of not bathing which is necessary after having sex and before the prayer. However, the target English audience does not know that he would be *janabah* [body's impurity due to having sex] - if he actually had sex with Ta'atto, he has to wash himself to be religiously qualified to perform *salah* [prayer]. Since he did not have sex with her, he can perform prayers without having a shower. The deliberate use of 'not bathing' in *TDS* (23), ironically, subverts the allegation of the witnesses. Hence, the witnesses' account further complicates Abdou's character by implying his religious delinquency in not bathing after having sex which runs contrary to Abdou strict religious and disciplined life: "In the morning at six he would have finished his dawn prayers, opened his shop, reciting verses from the Quran and some *adaiyah* [oral prayers] he had memorized as a child" (*YG* 15).

The hesitation with inexperienced women is the evident sensitivity in his character. In *TDS*, the translators' tendency to typify Abdou as an Oriental man undervalues the sensitive aspect of his character. However, owing to the limited freedom in re-creation of the source text the translators could not ignore Abdou's characteristic hesitation in the first sexual encounter between Ta'atto and him:

"she felt ready to explode. Why didn't he move?" (22). Therefore, in the words of Al-Wadhaf and Omar such representation "feminized" Abdou's character in its representation and defies the discourse on the orient men. The hyper-sexual and animalistic feature which informs the oriental cast of Abdou is, therefore, the effect of gender stereotyping.

## 5. Conclusion

The translation stylistic analysis of the texts, the original and the target texts, reveals various points of revision of يموتون غرباء [Yamotona Ghoraba]. These revisions are subtle and indeed negligible for the general English readers of the story. But for the scholars and the readers of Arabic text these revisions are of greater concern because the revisions, even though commensurate to the expectation of the English readers, highlight a different impression of the original text. The reading of the target text varies as the text is divided in twelve sections and the sense of dramatic impetus of the plot. The English readers read the story as a compendium of twelve distinctive episodes where the rising and falling actions are barely captured in the structure of the plot. The English translation has pursued a larger reach of global audience and tried to accommodate the Arabic text with a larger geographical backdrop of Addis Ababa. But this larger geographical setting does not match the narrow magnitude of affairs described in the original text. The affairs of the story are confined to a small locality of Sodset Kilo whose smaller dimension justifies the rationale of greater familiarity of a small shop-owner among the inhabitants of the locality. The target text omits some factual information to reduce the informational load of the reader and reworks literary appeal of the text. The re-working of the text preponderates over characterization and theme of the story. The character of Abdou is typified Oriental and the focus on his libidinal ventures overshadows the sensitivity of his character. The theme of the story is the fall of a religious, disciplined and industrious man under the forces of migration which keep him away from domestic happiness with wife and children. The separation with family drives Abdou into intimate relation with the women of the locality. Since the women of the locality are prostitutes, Abdou cannot expect a chaste relationship. The target text does not project Abdou's amorous intrigues in line with his attempt to satisfy the human need for company. The tendency of stereotyping Abdou's character, therefore, fails to dramatize the spiritual struggle of Abdou on the line of moral values. A careful but parallel reading of يموتون غرباء [Yamotona Ghoraba] and *They Die Strangers* would bring to surface how subtle revisions of the text affect and alter the aesthetic impression of موتون غرباء [Yamotona Ghoraba].

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