

A Translation into English of Khalil I. Al-Fuzai's¹ "A Lot of Hands"²

Uma tradução para o inglês de Khalil I. Al-Fuzai's¹ "A Lot of Hands"²

Una traducción al inglés de "Muchas manos"² de Khalil I. Al-Fuzai¹

Received: 18/01/2021 | Revised: 20/02/2021 | Accepted: 01/03/2021 | Published: 03/03/2021

Gassim H. Dohal

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2513-7268>

Independent Researcher, Gizan, Saudi Arabia

E-mail: dr_waitme@hotmail.com

Abstract

Translating Khalil I. Al-Fuzai's "A Lot of Hands" aims at what Bhabha calls "cultural communication" (228). In this way, translation reconstructs and introduces the self to other people and nations. In this sense, translation contributes to the concept of identity. Khalil I. Al-Fuzai (1940-today) is a writer from Saudi Arabia who wrote a few collections of stories. In his stories he tries to present his Arabian community in a direct, simple way (Dohal 2013). One of his stories is "A Lot of Hands." Methodology is a document translation of a story for it is a good sample of what Al-Fuzai has written (Dohal, 2018 & 2019). In addition, it addresses a side of the Arabian culture; this story depicts the abuse and oppression that some children face from their close relatives. Indeed it is about a universal concern.

Keywords: Short story; Saudi; Al-Fuzai; "A Lot of Hands".

Resumo

A tradução de "A Lot of Hands" de Khalil I. Al-Fuzai visa o que Bhabha chama de "comunicação cultural" (228). Desse modo, a tradução reconstrói e apresenta o eu a outras pessoas e nações. Nesse sentido, a tradução contribui para o conceito de identidade. Khalil I. Al-Fuzai (1940 até hoje) é um escritor da Arábia Saudita que escreveu algumas coleções de contos. Em suas histórias, ele tenta apresentar sua comunidade árabe de uma forma direta e simples (Dohal 2013). Uma de suas histórias é "A Lot of Hands". Metodologia é a tradução de um documento de uma história, pois é uma boa amostra do que Al-Fuzai escreveu (Dohal, 2018 e 2019). Além disso, aborda um lado da cultura árabe; esta história retrata o abuso e a opressão que algumas crianças enfrentam de seus parentes próximos. Na verdade, trata-se de uma preocupação universal.

Palavras-chave: História curta; Saudita; Al-Fuzai; "Muitas mãos".

Resumen

La traducción de "A Lot of Hands" de Khalil I. Al-Fuzai apunta a lo que Bhabha llama "comunicación cultural" (228). De esta manera, la traducción reconstruye y presenta el yo a otras personas y naciones. En este sentido, la traducción contribuye al concepto de identidad. Khalil I. Al-Fuzai (1940-hoy) es un escritor de Arabia Saudita que escribió algunas colecciones de historias. En sus historias, intenta presentar a su comunidad árabe de una manera directa y sencilla (Dohal 2013). Una de sus historias es "A Lot of Hands". La metodología es una traducción documental de una historia por lo que es una buena muestra de lo que ha escrito Al-Fuzai (Dohal, 2018 & 2019). Además, aborda un aspecto de la cultura árabe; esta historia describe el abuso y la opresión que enfrentan algunos niños por parte de sus parientes cercanos. De hecho, se trata de una preocupación universal.

Palabras clave: Cuento; Saudí; Al-Fuzai; "Muchas manos".

1. Introduction

Literature can reveal a lot about a people, an age and a culture. The purpose of this paper is to present The purpose of this translation is to present a short story written by Khalil I. Al-Fuzai to English readers. I hope that readers of this story start looking after other translated texts for this and other writers.

After a series of offenses, and deprivation, a child kills his father due to extreme depression. This story depicts denial of the human rights that some young people face from their close relatives. In this story, Al-Fuzai gives us a chance to explore the inner voice of the violated child through the omniscient narrator.

Despite the father's mistreatment, the society takes part in creating the protagonist's problem, "All people say that he is crazy . . ." Wrong treatments have psychological results; suppression develops complexes in the personality of the person in

question. In the story, the child becomes the marginalized victim of both the father and the society.

2. Methodology

According to Lawrence Venuti (1995), there are two methods that a translator may choose between. One method is to “domesticate” the foreign text, and the other method of translation is to “foreignize” the source text. Furthermore, Venuti adds, “a translated text should be the site where a different culture emerges, where a reader gets a glimpse of a cultural other” (309). Indeed, I have tried in my translation to keep as close as possible to the source text. My objective for the source text is to recreate a representative text in the new language where distinctive characteristics; this is what readers will notice while reading this story.

3. Translation and Discussion

3.1 TRANSLATION

A Lot of Hands

Trying to charge his voice with negative waves and make it sound innocent to the maximum of innocence, he says, “You know that I am not guilty of his death; it is Allah’s will that this took place.”

Everyone was busy, each with what he has in his own hand . . . 3 except for one of them who speaks, while another starts jotting down his testimony:

“Do you have anything else to say?”

He thinks before he hesitantly responds, “No.”

After he looks at his watch, the notary closes his report. Then, he asks him to sign. He uses the notary’s pen to sign what he has said; then he lets them play with the fingers of his hand to imprint on other papers he knows nothing about. When they are done, he looks at the ink that pollutes his fingers. He feels that he hates this ink to death. The same feeling strikes him toward other people there, even his father’s picture that is hung and in which he sees looks of sarcasm and revenge. Then, he says to himself, “Well . . . everything is done and you have to sleep in your grave at ease.” Yet, the looks of sarcasm and revenge increase in depth when he scrutinizes that picture.

All people say that he is crazy . . . his father . . . his father’s acquaintances . . . for nothing but the fact that he makes mistakes. He always makes mistakes . . . this is what he admits, but his mistakes are not so big, and then he always admits his mistakes . . . perhaps this is his fault, but it is a fault he cannot get rid of . . . the mistakes he makes are always discovered . . . and he always admits them.

His life from its beginning has not been successful. It has been barren because he missed his mother’s compassion too early . . . and detestable because of his father’s atrocity . . . and tiring, boring and disgusting at the same time. Have they said he is crazy? He has heard this more than once and on different occasions. Why has he not proved that he is able to avoid making mistakes?

Then, let him commit his crime whatever its consequences.

Once, his father was sitting with some of his acquaintances. He wanted to sit with them and join them in their conversation, but his share was insult and degradation for no reasonable grounds.

Such situations embarrass him . . . indeed they are many. He does not remember one time, even one time he was allowed to be something . . . they always considered him . . . marginal . . . nothing . . . nobody!

He tells himself:

“What is their opinion, now, after what has happened?”

At the same time, he feels confined, upset and angry.

What kind of foolishness caused him to commit his hideous crime . . . if someone talked to him about it, he would not believe it. Now he has no other option except to believe it because denying facts only and solely confirms his recognition of those facts. Everything is so obvious that evidence is not needed . . . even the events of the beginning are still jamming his mind while taking a dulling, confusing form . . . from the time the hand of fate started weaving the threads of his story . . . the story of his crime . . . since five years ago when his father asked him to leave school in order to help him manage his business. He does not remember exactly why he hesitated at the beginning . . . maybe it was the desire to escape his father's control, and maybe . . . the wish to continue his school, and maybe neither the former nor the latter, but something else he does not remember now. The important thing is that after hesitation he finds himself working with his father in his shop, the father mistreating him in everything . . . he does not trust him with anything, he suspects all his behavior, and he watches over him strictly. Despite his feeling that this conduct hurts him, he accustoms himself to accept the worst of assumptions, and he has to accept them so . . . he does not forget that once he tried to run away from his father. The consequence was that he returned submissive and lowly, asking for mercy and pardon. He did not want this to happen but his father did . . . when his father wants something, he does not care who stands against him or in his way, and he uses his power and personal acquaintance with those who are in charge. On that day, he cried as if he were crying for the first time . . . he adds his tears to all that boils over between his flanks—such as hatred, disgust, and a grudge against this world and its people . . . is it so shameful that a person of twenty years cries?

All people are busy with what they have in their hands, except him, who is busy with his thoughts.

Now years passed after that incident took place, he lives his present with his past a major factor in its adjustment . . . the past with all its occasional happiness . . . his mother's hate of his father . . . the continuous dispute between them . . . and the severe beatings he used to receive from his father whenever he made a mistake, and finally the death of his mother who left him alone, except for his father . . . the one to whose heart mercy knows no way . . . and finally his crazy plan to kill his father.

He has killed his father?

Is this act the extreme limit of foolishness?

At that time he saw with the eye of reason what he had done; he imagined that to be the only escape that would rid him of his father's cruelty, and it would make him able to inherit his father's wealth after all . . . he felt at ease with the idea of killing, generally and minutely. He reenacts a part he watched in one of the films where the hero was able to suffocate his opponent while sleeping, and easily got rid of the corpse. So he believed that circumstances would serve him as they did the hero of the film. He forgot that his conditions were not destined for acting such a role.

What are these damned reminiscences that swarm in his mind? . . . How hateful they are . . .

The weather outside the room where the investigation takes place is . . . severe . . . the cold is harsh . . . the intermittent rain is pouring down . . . small flakes of snow beat strongly against the window panes—and the wind violently blows the leaves of the trees . . . and the garden of the house is empty except for the policemen who spread out searching for new evidence related to the crime.

Silly people! He believes they are. If they know that he has admitted his crime, they do not need to bother themselves searching for more evidence.

He does not know whether to feel sad or even to become happy after everything is over.

No . . . he does not need to feel sad or even to become happy; the corpse is discovered before he can get rid of it, and evidence against him is found, and he has admitted his crime . . . all this happens in a short period of time . . . he does not know when it starts and when it ends . . . sadness and happiness become nonsense after what already happened . . . even if he tries to

flee as he did from his father. In the first case, his father's power brought him back, but now if he tries to escape, his end will come from one of these pistols carried by the policemen. A movement from one of the policemen attracts his attention, when the policeman puts his hand on his pistol to adjust his leather belt from which the pistol hangs down in its holster. He thinks that that guy has already read his thoughts, so he decides not to think, feeling the alienation that surrounds him from all six directions.

He is not aware of what is going on around him . . . the last word he spat at their faces was "NO" when the officer asked him, "Do you have anything else to say?"

Then, he got lost with his thoughts that took him far away from all that surrounds him.

Finally, he discovers that they are preparing to leave the house, and he feels a lot of hands leading him resolutely towards the car parked in front of the house.

In the light of the street light, he catches sight of an apparently ugly cat carrying a fish between its teeth . . . it stops and looks at him in particular, as if it were rejoicing at his misfortune. Just before it disappears in the darkness, he spits on the ground in disgust, and gets in the car, while being pushed by many hands. If he were destined to look at their faces at that moment, he would find them gloomy and sullen. Indeed, experiences have dug on their foreheads deep trenches of wrinkles hindered in their stiff length. Then the car moves on its way towards an unknown future which it is late to think about, whatever the end may be.

4. Conclusion

In the above story, Khalil I. Al-Fuzai depicts the way in which some individuals are treated during their childhood. Any treatment is reflected in the personality in question; if it is bad as the case in this story, it will have problematic consequences, mainly psychological. Usually the parents are the ones who should take care of upbringing their children, but when one or both are not doing their natural job, this really creates deep solicitude. More than this, the writer addresses psychological outcomes in many of his stories (Dohal, 2013).

Translator's Notes

- 1- Khalil I. Al-Fuzai (1940-) is a literary writer from Saudi Arabia. In his writings, he introduced his culture, addressing many social, cultural, and religious issues he saw in his society.
- 2- This story was translated from the following Arabic source: Al-Fuzai, Khalil I. (1979). Thursday Fair. (سوق الخميس). Taif: Taif Literary Club, 11-16.
- 3- . . . Every now and then there are few dots found in the source text.

Referências

- Afeifi, M. A. (1993). "البنية اللغوية في قصص الفزيع" ("Linguistic Environment in Al-Fuzai's Stories.") *Studies in Saudi Arabian Literature*. Cairo: Al-Khanji Bookstore.
- Al-Fuzai, K. I. (1979). Thursday Fair. (سوق الخميس). Taif: Taif Literary Club, 1979: 11-16.
- As-Shabat, A. A. (1999). "Khalil Al-Fuzai." من الخليج العربي أدباء و أدبيات. (*Men and Women of Letters from the Arabian Gulf*.) Khubar: The New National House for Publishing and Distribution.
- Bhabha, H. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Dohal, G. H. (2018). A Translation into English of Khalil I. Al-Fuzai's "The Crazy Street". *International Journal of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies*, (2018) 6(4), 1-4. <http://dx.doi.org/10.0001/ijllis.v7i11.1791>.
- Dohal, G. H. (2019). An Introduction to and a Translation into English of Khalil I. Al-Fuzai's "Thursday Fair". *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, (2019) 10(2), 121-3. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v.10n.2p.121>.

Dohal, G. H. (2015). Khalil I. Al-Fuzai: A Writer from Saudi Arabia. *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies (AJMS)*, (2015) 3(2), 166-67. Retrieved from <http://www.ajms.co.in/sites/ajms2015/index.php/ajms/article/view/870/701>.

Dohal, G. H. (2013). Khalil I. Al-Fuzai: Life and Contributions. *International Journal of English and Literature (IJEL)*, (2013) 3(5), 53-60. <http://www.tjprc.org/publishpapers/2-40-1384512377-9.%20Khalil.full.pdf>.

Venuti, L. (2008). *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London & New York: Routledge.