

A Translation into English of KHALIL I. AL-FUZAI's "Alienation"



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Abstract

The hero of this short story travels from his village for a while and when he returns, he finds himself unwanted and ignored by its people because he has not lent a hand to the development of the village he belongs to. In an isolated tribal society, help, and cooperation are expected. Hence, we notice this reaction from the people of this village.

Keywords:

al-fuzai;

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1. Introduction

Translation is an important way that helps people get close to each other. It could help in introducing different cultures. It is through translation that people can create an atmosphere of understanding and respect. By translating Khalil i. Al-Fuzai's "Alienation," readers of this journal will have a chance to read for this Saudi writer (Dohal, 2018).

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2. Translation

Beautiful dreams decorate the moments... awaiting the arrival at the loved village... the strong welcome that it longs for... the great and wonderful feelings that jostle inside me. The friendly memoirs tickle my mind... all that go in vain... it turns into blood dripping from the hands stretched with a clear enmity to the absentee who returns...

My paper horses immigrate far away toward the endlessness... dreams demolish... and its copious tide diminishes in front of a lofty mountain of denouncement. Hence what causes the absentee to return after twenty years of traveling in the courses of the unknown?

The wonderful evenings at the public square of the village... the latent stories in our minds where we start and retell their details... Surat Al-Fatihah (Chapter of the Opening) and Ayat Al-Kursi (the Verse of the Throne) protect everyone while returning home after chatting in the moonlit nights and using a hand-light which is used by all of us on an alternative basis. We are young... drink the moon's light, and travel to worlds that have never been visited before... venture in the universe's labyrinth. Yet in the end, we discover that we indeed chat in the evenings at the public square of the village and that less than half of the night is left.

Does time erase the features of those beautiful memoirs?

One day I travel with other travelers. I leave the village. I return many times to the village, then I travel to a place that is further than the far itself, and my news never reaches the village... and its news does not reach me. And the alienation of the soul becomes harder than the desolation of the homeland... and when I finally come back, everything has changed. If things change, it does not matter, but when souls change, this is what is not expected.

One person does not change; he meets me with his usual smile. The past years could not change his features. I accost him, "Are you still alive?"

"I discovered the secret of life, and I do not think that death will approach me."

"What secret?"

"How is it going to be a secret if I tell you about it?"

"I want to live as you live..."

"You cannot..."

"Why...?"

"Because your generation does not believe in our theories with regard to life..."

"What do you mean?"

"I will tell you and I will leave all my matter to Allah... you see that I surpassed one hundred years... during my life I knew more than one thousand women and I am still looking forward to knowing more."

I do not wonder because twenty years ago I knew that he was a ladies' man, and though I do not discover the relationship between what he said and the secret of life he talked about earlier, yet I try to evoke him, "But you cannot..."

"This is what you think... I long for a woman, though. Do you know that the advice my father used to repeat is that if you want to live for a long time, then have women..."

I realize what he wants to say, so I say, "This is a wrong theory!"

"I am convinced of it."

"And are you going to advise your sons with...?"

"They do not listen... they laugh at this idea... one of my sons mockingly said that he read once that living with women causes the length of chin hair, yet it does not lead to long life. I tried to convince him that as long as it causes the length of chin hair, then it should lead to the length of everything including age... he was not convinced..."

* * *

A question slips away; I want to know his response, "Why do they look at me with enmity?"

"Why do you not ask them?"

"They avoid talking with me."

"When you left them, they indeed needed you... and you returned to them after they became in no need for you."

"And what was their need?"

"The village was in need of all its sons after a flood destroyed it... all returned... but you did not..."

"I was struggling somewhere else."

"Any struggle should be for the sake of the village."

* * *

My love of it does not abate... my love of it is my life, and how does a man give up his life... how can I prove to them that I love the land... I wish that I could kiss its soil and cover my head with its surface...

Some children gather... look at me with astonishment as if they were looking at a creature coming from an alien world. I try to talk to one of them. All run away like frightened horses... one of them would be my son if I did not leave the village... it would be possible to talk with them if I stayed there... everything would be possible if I did not leave.

Walls of the village ooze with aversion... enmity fills the atmosphere... I feel it... I almost touch it heavy... real... but I will not travel again.

3. Conclusion

As stated earlier in my introduction, readers of this journal will have a chance to read for this Saudi writer. People of different cultures need translations in order to develop an atmosphere of respect and understanding, particularly when translators know the culture they are translating from. In “Alienation,” readers will experience a theme all cultures share; that is ‘identity’.

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Statement of authorship

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Biography of Author

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