The Translator as Dramatist:
On the Problems of Translating Dramatic Texts

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I- Introduction

Despite the peculiar richness of the theatrical corpus since the emergence of Greek Tragedy as a dramatic genre in the 5th century B.C. (Case 1985:318), little effort has been made to developing the theatre studies as a well-defined academic discipline. Noteworthy, in this context, is the dominance of written-text analysis approach to theatre texts since Aristotle's *The Poetics* (Kier 1980: 5).This situation gives rise to two far-reaching results. The first is related to the commonly-held view of the supremacy of literary/written text over the other elements of the theatrical show. The second result is concerned with the impact such an attitude had on translating theatre. In this respect, Susan Bassnett notes that "of all types of literary translation, theatre is the most neglected area."(1991: 120)[1] There is very little material on the special problems of translating dramatic works mainly because it has become common practice for the individual theatre translators to translate dramatic texts in the same way as prose texts (ibid.).

However, theatre texts, as Bassnet asserts, can not be read, and hence, translated in the same way as the other prose texts. In fact, they "must be read differently…as something incomplete, rather than as a fully rounded unit, since it is only in performance that the full potential of the text is realized."(qtd. in Xu 2008: 8)

Bassnett's affirmative statement of the incomleteness of theatre texts implies that the linguistic system is only one element among many to be considered in the process of translation. As a result, the problems of translating literary texts take on a new dimension of complexity with theatre translation (Bassnett 1991:132) since the translator is faced with a central problem: whether to translate the theatre text as a purely literary text, or to try to translate it in its function as one element in another, more complex system (ibid.: 120).

In order to understand the reasons behind this seemingly unjustified negligence of dramatic texts translation, it is necessary, firstly; to know the meaning of drama as a literary genre.

2- The Nature of Drama:

Aristotle calls drama "imitated human action." (Holman 1980: 138) James M. Manly sees three necessary elements in drama. They are (1) a story, (2) told in action, (3) by actors who impersonate the characters of the story (ibid.) Drama, moreover, is a "staged art," as Robert Di Yanni asserts (qtd in

Dukore 1974: 867). Accordingly, as a literary genre, drama is only realized in performance. As a literary form, it is designed for the theatre because characters are assigned roles and they act out their roles as the action is enacted on the stage. Generally, the word, dramatist is used for any artist who is involved in any dramatic composition either in writing or in performance (Yesufu 2008: 7).

Drama is different from other genres of literature. It has unique characteristics that have come about in response to its peculiar nature. Really, it is difficult to separate drama from performance because during the stage performance of a play, drama brings life experiences realistically to the audience. It is the most concrete of all genres of literature. In fact, the playwright does not tell a story. Instead one gets the story as the characters interact and live out their own experiences on stage (Ibid).

Burkhanov (2004: 404) is of the opinion that a play- hence its translation- is an aesthetic product of a dual nature. On the one hand, a dramatic text is a piece of literary fiction. This means that a play text can be, and actually is, read as any other literary work and should be evaluated as such. On the other hand, a dramatic text is a kind of 'raw material' for its staging in the theatre. This implies that a play text, in addition to being a literary work, is a "form of literary composition designed for performance in the theatre (Abrams 1993:48). Thus, a playwright should make a special effort to ensure performability of the resulting text in the process of writing a play.

This orientation of dramatic texts for staging determines a number of specific features of drama differing it as a literary type from other kinds of literary works. The plot, or the dramatic action, forms the plane of content of the play text; whereas its form of expression comprises stage directions, list of characters, and, primarily, verbal interaction between those characters (Burkhanov 2005: 405).

To these, Bassnett adds, that the language in which the play text is written serves as a sign in the network of what the semiotician, Tadeuz Kowzan calls "auditive and visual signs (See Bassnett in Hermans 1985:87-89). And since the play text is written for voices, the dramatic text contains also a set of paralinguistic systems, where pitch, intonation, speed of delivery, accent, etc., are all signifiers. In addition, the play text contains within it the undertext or what is called the gestural text that determines the movements an actor speaking that text can make. So it is not only the context but also the 'coded gestural patterning' within the language itself that contributes to the actor's work, and the translator who ignores all systems outside the purely literary is running serious risks (ibid.). This emphasis on the performability of the theatre text and the presence of gestural undertext form the cornerstone in Basnett's attitude towards translating theatre texts in the early 1980s.

3- Translation and the Dramatic Text:

In many ways, Gounaridou (2001:1) believes that translation falls within the larger framework of representation and mimesis. In the same vein, Zatlin (2005: 3) rightly observes that in making the adjustments to a dramatic text, translators are not alone in adapting and interpreting their source. From the perspective of theatre practitioners, staging a play always involves translation of many kinds. In this context, Reba Gostand notes

> Drama, as an art-form, is a constant process of translation: from original concept to script, to producer/director's interpretation, to contribution by designer and actor/actress, to visual and/or aural images to audience response…there may be a number of subsidiary processes of translation at work (qtd. in ibid.: 3-4).

With respect to the tendency of considering the staging of play as mere translation, Anne Ubersfled was more specific. She believes that one result of the supremacy of the literary text has been the perception of performance as merely a 'translation' (qtd. in Bassnett 1991: 120)

> The task of the director, therefore, is to 'translate into another language' a text to which he has a prime duty to remain 'faithful'. This position is based on the concept of semantic equivalence between the written text and its performance; only the mode of expression will be altered…the form and content of the expression will remain identical when transferred from a system of text signs to a system of performance signs (ibid.:120-121).

The danger with such an attitude is immediately obvious. The pre-eminence of the written text leads to an assumption that there is a single right way of reading and hence performing the theatre text, in which case the translator is bound more rigidly to a preconceived model than is the translator of poetry or prose texts. As a result, Ubersfled explains, any deviation by director or translator can be subjected to a value judgment that will assess both 'translations' as more or less deviant from the correct norm (ibid.:121).

Ubersfled, furthermore, is of the opinion that the linguistic system is only one of a set of interrelated systems that comprise the spectacle (ibid.: 5). In *Reading the Theatre* (1978), she categorically calls attention to two important points. The first point is related to her belief that any notion of theatre must see written texts as indissolubly linked to their performance; and the second to her opinion that the written text is a text troué, full of gaps in that it can not be separated from the 'synchronic signs' of its realization (Marinetti 2004: 31). From this perspective, the linguistic element of the play text is only one of the semiotic systems that make up the theatrical event and its very existence relies on its relationship with the other systems (ibid.). Starting with the premise that

theatre consists of the interdependent and dialectical relationship between the written text and performance, Ubersfled points out how an artificial distinction between the two has led to the priortisation of the written/verbal text over the other sign systems that constitute the theatrical event (Bassnett 1991: 120). This situation also leads to a criticism of any one who appears to offend the purity of the written text (ibid.: 121).

3.1: Developments in the History of Theatre Translation:

Instead of focusing exclusively on the written text in translating theatre texts which dominated theatre studies since Aristotle, most of the theoretical works of the theatre semioticians of the Prague School in the 1930s suggest a different approach; namely, to focus on the interrelationship between written text and performance (Marinettti 2004: 32). Though they offer different approaches to the study of theatre, the Prague School theatre semioticians all agree that the dramatic/written text is only one optional system among other interrelated systems that comprise the theatrical spectacle and see it as radically conditioned by its performability (Nikolarea 2003:6). This attitude towards the dramatic text in theatre semiotics has not only opened new perspectives in drama studies and theatrical practice but also had a great impact on the field of translation studies. The challenging notion of performability, especially, has led some theoreticians of translation studies to reexamine their position towards translating theatre texts (ibid.: 6).

In this respect, the publication of Otakar Zich's "The Aesthetic of the Art of Drama," and Jan Mukarovsky's "An Attempted Structural Analysis of the Phenomenon of the Actor,"(1931) was of prime importance to the development of theatre studies. These two pioneering studies were instrumental in radically changing the prospects for the scientific analysis of theatre and drama. In his study, Zich claimed that theatre consists of heterogeneous but interdependent systems, none of which has special prominence. He was the first among theatre semioticians to deny the written text any automatic dominance over other systems; instead, he saw it as just one of the systems that participate in the making up of the total dramatic representation (Kier 1980:6).

Applying to art the Saussurian definition of the sign, Mukarovsky took the stance that a work of art resides in the collective consciousness of the public and identified it- in this case the theatrical performance in its entirety- as the semiotic unit whose signifier is the 'work' itself and the signified the 'aesthetic object' (ibid.:7). For Mukarovsky, this application represents the first step towards a semiotic of performance, in which the "performance text becomes a macro-sign whose meaning is constituted by its total effect."(Nikolarea 2003: 2) This approach is important for the seiomtic of theatre and drama for two different but closely related reasons. First, it emphasizes the subordination of all constituents to a unified whole and the importance of the audience as the maker of meaning of this whole. Second, it views the performance not as a single sign,

but as a network of semiotic units belonging to different but cooperative systems (ibid.).

In *Literature and Spectacle* (1975), Kowzan reasserts the basic Prague School principles and endeavors to establish a typology of theatrical signs and sign systems (Nikolarea: 3). He provides a preliminary and approximate typology of thirteen systems. However, he admits that "a much more detailed classification could be made"(Kier: 50). He lists language, tone, facial mime, gesture, movement, makeup, hairstyle, costume, props, décor, lighting, music and sound effects (ibid.). Noteworthy here is Kowzan's belief, in contradistinction to Ubersfled, that written text can function outside the theatrical system and the theatrical system can function without written texts.

Bassnett's work on theatre translation falls into two phases. In the first phase, Bassnett closely follows the tendencies in the semiotic of theatre as well as Kowzan's discussion of the extralinguistic and paralinguistic dimensions of the written text, thus asserting the impossibility of separating the written text from its performance because theatre is constituted by the dialectical relationship between these two components (Nikolarea: 6-7). Drawing on the works of the Italian semiotician Marcello Pagnini who advocated the idea of a 'grammar of performance' embedded in the text, Bassnett developed the concept of "gestural understructure," as a sort of blueprint of an 'ideal' performance which the translator was to recognize in the source text, decode and recode in the target text (Marinetti: 32).

In the second phase of her work on theatre and translation, Bassnett's position changed drastically. She gradually moves away from the structural idea of 'gestic subtext,' and argues that it is impossible for a translator to deduce any 'gestural understructure' from the source text, on the grounds that there can not be one single 'grammar of performance' embedded in a text when there are as many potential translations of the text as there are different readings (Marinetti: 33). Moreover, Bassnett recognizes the limits of the concept of 'gestic subtext' for the translator. She explains

> What is left for the translator to do is to engage specifically with the signs of the text: to wrestle with the linguistic units, the speech rhythms, the pauses and silences, the shifts of tone or of register, the problems of intonation patterns; in short, the linguistic and paralinguistic aspects of the written text that are decodable and reencodable (qtd in ibid.).

So, since the written text is only one element of an eventual performance, it follows that the task of integrating the written with the other sign systems that constitute the theatrical event is not the translator's but the director's and the playwright's (ibid.).

In addition to disregarding the 'gestic subtext,' Bassnett condemns the concept of performability calling it "a very vexed term."(Nikolarea:8) In her article, "Ways through the Labyrinth: Strategies and Methods for Translating Theatre Texts," She dismissed it as the "implicit, undefined and undefinable quality of a theatre text that so many translators latch on to as a justification for their various linguistic strategies." (ibid.) Performability has been variously used by translators to justify substantial variation in the target text, including cuts and additions and to escape from the servant-master relationship to the written text and to exercise greater liberties with the written text than naturalist conventions allowed.

The most surprising aspect of "Ways through the Labyrinth" might be Bassnett's concluding remarks:

> It seems to me that the time has come to set aside "performability" as a criterion for translating, and to focus more closely on the linguistic structures of the text itself. For, after all, it is only within the written that the performable can be encoded and there are infinite performance decodings in any play text. The written text, troué though it may be, is the raw material on which the translator has to work and it is with the written text, rather than with a hypothetical performance, that the translator must begin (qtd. in Hermans 1985: 102).

To sum up, the 1980s and 1990s approaches of theatre translation were polarized between two extremes: that of performability approach (mise en scene) and that of readability approach (written text)[2]. In his article "Problems of Translation for the Stage: Intercultural and Post-Modern Theatre,"(1989) Patrice Pavis claimed that translation for the stage goes beyond the interlingual translation of the dramatic text; he advocated that "a real translation takes place on the level of the mise en scene as a whole." (ibid.) He also postulates the existence of two separate entities with two different semiotic systems, the mise en scene and mise en signe, which are not interdependent but simultaneous, thus avoiding the risk of prioritization of one element over the other (Marinetti: 32).

3-2: The Theatre Translator:

In the light of this heated debate over the best method to translate a dramatic text, the theatre translator has to choose between the criterion of performability and the criterion of the function of the text itself; or he/she may opt for mixing both. As for performability, Bassnett describes in detail the importance of this concept and its implications for theatre translation. On the one hand, performability implies a distinction between the idea of the written text and the physical aspect of its performance, and, on the other hand, it presupposes that the theatre text contains within its structure some features that make it performable, i.e., a coded gestural patterning. Consequently, the

translator must determine which structures are performable and translate them into the target language (Nikolarea: 7). This, of course, is something different from what the translator of other types of texts does.

The continual change in the concept of performability is another aspect which the translator of theatre texts faces (ibid.). It is a well-known fact that since performance is determined by the various developments in acting style, playing space, the role of audience, the altered concepts of theatre and the national contexts, the translator has to consider time and space as variables in the changing concept of performance. A central consideration for the theatre translator, therefore, must be the performance text and its relationship to contemporary audience (Bassnett: 132). In fact, the presence of the audience indicates that the function of theatre transcends the strictly linguistic level-found in other types of texts-and reveals the public dimension of the challenges a theatre translator faces when attempting to achieve an effect: "The translator must take into account the function of the text as an element for and of performance." (ibid)

3-3: The Translator as a Dramatist:

It has been customary since the early stage of theatre studies to question the autonomy of the translator who was usually considered as no more than "a monkey, with no choice save to make the same grimaces as his master."(Leppihalme in Karoubi 2000: 1) However, in the last three decades and under the influence of poststructuralism and functionalism, the focus of the attention has been shifted to the issue of translator's agency and subjectivity, and the notions of originality and the original author's superiority over translator have been severely questioned (ibid.). Alvarez and Vidal (1996: 2) suggest that a translator can be "the authority who manipulates the culture, politics, literature and their acceptance in the target culture." A translator does have an authority over his work- the TL text- as long as he determines the implicit meanings of the final version, since then he will be having a kind of authority over the work he is involved in (ibid: 4).

Realizing the role a translator performs in translating and the efforts that he makes to produce the TL version, Sir John Denham argues for a concept of translation that sees the translator and the original writer as "equals but operating in clearly differentiated social and temporal contexts."(Bassnett 1991: 59)

While poststructuralism seeks to dethrone the author and his authorial intention by emphasizing the role of the translator as an autonomous reader of the source text, Functionalism tries to dethrone the source text itself by emphasizing the role of the translator as a creator of the target text (Karoubi 3). Useful here is Aaltonen's application of Lefevere's concept of 'rewriting' to the theatre system. The notion of rewriting, like the literary system, is an artificial

construct where texts are objects that are read and rewritten by human agents, i.e, translators (in Marnetti: 33).

Moreover, Corrigan affirmed that theatrical translators, like dramatists, must know how writing for the theatre differs from literature and must be trained in the practice of theatre: "Without such training the tendency will be to translate words and their meanings. This practice will never produce performable translations, and that is, after all, the purpose of doing the job in the first place (Zatlin: 2-3). Similarly, Rick Hite advised theatrical translators to become actors and listen to their work so that they may perceive "the problems of translating from spoken text to spoken text" and "becomes more sensitive to the vocal idiosyncrasies of both languages, of their inherent rhythms, patterns, and stress."(ibid.: 3)

Zuber affirms that translators, like playwrights, should write for actors, not for readers. In an ideal arrangement, "the translator's manuscript would first be tried out on the stage and discussed and changed in rehearsals, and only then published for future performance-or for readers." (ibid.: 4) Because the required transformation from page to stage is complex, most experienced theatrical translators wish to be involved in the dynamics of rehearsals, standing in as the author's surrogate. But far too frequently, the translator is shunted aside.

This emphasis on the performance aspect of the written text and its relationship to audience gives rise to a serious problem, namely, the plurality of readings in the translation of the dramatic texts. Sirkku Aaltonen believes that texts do not have fixed readings and that every reading of a text generates a new text (In Marinetti: 33). Aaltonen sees theatre texts as apartments, spaces to be occupied and manipulated for periods of time by different tenants. This is particularly true of the theatre world, where, for every performance of a text, several different readings of the same text are required. According to Bassnett, there are six types of readings; namely, the post performance reading, the director's, the actor's, the designer's, plus the dramaturgical reading and the rehearsal reading (in ibid.: 41)

As for Aaltonen, he believes

> Playwrights, translators, stage directors, dress and set designers, sound and light technicians as well as actors all contribute to the creation of theatre texts when they move into them and make them their own (ibid.: 33).

Bassnett, as it has been already stated, attacks performability and draws attention to the tendency of theatre translators to hide behind ' performability' whenever they feel the need to justify radical changes of the source text. She believes that the task of integrating the written with the other sign systems that constitute the theatrical event is not the translator's but the director's and the playwright's.

3-4: The Problems of Translating Theatre Texts:

In theatre text translation, there are two types of problems. The first type is common in the translation of theatre texts as well as the translation of other types of literary productions. In "Practical Approaches to Translating Theatre", Zatlin lists some of the problems of theatre translation (See Zatlin 2005: 67). They are (1) investigating copyrights and acquiring permission before deciding to translate a play. In addition to securing rights to translate, it is important to (2) identify the appropriate version of the text (ibid.: 67).

(3)The choice of the translated text: There are many factors that determine the choice of the source text. It is chosen for a certain purpose and the guidelines of translation are defined to serve this purpose by the translator and/or by those who initiate the translating activity. In fact, most translation projects are initiated by an actor of the domestic culture such as state ideology, cultural climate, the expectation of the target audience, economic and social reasons, etc (Aksoy2002: 4-5). Almost always the translated source texts in Iraq are selected by the translators themselves and the main factors in this selection is personal taste and the familiarity of the authors of the source text.

(4)There is another problem which the translator faces; namely, the lack of institutional framework within which the translations are produced (Lefevere: 1992:135). The position of translation as a literary activity in Iraq is a case in point. Neither the government nor the Ministry of Culture has a role in channeling the efforts of the translators into an institutionalized project on a national scale.

(5)There is also the problem of cultural differences. As Alan Thomas says, "It is evident that cultural borders, as much as language, form barriers to good translation." (Zatlin.: 9). Pavis similarly observes: "We can not simply translate a text linguistically; rather we confront and communicate heterogeneous cultures and situations of enunciation that are separated in space and time (ibid.). Moreover, Eugene Nida believes that "differences between cultures may cause more severe complications for the translator than do differences in language structure."(In Kate James 2000: 2)

The second type of problems encountered by the translator is related to the theatre text as a text of a special nature. As it is explained earlier in this paper, the theatre text should be read differently (Xu: 8- 9). It can not be treated as a purely literary text, since the consideration of style and register of language is made more complex by the acting style and theatrical performance. Moreover, the meaning of words and sentences can change in the light of speech rhythm, tone and intonation, which may be indicated or merely implied in the text (Lai qtd. in ibid: 9).

As Bassnett points out, the written text is a functional component in the total process that comprises theatre and is characterized in ways that distinguish

it from a written text designed to be read in its own right. She stresses the theatrical aspect of drama, and argues:

> A theatre text, written with a view to its performance, contains distinguishable structural features that make it performable, beyond the stage directions themselves. Consequently the task of the translator must be to determine what those structures are and to translate them into the target language, even though this may lead to major shifts on the linguistic and stylistic planes (In Bassnett,122- 123).

This is why a detailed structural analysis is necessary in translating process. If a translator has a better understanding of the structure, many problems can be avoided from the beginning. It is noteworthy that various parts of the play text vary with respect to their translatability. For instance, in most cases stage directions as a part of play text do not cause special problems in the process of translation. Stage directions are the playwright's descriptions or commentaries (Burkhanov: 408) explicating the setting or dramatic personae's emotional states and peculiarities of behavior. There are also stage directions indicating "stage business," i.e., physical actions or movements performed by a character, intended to establish appropriate atmosphere, reveal his or her state of mind or explain a situation. Burkhanov believes that it is "the instances of dramatic speech forming the verbal exchanges between the characters that need the translator's ultimate attention and effort." (ibid.)

Unlike the conversational style in the other literary types, the dialogue in the theatre text is of special nature. The characteristics of this theatrical dialogue such as rhythm, intonation, patterns, pitch and loudness may not be immediately apparent from the straightforward reading of the written text in isolation. Robert Corrigan, in a rare article on translating for actors, argues that at all times, the translator must hear the voice that speaks and take into account the 'gesture' of the language, the cadence rhythm, and pauses that occur when the written text is spoken (Bassnett : 122). In line with this, Pavis (2005: 219) believes that the words spoken by the actor (or any other kind of stage utterance) must be "analyzed in the way they are concretely stated on stage, colored by the voice of the actor, and the interpretation of the scene, and not in the way we would analyze them if we had read the written text."

The nature of the relationship between the written text and its audience is another problem the translators of the theatre texts face. In this regard, Ortrun Zuber succinctly observes, "a play is dependent on the immediacy of its impact on the audience." (qtd. in Zatlin : 1) Unlike the readers of the translated novels, spectators in the theatre must grasp immediately the sense of the dialogue. In this respect, Clifford Landers correctly states: "Even style, which is by no means unimportant in dramatic translation, sometimes must yield to the reality that

actors have to be able to deliver the lines in a convincing and natural manner (ibid.).

Pavis has his own approach to theatre translation problems. In his article, "Problems of Translation for the Stage: Intercultural and Post-Modern Theatre," he mentions four problems peculiar to the translation for the stage. They are: the intersection of situations of enunciations; the series of concretization of a theatre text; the conditions of theatre translation reception; and, the mise en scene of a translation (Nikolarea: 9).

Dealing with the first problem, Pavis maintains that there are two situations of enunciation: that which belongs exclusively to either the source or target culture, or that which is a mixture of the two. Pavis tends to believe that the translator and his translation are both situated at the intersection of sets of enunciation of differing degrees, a situation that is a mixture of both source and target cultures. For him, the translated text always consists partly of source text and partly of target text and target culture because any transfer involves the multiple dimensions of the source text adapted to the target text and target culture (ibid.) Furthermore, Pavis holds that the theatre translation is a hermeneutic act, since its main purpose is to pull the source text towards the target language and culture, separating it from its source and origin (ibid.: 10).

3-5: Theatre Text Translation Strategies:

In order to overcome these problems, the translator employs a number of strategies. According to Bassnett, there are five types of drama translation strategies; namely, treating the theatre text as a literary text; using the source language cultural context as a frame text; translating performability; creating source language verse drama in alternative forms, and finally, cooperative translation, i.e., between the translator and the author (In Hermans 90-91).

To this Aaltonen adds other kinds of strategies used by translators to bring source text in line with the theatrical conventions of the target system. These strategies are described as 'acculturation' and 'neutralization' (Marinetti 33). In the theatre system, the degree of acculturation needed for a text to be accepted in the target canon tends to be higher than in the other literary systems. Aaltonen explains this by arguing that if the play text is seen as one of the elements that constitute the theatrical event, it is impossible to avoid a certain degree of acculturation in translation, and she adds that due to the very nature of the medium of theatre, the manipulation of the original is more visible here than elsewhere (ibid.). Romy Heylen, on the other hand, sees the acculturation of the play text in terms of degree. He talks

> about a descending 'scale of acculturation' that goes from
> the so-called 'foreignized' texts, where no attempt is made
> to acculturate the source text, through various stages of
> 'negotiation,' up to a complete acculturation, where
> problematic elements of the source texts are normalized

and domesticated to suit audience expectation and the constraints of the receiving theatre system (Ibid 33-34).

Before adopting any of these strategies, Lai Chichun asserts, the translator should ask himself what kind of translation he wants to produce. This not only includes a choice between producing a reading text or a text for performance, but also one between "bringing the reader to the source text or bring the source text to the reader."(qtd. in Xu:10). Such a choice entails an attitude towards the source text, ranging from mere 'translation' defined as "a faithful literary rendering of the source text into another language" (J. C. Santoyo in Zatlin: 2005: 79), to 'adaptation' that has been used "to disguise all manners of unacceptable textual and stage manipulation" (ibid.), to a drastic rewriting of the text which might be called a "version" that takes performance requirements into account." (ibid.)

Adaptations, even ones that involve few textual changes may radically alter the underlying meaning of a play. J. C. Santoyo states that adaptation may propose to naturalize or domesticate the text in order to achieve an equivalent impact on the target audience (ibid.). According to Terry Hale and Carole-Anne Upton, the 'dilemma over foreignization or domestication of the text is one shared by all literary translators, although the decision to relocate is arguably more consequential with a text for performance than with a text intended to be read privately (qtd. in Zatlin 2005 :79).

Adaptation is a frequent strategy that takes many forms. Franz H. Link mentions altering stage directions so that a play may be performed in a different kind of theatre; for example, staging a Greek tragedy in a modern playhouse is a kind of adaptation (ibid. 80). To some extent, all staging of the plays, whether or not they are translations, involve adaptation to new circumstances as P. Bohem observes (ibid.: 80).

As for the strategies used to solve the theatre text translation from English into Arabic, they are broadly of two types. The translators opt for two main strategies. They are (1) to treat the theatre text as a literary text and (2) to adapt it. In his translation of Wlliam Shakespeare's Hamlet, Jabra Abraheem Jabra chooses to treat the play as a literary text. He is mainly after achieving the linguistic equivalence. Jabra leaves the task of integrating the written text with the other sign systems that contribute to the theatrical event to the target language director and playwright. The following two examples explain this:

Hamlet: Not this, by no means, that I bid you do;

Let the bloat King tempt you again to bed;

Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;

And let him for a pair of reechy kisses,

Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,

Make you to ravel all this matter out,

That I essentially am not in madness,

But mad in craft. (Act 4, Sc. 3: 245)

هاملت: لا الذي أمرتك بفعله قط.
دعي الملك المنتفخ يغريك ثانية بالفراش
ويقرص خدك ماجناً ويدعوك عصفورته،
وعيه لقاء قبلتين سخماوين
او دعابتين لعنقك من اصابعه الكريهة
يجعلك تفضين بأمري هذا كله
من انني ما فقدت عقلي اصلاً
بل انني مجنون حيلةً وخديعةً. (الفصل الثالث المشهد الرابع: ١٤٤ـ١٤٥)

Hamlet: A murderer and a villain!
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole
And put it in his pocket!
…………………………
A King of shreds and patches-
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings (Act3, Sc.4: 237-239).

هاملت: قاتل، ووغد.
عبد ليس بعشر معشار
سيدك السابق. اضحوكة لا ملك،
لص من لصوص السؤود والحكم
اختلس من الرف تاجاً غالياً
ودسه في جيبه. (الفصل الثالث، المشهد الرابع:١٤٠ـ١٤١)

Meanwhile, in his translation of the same play, Gazi Jamal opts for the performability approach which allows him to make substantial variation in the target text, including cuts and additions and to exercise a greater liberty with the written text. In fact, he makes several changes in the stage direction. He also cuts the number of the scenes in the third act. Instead of four scenes, he translates two scenes only.

4-Conclusions Translation is an act that ensures the life and survival of the original text. It "injects new life blood into texts," as Alvarez and Vidal point out, and brings it to the attention of a new world of readers; those of the target language. In the light of the development in the translation studies and under the influence of 'Functionalism,' the position of the translator as a mediator between two cultures witnesses a dramatic change. Instead of viewing the translator as a mere mechanical device replacing linguistic codes from one language into another, the translator and the original writer become "equal but operating in different social and temporal contexts," as John Denham asserts (qtd in Bassnett: 1991: 59). Generally, the translator's objective is indistinguishable with that of the writer. He has to make several assumptions about the target language readership, their familiarity with the topic and the culture.

Commenting on the source and target texts, the American translator Margaret Sayers Peden constructed a complex metaphor out of an ice cube:

> I like to think of the original work as an ice cube. During the process of translation the cube is melted. While in its liquid state, every molecule changes place; none remains in its original relationship to the others. The process of forming the work in a second language begins here. Molecules escape, new molecules are poured in to fill the spaces, but the lines of molding and mending are virtually invisible. The work exists in the second language as a new ice cube--different, but to all appearances the same (Zatlin: 31).

Finally, to the question, "What advice do you have for aspiring theatrical translators who wish to get stated in the field?" The majority of the respondents gave the same basic answer. "First get involved in the theatre. Learn to act, make friends with theatre people or at least visit a local theatre and talk to literary managers, directors, actors, or theatre critics."(ibid)

End Notes

[1]There has been a great change in the field of theatre translation over the last twenty years. Unfortunately, the unavailability of sources in this field was a big obstacle in the way of informing this paper.

[2]The term "mise-en-scène" developed in the theater, where it literally meant "put into the scene" and referred to the design and direction of the entire production, or, as "metteur-en-scène," to the director's work (www.wikipedia.com). As for the two approaches, the first simply means that the translator should take into consideration the other theatrical elements besides the linguistic element in hiss translation whereas the second approach means simply treating the theatre text as any other literary text.

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