

## Analysis of Translation Process of Feminist Themes in Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns

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### Abstract:

This paper aims at studying the translation of feminist themes in Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by focusing on whether the translator has amplified or changed the ST, focusing on the contexts of two characters, Maryam and Laila. This paper investigates two translation approaches: Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Olga Castro's intersectional feminist and sociocultural transformation.

The concept of gender, culture, and ideology in translation will be examined to reflect how the translator's linguistic choices figure out the depiction of gendered dynamics and feminist struggle. The goal of this paper's results is to show how much the translation can either support, question, or analyze the feminist presence in the source text. This will give you an idea of how translation can be used to bring feminist discourse to people from different cultures.

**Keywords:** *Husseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns, Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis, intersectional feminist, sociocultural transformation*

## تحليل عملية ترجمة المواضيع النسوية في رواية ألف شمس مشرقة للكاتب خالد حسيني

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### الملخص:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة ترجمة القضايا النسوية في رواية ألف شمس مشرقة لخالد حسيني، مع التركيز على مدى التعديل أو التضخيم الذي قام به المترجم للنص المصدر، مع تسليط الضوء على سياقات الشخصيتين الرئيسيتين، مريم وليلى. يتناول البحث منهجين رئيسيين في الترجمة: تحليل الخطاب النقدي لفيركلاف (CDA) ونظرية التحول النسوي والاجتماعي والثقافي المتعدد الأبعاد لأولغا كاسترو.

يستكشف البحث مفاهيم النوع الاجتماعي، والثقافة، والأيديولوجيا في الترجمة، بهدف توضيح الكيفية التي تعكس بها الاختيارات اللغوية للمترجم ديناميكيات النوع الاجتماعي والنضال النسوي. تسعى نتائج هذا البحث إلى الكشف عن مدى قدرة الترجمات على تعزيز أو تحدي أو تحليل حضور القضايا النسوية في النصوص الأصلية، مما يقدم رؤى معمقة حول دور الترجمة كوسيلة لتقديم الخطاب النسوي في سياقات ثقافية متعددة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** ألف شمس ساطعة للحسيني، تحليل الخطاب النقدي لفيركلاف، النسوية التقاطعية، التحول الاجتماعي والثقافي

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## Introduction

Translation is a process of communication through words, but it is not a neutral act; the meaning of either the source text or the target text is always under the influence of their cultural, ideological, and linguistic contexts. When translating a rich text like *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, the translation process functions as an act of arguing meanings, mainly the feminist themes presented in the novel. The lives of two Afghan characters, Laila and Mariam, are clearly portrayed with the act of oppression, violence, and patriarchal edifices they have undergone, while at the same time reflecting their power of resistance, solidarity, and opposition. Translating such a kind of novel requires more than rendering meaning from one text into another, but it involves various processing with the different dimensions of gender and sociopolitical phenomena implanted in the source text and then determining the ways how such themes will resound with the audience of the target language readers. There are some important and important questions that need to be asked about how feminist themes are translated and how the translator's job shapes or changes the story to fit cultural or ideological norms in the TT.

In feminist translation studies, many theoretical approaches created by scholars like Luis Von Flotow and Sherry Simon are used to look into how gender and power are shown, changed, or explained in translation. The theories in feminist translation highlighted the role of the translator as an active mediator in encouraging the feminist discourse. With the help of new scholars like Olga Castro, these theories have grown to include the idea of intersectionality in the translation of feminist perspectives. This idea says that the idea of gender can't be looked at separately from ideas about race, culture, or class. Based on Castro's ideas in her work, this research paper aims to examine how the feminist themes in Hossein's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*—lodged in Afghan female characters' real experiences—are negotiated in translation and how the concepts of gendered, cultural, and ideological intersections frame these negotiations. In Castro's work, the themes of intersectionality and sociocultural contexts are emphasized. This creates a modern and fresh way to look at how feminist ideas are translated into different cultural contexts.

Here, we adapt Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis, maintaining its focus on language, power, and ideology issues. Fairclough's model has three levels of analysis: textual, discourse, and sociocultural. It suggests a strong way to look into how gendered power dynamics and ideological processes are shown in ST and how they are translated into the target text. Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis and feminist translation theory are used in this study to look at both the linguistic issues in the text and the sociocultural aspects that have a direct effect on how the translator chooses to translate the language from the source text to the target text. This binary relationship between these two frameworks offers a wide-ranging

investigation of whether the translator has amplified, diluted, or distorted the feminist presentation planted in Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.

There are many previous works that have established strong foundations for examining feminist themes in many fields of translation. Simon (1996) *Gender in Translation* discussed how the practices of feminist translation could disturb the norms of patriarchy by disrupting the structures of traditional language. So gendered agency refers to the capacity of individuals, particularly women, to act, make decisions, and assert autonomy within social and cultural structures shaped by gender norms. In the context of feminist translation, gendered agency explores how these capacities are represented, negotiated, or transformed in literary texts as they move between source and target cultures. It examines how translation practices either preserve, amplify, or modify the portrayal of women's roles, resistance, and empowerment in alignment with or against the ideological and sociocultural norms of the target audience. Castro and Ergun's 2017 work, *On Feminist Translation Studies: Local and Transnational Perspectives*, showed how translation can be used to analyze feminist discourses within the limits of culture. It also highlighted intersectionality as a major issue in feminist translation. Baker's book *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account* (2006) also supported the idea that translation can be used to shape the stories of ideologies and feminist norms within the context of sociopolitical views. But these kinds of studies have made important contributions. Not many have looked at how feminist texts are translated into political situations, like Hosseini's "*A Thousand Splendid Suns*," which mix gender norms with themes of war, struggle, and cultural identity.

This research paper's main goal is to focus on this gap by exploring the translation of Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* from English into Arabic by Maha Musad. Some important passages are looked at that show the character's times of freedom, oppression, and unity. It is also looked at how the translator works as both a language mediator and a cultural investigator to adapt the language and cultural norms. This study looks at how the translator has kept, changed, or reinterpreted feminist themes by using the terms of analysis from both the source and target cultures of the sociopolitical contexts. Consequently, this paper is a contribution to the studies of feminist translation by establishing how translation works as a linguistic performance, a political and cultural interference. It tries to find out how much translation supports or opposes patriarchal ideas and to give ideas about what translation can do in the world of feminist discourse.

## Research Questions

1. How does the translator convey, amplify, or change the themes of feminism, especially the presentation of Mariam and Laila in the translation of Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*?

2. To what extent do the linguistic and cultural variations used by the translator reflect the feminist critique implanted in the source text?
3. How do sociocultural and ideological contexts influence the presentation of gendered power dynamics and feminist struggles in the targeted translation?

### **Research Objectives**

1. The goal is to investigate how the translator conveys, amplifies, or changes the themes of feminism, especially the presentation of Mariam and Laila in the translation of Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*.
2. To evaluate the linguistic and cultural variations used by the translator, reflect on the feminist critique implanted in the source text.
3. To identify how the presentation of gendered power dynamics and feminist struggle in the target translation is influenced by the sociocultural and ideological contexts.

### **Research Methodology**

#### *Type of Data*

The present study interrogates two major texts and the subtexts they embody. The first text is a contracted extract from Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, which Maha Musad has translated into Arabic. The passages are chosen purposively to show feminist issues like autonomy, suppression, and mutual protection within the narrative. They draw attention to important parts of the dialogue between the female characters, how they are seen, and the voice of the story, focusing on issues related to how culture enforces gender roles based on men's roles. Through these theme-theoretical engagements, the study seeks to unbridge the rendering(s) of these themes in the Arabic translation.

The other is an assemblage of critiques of feminist literature on translation and CDA theory. These feminist warrior sisters give more information to the analysis, which is like a cudgel fighting on that predetermined front, from feminist advocacy to problems in cultural translation to the social and political factors that affect translation work. With both primary and secondary data together, it will be possible to get a full picture of how well the feminine parts of the original were translated.

#### *Data Collection*

The methodology of data collection sheds light on the systemic selection chosen from the original version of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and its version in Arabic. It alludes to the confirmation of the aptness and correspondence that emerges in both Arabic and the original English texts in linguistic, cultural, and socio-political themes. The sections are cherry-picked on conflicting and synchronous values; consequently, events revolving around the theme of the personal journey, revolution, resistance, or feminism support the entire research agenda.

The secondary data contains theoretical frameworks and previous studies that can be useful for feminist translation studies and critical discourse analysis (CDA). These sources give the analysis a solid academic base. They give information about feminist critique, cultural translation, and the political and social factors that affect translation practices. With both primary and secondary data, it will be possible to do a full investigation of how accurate the translation is in terms of the feminist aspects of the source text.

### *Data Analysis*

We chose an analytical model for this thesis that combines Fairclough's CDA model and Olga Castro's feminist translation. This model allows for a sideways look at the linguistic and social limitations that cause translation errors in these two texts.

1. Linguistic Analysis: We use Fairclough's CDA model to look at the ST and TT's word choices, sentence structures, and speech patterns. We pay particular attention to how language constructs gendered power dynamics and conveys feminist themes. For example, instances of word choice, tone, and narrative voice that reinforce or subvert patriarchal norms are critically analyzed.

2. Sociological and Ideological Analysis: According to Castro's feminist translation theory, the research investigates the role of the translator in enabling cross-cultural awareness through his/her options. This includes the analysis of shifts in meaning, such as the elevation or weakening of feminist views, as well as the investigation of how the sociopolitical environments guide the translation strategies. For instance, we meticulously study the interpretation of culturally specific terms, idiomatic expressions, and metaphors related to gender oppression and resistance.

The study compares the ST and TT to determine if linguistic and cultural changes improved or hurt the feminist message of the original text. Moreover, the study deals with the question of whether the translator's impact is such that the feminist viewpoints of the original text are either supported or contested.

### *Research Implications*

As part of the larger discussion of feminist translation studies, the results of this study show how translation practices are linked to cultural and ideological factors. In particular, the research operates as an indicator of the important role of translation in the continuity or transformation of feminist stories in literary texts, which can be very instructive for translators and scholars in the field.

## **Literature Review**

### *Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns*

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* is described as a poignant literary text that stresses the intersecting lives of two Afghan women, Mariam and Laila, whose lives of love, loss, and struggle disclose their persistence against the framework of war and societal unfair treatment and oppression. Foster Juli (2007) emphasized how the

characters of Mariam and Laila's intersecting experiences transferred from one stage into another in order to deepen their companionship, which symbolizes their struggle and resilience under the dominion of social oppressive structures. Julie. F. (2007) affirmed that the characters' relationship created a source of emotional bond and power that enabled them to resist the domination of men.

Marwan Harb Alqaryouti (2024) emphasized that these feminist ideas are ingrained in the narratives by using revealing dialogues, symbolic imagery, and the characters' developing companionship. The novel has gotten good reviews because it deals with universal issues and has a sophisticated tone of feminist struggle and resistance. This makes it an important text for showing the serious function of these kinds of issues that are explored in different cultural attitudes through translation.

### *Castro's influence on the feminist translation of cultures*

Castro's theoretical feminist works in translation strengthen the significance of the intersectional contexts of gender, culture, and sociopolitical scenarios. According to CasCastro8), feminist translation does not only refer to feminist issues but includes an active negotiation of the resonance of feminist ideologies across different cultural perspectives. By giving us a way to look at big ideas that are deeply rooted in the oppression of gender and culture, like in *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Ca (2018) 8 emphasized the ways that gender, race, class, and cultural identity all interact with each other. Her writings about feminist translation are very useful for looking into how true the translator was to the source text while also taking into account the target text's audience and cultural expectations. They show the nature of the feminist translated texts.

### *Promoting gendered themes and female feminist translation*

Promoting gendered themes in female agency is a primary concern in translation studies. Luise Flotow and Sherry Simon's writings focused on how translation can help feminist ideas spread. They talked about using a lot of different kinds of language, focusing on women's points of view, and fighting against sexist ideas that are rooted in language. Researchers have developed numerous ways to negotiate gender and agency issues in feminist or postcolonial translations.

Scholars have found out that the translators work as cultural mediators in either reflecting or challenging the power dynamics and ideological issues of both ST and TC. The ideological posture of translators, the sociopolitical environment of the culture, and the outstanding cultural stance toward gender can reframe the female characters' representation in literary translations.

### *Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis in Translation Studies*

A significant tool for comparing the presence of language, power, and ideology in translated texts is Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis. Fairclough's model has three parts: textual analysis, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice.



These are often used together to look into how power relationships change and reflect in translations. With the help of Fairclough's CDA, it's easy to figure out what kinds of language are being used, how they affect ideas, and where they fit in larger social and political contexts.

When it comes to feminist translation, CDA lets you look at how gendered relationships and feminist ideas are expressed in language in both the source and target texts. Using Fairclough's model in past translation studies has shown that both texts change the way ideological potentials are aligned and how they are resisted in the target cultures. This model is very important because it lets us look closely at how changes in language and cultural norms in the source texts affect how feminist resistance and gendered agency are shown.

## Discussions

### *Analysis of Maha's Arabic Translation*

Maha's Arabic translation of Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is a fantastic example. It represents how female-sensitive literary themes are transformed and differentiated through language and culture intersections. However, the translation changes the important parts of the text, like women's roles, solidarity, and patriarchy, so they are more in line with the Arabic-speaking audience's language and cultural preferences. It is necessary to make these changes in order to accurately outline the main points of the story without having a direct and sometimes strong effect on the feminist critique that is present in the source text (ST).

Understanding the background and norms of the receiving audience complicates allegiance to Maha's work. Feminists expect a more realistic and empathetic approach as feminist issues traverse a variety of social and cultural contexts. Namely, the fact that the target language and the story mutually inform and enrich one another by operating on the boundaries of the feminist issue makes the translation more vibrant and multifaceted. The translation, exploiting the point of contact between the target language and narrative, leads to a better understanding of gender issues and becomes more like fiction. The magnificence of this tension perfectly manifests in the translation of feminist texts within the culturally gendered framework of society and social structures. For instance, Maha's translation not only reflects the literal meaning of the text but also ensures that the themes of the source narrative are made more relatable and culturally acceptable for the target audience. The translator frequently must strike a balance between cultural taboos and sensitivities, addressing the reasons behind women's struggles and men's attempts to restrict their rights, particularly through domestic violence and other forms of control, such as preventing women from pursuing education.

Feminist critique is very explicit in the Arabic-speaking communities due to their particular societal values. Regardless of the topic, if a woman is involved, males will always take the spotlight and use any opportunity to silence her. In other words,

men's stories can exclude women from any situation. For example, Mariam's agency is shown in the ST as an act of defiance against patriarchal oppression, but it is subtly reframed in the translation as an act of protecting the community, which emphasizes her role within the family.

This change, even though it preserves the events going on, changes the sexes of the really one-sided ideological themes of the source text and makes them more acceptable or satisfying to the instrument, suggesting some light forms of feminism. In like manner, a slight alteration occurs in the Egyptian translation of the novel to the characters who are supposed to be women that symbolize the shared values of freedom and the women's work—the bond/relationship of the two women that is unbelievable to traditional male chauvinists. The choice again was the militarization of Mariam-Jalila's symbolic images. Perhaps the most striking feature of SHs was that the two women continued to grow and represent solidarity, while the story's frame changed their relationship from a strong survival one to a more care-based one. By doing so, the translation minimizes the subversive feminist undertones of their solidarity and recasts it as an extension of cultural norms surrounding women's roles as caregivers and nurturers.

The representation of Rasheed, the embodiment of patriarchal domination and violence, also reflects these translational shifts. While the ST vividly portrays Rasheed's aggression and authoritarian behavior, the Arabic translation tempers this intensity, muting some of the sharper edges of his character. This moderation not only reduces the emotional impact of his actions but also softens the critique of systemic male dominance that is central to the feminist message of the novel. The translator's choice to tone down these depictions may stem from a desire to align the narrative with the cultural sensibilities of the target audience, where explicit portrayals of violence and oppression may be less acceptable.

By looking at these choices about translation, it's clear that Maha's work is a careful balance between being true to the language and being sensitive to other cultures. The translation maintains the general structural elements and cohesion of the source text and, in the process, slightly adjusts its feminist themes to match the socially and culturally correct values of the target audience. This nuanced method brings out issues and responsibilities that translators have to grapple with when they get materials that address or depict controversial or sensitive topics, especially between different cultures. The woman's power, along with political analysis and the practice of solidarity, shone a light on the Arabic translation of the original, which showed how complex cultural adaptation and fidelity to the source text were in the translation itself. This is a great example of how hard it can be to translate feminist literature for different audiences.

The fact that translators have to choose between keeping the language correct and making the text more culturally acceptable shows how powerful translation is as a way to exchange cultures for the benefit of all parties, whether it's

for economic, social, or political reasons. It also asks if the loss or change of translation, such as language and culture, could mean that the cultural aspects or values of the source text are lost in the target language, which goes against the idea that the two are the same. Therefore, Khaled Hosseini's novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, not only serves as a prime example of literary intercultural crossover but also provides a global perspective on the translation of feminist themes. The description of such phenomena through text transformations shows not only how translation influences the way the feminist narrative is received and interpreted" but also reflects the complicated rapport between language, culture, and ideology.

### *Translating the representation of female agency in the novel*

The climactic act of resistance is reflected in the character of Mariam, particularly when she kills Rasheed in order to save Laila. This is a kind of recapitulation of the feminist resistance in a world where a man is the center of dominion. This scene in the original English text is full of raw emotional strength, which flamboyantly displays Mariam as a new character who has been transformed as a powerful female agent. The narrative clearly emphasizes her inner power and moral lucidity, as depicted in the novel.

"And with that, Mariam brought down the shovel." This time, she gave it everything she had." (269)

A similar consequence of the story events is conveyed in the Arabic translation but with some refined tonic alterations:

"ومع هذا هوت مريم بالمجرفة . هذه المرة، منحتها كل ما تملك من قوة." (351)  
"ثم قامت مريم بخفض المجرفة بكل ما أوتيت من قوة هذه المرة."

The Arabic translation noticeably moderates the strength of the original sentence, despite maintaining its literal meaning. The phrase "كل ما تملك من قوة" (all the power she had) includes the physical effort entangled in the performance, but Mariam's psychological and emotional transformation is not entirely resonant. The phrase "everything she had" in the ST indicates Mariam's physical power as well as the outcome of her inner transformation—a symbolic reference of resistance and liberty. The Arabic translation doesn't fully capture the complex meanings of the original text. This is because the story is told in a subdued way, which is typical of Arabic translations that show violence or resistance as being toned down for cultural reasons.

This act of internal transformation that comes as a result of years of systematic oppressive domination frames her resistance and strength. The source text makes it sound like these thoughts are infused with a sense of moral clarity and persistence. However, the translator chooses neutrality and focuses on Mariam's immediate actions instead of the larger feminist implications of her choices in the target text. For example, the source text portrays Mariam in killing Rasheed as a personal liberty and a resistance of patriarchal aggressive violence; however, the

Arabic translation subtly changes the emphasis as a presentation of the necessary protection of Laila and her children. Therefore, this change in translation has anchored Mariam's decision as being communal rather than individual.

### *Female Solidarity and Bonds*

Mariam and Laila's relationship is considered an important milestone mark in the novel regarding the feminist themes. Their bond goes beyond their personal conflict and suffering and helps them be powerful humans who stand against the patriarchal system. As demonstrated in the passage below, the novelist employs clear narrative descriptions to depict their bonds with depth and solidarity.

"She remembered all the afternoons they'd spent together, braiding each other's hair, Mariam listening patiently to her random thoughts and ordinary stories with an air of gratitude, with the expression of a person to whom a unique and coveted privilege had been extended." (275-276)

The Arabic translation is:

"تذكرت كل الأوقات التي قضتها معاً، تضفران شعر بعضهما البعض، ومريم مصغية بصبر لأفكارها العشوائية وقصصها العادية بنفس من العرفان، بتعبير شخص فريد يشتهي هذا الامتياز (360)"

The above passage shows how the translator mirrors her translation with the source text, despite her subtle interpretation of the characters' emotional resonance. In other words, the source text clearly highlights the transformative strength of Mariam and Laila's bond and portrays it as a reflection of their feminist solidarity. However, the target text portrays Mariam and Laila as part of a familiar situation of communal concern and familial relationship. The translator has chosen a particular kind of word and sentence structure that accentuates ease and emotional care and support rather than a revolutionary undercurrent of their harmony and solidarity.

This reformulation creates a kind of alignment with the cultural norms of the target Arabic readers in which the female bonds are usually distinguished by their nourishing qualities but are rarely situated as a defending act against the oppressive systems. Therefore, the way their bond is rendered in Arabic translation echoes the cultural values, depicting it as a practice of resilience within the limitation of family systems rather than a direct opposition and struggle to patriarchy.

Furthermore, the conversation that takes place between Mariam and Laila, which usually serves as a means of explicating their mutual resistance, undergoes a delicate tonal change in Arabic. In other words, the source text provides a translation of earnestness and defiance, but the Arabic translation conveys a softer and more reserved nature. This alteration reveals cultural attitudes that prioritize restraints and delicacy, particularly in texts that align with societal ideas.

### *The image presentation of patriarchal domination and oppression*

The character of Rasheed is personified with images of patriarchal oppression and violence, and his rude behavior underlines the stereotypical nature of gendered

domination in the source text. The following passages portray him in violent and unwavering terms, using colorful imagery to exhibit his cruelty:

A) "Rasheed shot her a sidelong glance. He made a sound between a sigh and a groan, dropped his legs from the table, and turned off the radio. He took it upstairs to his room. He closed the door." (85)

B) "His face turned stony. "So you let him in. Here. He is currently at my house. You let him in. He was in here with my son." (260)

We translate the aforementioned passages into Arabic as follows:

أ- "نظر اليها بزاوية عينه وأصدر صوتاً بين التنهيد والانيين، ثم انزل قدميه عن الطاولة واطفاً الراديو. اخذه معه الى غرفته واغلق الباب(416) "

ب- "أصبح وجهه جامداً؛ ادخلته. هنا. إلى منزلي. ادخلته. كان هنا مع ابني.(339) "

The translator's faithfulness to the literal meaning is evident in the above Arabic translation, yet it either ignores or subdues the instinctive strength of Rasheed's rude behavior. For example, in the phrases "أصبح وجهه جامداً" and "وأصدر صوتاً"، Rasheed's anger is expressed but does not convey the sharpness of his aggression that is seen in the source text. It is a kind of linguistic moderation that reduces the psychological influence of Rasheed's aggressive authority, possibly lessening the patriarchal oppression faced by the feminist critique in the source text.

Moreover, there are frequently some shifts in Rasheed's behavior to align with the cultural norms of the Arabic audience. For example, some words or phrases include clear violence or disgraceful meaning, but the translator rendered them in ways to reflect a kind of mutation of male dominance for some conservative target readers. This translation technique has created a text that is palatable for an Arabic audience, but it also leaves some gaps in the novel's portrayal of patriarchal domination.

Maha Musad's translation of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* achieves a delicate balance between linguistic faithfulness and cultural sensitivity. The translation preserves the narrative structure and key events while adapting certain features to align with the sociocultural norms of the target audience. In many cultures, the subtleties of feminist criticism are toned down to fit in with social norms and avoid direct confrontations with patriarchal systems and this moderation is a kind of such reflection.

The preservation of the source text's key elements ensures that the story's overall narrative integrity is retained, allowing Arabic readers to experience the essence of Khaled Hosseini's original work. But the translation's small but noticeable changes to language and story show that the authors wanted to find a balance between staying true to the original text and taking into account the audience's cultural values. For example, instances of explicit feminist resistance or individual defiance in the source text are often reframed in the translation to emphasize collective responsibility or familial protection. This adjustment not only softens the

feminist critique but also aligns the characters' actions with culturally accepted roles for women within Arabic-speaking societies.

The depiction of Mariam's character transformation, particularly during her act of resistance against Rasheed, exemplifies this delicate balance. While the source text portrays her actions as a culmination of personal empowerment and moral clarity, the Arabic translation reframes them as acts motivated by communal care, primarily aimed at protecting Laila and her children. This change in focus changes the story's ideological foundations in a subtle way by shifting the focus from Mariam's individual choices to her role within her family. Such a shift is indicative of the translator's effort to align Mariam's actions with cultural expectations while maintaining the broader narrative arc of the story.

Similarly, the portrayal of solidarity between Mariam and Laila undergoes a transformation in the translation. In the source text, their relationship is depicted as a powerful alliance that transcends traditional gender roles, symbolizing the strength of female solidarity in challenging patriarchal oppression. The Arabic translation, however, frames their bond within the context of mutual care and support, emphasizing their roles as nurturers rather than active resisters of systemic oppression. This nuanced reframing ensures that the feminist themes remain present but are presented in a manner that resonates with the cultural sensibilities of the target audience.

The characterization of Rasheed, who embodies patriarchal domination and systemic violence, is another area where the translation's cultural sensitivity is evident. The source text's vivid portrayal of Rasheed's aggression and authoritarian behavior is tempered in the Arabic translation, reducing the emotional and psychological impact of his actions. For instance, the sharpness of his abusive language and the intensity of his violence are often softened or rendered less explicit. This tone change keeps the story's larger critique of patriarchy, but it also shows that the author was trying to make the text fit the cultural norms of the Arabic-speaking audience, where direct depictions of violence and dominance may be less socially acceptable.

This balance between faithfulness to the source text and adaptation to cultural norms highlights the translator's role as a mediator of cultural understanding. Maha Musad's choices reflect an awareness of the complexities involved in translating feminist texts, particularly in contexts where gender norms and societal structures are deeply ingrained. The translation's toned-down use of feminist themes may lessen the ideological impact of the source text, but it also makes the text easier for people in the target culture to understand and accept, so its main ideas aren't lost completely.

However, these adaptations raise important questions about the extent to which translation should preserve the ideological nuances of the source text. The softening of feminist themes, while culturally sensitive, can dilute the critique of



patriarchal systems, potentially diminishing the transformative power of the original narrative. For example, changing how Mariam is portrayed as independent and how Rasheed is portrayed as violent might change how the reader sees the feminist critique that is hidden in the story, shifting the focus from systemic resistance to acts of survival by individuals or families.

Maha Musad's translation represents a careful negotiation between preserving the essence of the source text and adapting it to the cultural and linguistic norms of the target audience. While this approach ensures that the narrative remains relatable and culturally resonant, it also highlights the inherent challenges of translating feminist literature across cultural boundaries. The subtle changes made in the translation show how language, culture, and ideology interact, highlighting the transformative power of translation as a way to talk to people from other cultures. At the same time, they invite further reflection on the role of the translator in balancing faithfulness to the source text with the need to engage and resonate with the target audience.

### *Translational Choices and Their Impact on Feminist Ideology*

A translation of the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini into the language of the Arab world by Maha Musad constitutes a perfectly understandable case in hand investigation for scrutinizing how the elements of spirituality and feministic topics have undergone the change of the target-audience culture. Although most of the narrative file and the key events where they were set remain, there are undoubtedly several linguistic and cultural adaptations that indicate the questioning approach of these translators toward both their faithfulness to the source text and the target audience's cultural norms. This section examines the mentioned transformations in full, with special attention to their influence on feminist themes such as agency, solidarity, and patriarchy.

### *Reframing Female Agency*

Specifically, in the ST, whereas Mariam killed Rasheed to save Laila, it is that act of climax that is a powerful turning point for Mariam. It is by the same translation that Mariam's acts are redefined as motivated by the care of the community—that is, her protecting Laila and her children, not her personal strengthening. This change in the communication strategy of the target audience, which is giving women's actions within the context of familial or communal responsibilities, corresponds to cultural expectations. The text is still coherent, though it does not retain a feminist critique of individual agency as a resistance tool of the whole of society that was licensed.

### *Redefining Female Solidarity*

The killing of Rasheed to save Laila, Mariam's climactic act of resistance, is a poignant change of the character. In the translation, the narrative about Mariam's

action goes from being her own power play to being signed on by Laila's protection of her and her children. This change is completely in line with the conventional attitude of the target audience, in which the deeds of women, if at all, are usually discussed within their family or community duties. Nevertheless, as the author conveyed the plot, the feminist point related to the individual's ability to address the systemic oppression was partly lost due to the change.

The friendship between Mariam and Laila is a wonderful example of feminist solidarity in the ST. Their friendship goes beyond defeating their own sufferings to depicting them as combatants against male privilege. For example, the story tells of their connection with the emotion of deep personal connection being felt through the passage: 'all the afternoons they'd spent together, braiding each other's hair, Mariam listening patiently to her random thoughts and ordinary stories with an air of gratitude, with a person to whom a unique and coveted privilege had been extended' (275–276).

The Arabic translation gives a literal meaning to the ST while it nuances the theme of emotional care and nurturing roles. The formulation of sentences like "ومريم مصغية" "بصبر لأفكارها العشوائية" The phrase "Mariam listening patiently to her random thoughts" emphasizes their relationship as one of care and support, rather than active resistance. One of the interpretations in the new language of the translation suggests that women are always mostly depicted as caregivers, prioritizing safety and care but undermining the new view of their unity as an assertion of their rights. The translation simplifies the relationship and uses the cultural expectations that their bond should adhere to as a backdrop. Consequently, the translation acknowledgment of the female friend's bond leads to lessening the interpretation of their bonding as a subversion against men.

### *Muting Patriarchal Oppression*

Rasheed is the embodiment of patriarchal domination and systemic violence in ST. His aggressiveness and autocratic behavior accentuate the oppressive nature of the patriarchal system. Rasheed expresses his anger vividly in one place: "His face turned stony. 'So you let him in.'" Here. He is currently at my house. You let him in. He was present with my son. (260). Such depictions are instances of the raw emotional effect of his acts and point to the feminist critique of male dominance.

The Arabic translation tames Rasheed's aggression. The phrase "أصبح وجهه جامداً" ("His face became stony") depicts his anger but is not as sharp and immediate as in the ST. He often portrays his violent actions and oppressive behavior in a more subdued manner. This linguistic moderation may suggest cultural sensitivities in the target audience, where frank portrayals of violence and domination are less socially acceptable. Simultaneously, this adjustment reduces the emotional and psychological



impact of Rasheed's actions, thereby weakening the embedded feminist critique in the narrative.

### *Cultural Adaptation and Ideological Shifts*

These translational choices underpin the translator's role as a mediator of cultural understanding. The adaptation by Maha Mus'ad within *A Thousand Splendid Suns* reflects an effort to balance faithfulness to the ST with the cultural and linguistic norms of the target audience. In softening feminist themes and reframing characters' actions, the translation has to make the narrative relatable and culturally resonant. Yet, these adaptations beg important questions as to how much the translation should retain the ideological tone of the ST. Reframing Mariam's agency as collective rather than individual and her relationship with Laila as nourishing rather than resistant softens the aggressive nature of Rasheed. All of these subtle shifts relocate the ideological emphasis of the narrative. These shifts work to make the text more accessible for an Arabic-speaking audience; however, they also reduce the transformative effect of the feminist critique in ST.

### **Translation Analysis Gaps**

We highlight several examples of translation shifts, but deeper exploration of the ideological implications is necessary with particular focus on:

1. Impact of softening Rasheed's aggression: The choice to tone down Rasheed's violent behavior in the TT not only lessens the portrayal of patriarchal domination but also alters the feminist critique central to the ST. The researcher should expand on how this impacts the audience's understanding of systemic oppression and how the translation aligns or diverges from the feminist ideology in the ST.
2. Nuances in representing female agency and solidarity: The shifts in Mariam's act of resistance and her bond with Laila should be further analyzed to illustrate how these changes reshape feminist themes. For example, softening Mariam's inner transformation and emphasizing communal over individual defiance affects the overall feminist narrative.
3. More general cultural effects: The researcher should talk about how these translation choices show bigger cultural expectations and norms. This will help show how challenging it is to translate feminist criticism when social norms affect how texts are understood.

The translation of Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* into feminist themes represents, in a very compact way, the complex operation in which the linguistic, the cultural, and the ideological are engaged. This looked at how different phrases and value passages were re-created in the Arabic translation to keep the main story of women's fight for survival and their resistance while also taking into account the norms and expectations of the audience. These adaptations have

significant implications for the reception and interpretation of the feminist critique embedded in the source text in the target culture.

This paper paid attention to three major axes of transformation: female agency, female solidarities, and the representation of patriarchal oppression. In this Arabic version, Mariam is remade into the spokesperson for community values and decency rather than a feminist individualist rebel. Similarly, the bond between Mariam and Laila is modified in the translation from the strong alliance against patriarchy in the source text to emphasize more nurturing and care in culturally acceptable roles for women. Also, in the Arabic translation, Rasheed's patriarchal aggression has become less severe to reduce the harshness of a feminist critique in order to be more palatable to conservative readers.

These shifts underline the translator's important role in treading the target culture's ideological and ethical dimensions while adhering, as much as possible, to the spirit of the source text. The Arabic translation, in its shifts and omissions, reveals the challenges involved in translating feminist literature so that the latter retains its essential themes of gender yet is accessible to a new audience. At the same time, however, such adaptations also show how translation might act as a vector in propagating global feminist ideas to a new audience, even while those ideas are rewritten through local cultural frames.

This research underscores the power of translation to indeed be transformational, reframing feminist literature across cultural borders. Some ideological and normative shifts in the Arabic version of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* still capture the themes of struggle, resistance, and cohesion, which are fundamentally resilient and engage newer readers at varying comprehension levels.

The present study adds to the area where feminist translation studies and critical discourse analysis meet by showing how the two fields can work together to study the social and cultural aspects of translation. This paper calls for more research into how translation can support feminist ideas in different cultural settings based on an examination of the translator's role in navigating the intersections of gender, culture, and ideology.

Ultimately, translation is a dynamic practice wherein practical and ideological concerns cut across languages, thus making possible an increasingly significant cross-cultural dialogue. Studying feminist literature in translation carries important lessons on how feminist movements are articulated, negotiated, and preserved across languages and cultures. This is a continuing conversation that nurtures such cross-cultural solidarities as are so needed if the feminist pursuit of equality is to be pushed further forward internationally.

Maha Masud's translation of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* epitomizes the challenges that come with translating feminist literature across different cultures. The balance between linguistic fidelity and cultural sensitivity will make the story stay true to its originality while relating to the values of the target audience. This nuanced

approach underscores the translator's role as both a mediator and a reformer of feminist narratives, emphasizing the power of translation as a tool for cultural exchange. At the same time, these changes make us think about the feminist and ideological aspects of the original story, which makes us think more about how the translator affected how it was understood across cultural and linguistic lines.

### **Recommendations**

There are some future recommendations for translators in the field feminist translation. Translator should think of contributing paratextual explanations to reflect the difficulties in rendering feminist ideas for readers of different languages. Future research of feminist ideas of different cultures and languages need to be negotiated before being translated. These studies would contribute a wide understanding of how feminist contexts are mediated. Furthermore, modern feminist translation theories could be also used to disclose the influence of religious, class and moral factors to the translation to texts of different feminist attitudes. This would help to broaden the realm of understanding the analysis of cultural mechanics in reforming the translation procedures.

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