

Some Notes on Sami Mikhail's Translation of Najīb Maḥfūz's *As-Sukriyyah* into Hebrew

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Abstract

This research aims at addressing the translation of Najīb Maḥfūz's *As-Sukriyyah* by Sami Mikhail into Hebrew. In the research, I will try to make some observations about Mikhail's translation of the novel. The research began with a general introduction to the translation of Arabic literature into Hebrew, and the reason why orientalist in Israel are interested in Arabic literature, especially in Najīb Maḥfūz's literature, with the view of understanding the nature of the Arab society. The research also examines the translation of *As-Sukriyyah* to Hebrew. It focused on some of the problems and confusions that Mikhail created in his translation of the novel; these confusions are: the translation of the title, the Arabic names, his lack of methodology in unifying the translation of some words, his neglect of punctuation, and his deletion of some Arabic words, changing of some utterances to some meanings in such a way that was different from the meaning that Maḥfūz wanted. Despite the great effort sought by Mikhail in translating the novel, the translated work was flooded with several lapses that influenced the meaning. If Mikhail had given more attention to his work, the translation would have been more accurate and corresponding with the meaning envisaged by Maḥfūz.

Keywords

Najīb Maḥfūz, Sami Mikhail, *As-Sukriyyah*, Translation, Literature

1. Introduction

Many countries have tended to rely on literature as a means of revealing the nature of societies. Perhaps the most prominent contemporary attempt in this context is what the United States of America did to study Japanese literature during World War II (1939-1945). Because the United States of America did not

know the Japanese reality, (as Japan had entered the war next to Germany in what was known as the “Axis Countries” while the United States of America supported Britain and France, in what was known as the “Allied States”), and as a result of literary studies carried out by American researchers, the United States of America was able to reveal many aspects of Japanese society. Eventually, the Japanese towns of Hiroshima and Nagasaki ended up being wrecked by a nuclear bomb for the first time in history. The United States of America was also interested in studying the reality of the Soviets during Stalin’s rule to reveal aspects of this reality (Ibrahim Al-Bahrawi, 1981: pp. 8-9).

Israel has followed the same path, and so has been interested in studying the Arab personality, and the reality in which it lives so that it can determine the dimensions, characteristics, and uniqueness of that personality. The Arabic literature was one of the important foundations on which orientalists in Israel relied to reveal the reality of Arab society, and they moved in this context through two aspects: first, they have studied the Arabic literature with its various genres to expose the nature of Arab society; second, they have translated Arabic literature into Hebrew to help the Israeli reader understand the ideas and issues that expose the nature of Arab reality.

2. Israel and Najīb Maḥfūz’s Literature

Israel paid special attention to Arabic literature being one of the significant centers that helps to understand the nature of Arab society and the translation of such literature was one of Israel’s means of doing so.

Because of Najīb Maḥfūz’s Arab and international literary prestige, Israel has translated quite a few of his literary works, and *Al-Sukriyyah* “*Sugar Street*” (1957) is one of these works, which was translated by the Israeli-Iraqi writer Sami Mikhail, who also translated *Palace Walk* and *Palace of Desire*, i.e. he translated the trilogy. Israel’s interest in Arabic literature in general, and in Najīb Maḥfūz’s literature in particular, both in terms of study and translation, is due to a number of reasons, the most important of which are:

- 1) Najīb Maḥfūz, born in 1911 in Cairo, is one of the most important Arab writers, both in terms of how much literature he produces, and in terms of how this production is exposed to different stages of Egyptian history and the reality of this history, and, in consequence, Egyptian society.

- 2) Maḥfūz is one of the greatest Egyptian and Arab writers who attained wide international fame in modern times. He has gained popularity beyond the borders of Egypt and the Arab world, and his works have received great and growing attention from foreign researchers in the fields of Arab literature and Egyptian society. He has been known since the 1950s for his realistic and symbolic writings.

- 3) Maḥfūz has a clear vision of society and its rulers, and that if every era in Egypt has its own pyramid, and if every high-profile figure has created behind it a monument to later generations, the pyramid that Maḥfūz left behind him is his

novels, and he is metaphorically the sphinx at the pyramid's feet. Maḥfūz is also the Egyptian writer who placed all Egypt's leaders during this century within his own pyramid. His novels tell the history of ancient Egypt, and its history in the modern era.

4) In his writings, Maḥfūz called for full-time reform of the cultural conditions of the Arab world so that Arabs would not return to the life of nomadism after the current oil wealth runs out.

5) Maḥfūz has received the attention of Israeli scholars and critics for many years, because he has made the Arabic novel a key pillar of Arabic literature. The late Professor Sasson Somekh (1933-18 August 2019) was an Israeli academic, writer and translator, the former head of the Department of Arabic Literature at Tel Aviv University, and the prominent leader of those who have taken an interest in Maḥfūz's literature. His interest is manifested in the great bulk of research Somekh has done on him. Among his most important books about Maḥfūz are: *Maḥfūz's Universe*, and *Three Chapters of Najīb Maḥfūz's Literature*.

Najīb Maḥfūz adopted a different view from the Arab world's towards Israelis and the Jews. Israel is present in its internal consciousness not as a fearsome ogre, but as a means of identifying the positions of his opponents (Mohammed Mahmoud Abu Ghadir, 1998: pp. 58-59). Because of his position towards Israel, *Najīb Maḥfūz* was severely attacked, as no other Arab writer had ever been attacked. Indeed, he had a firm view of finding another way to deal with it other than wars. Interestingly, *Najīb Maḥfūz* announced his position after the June 1967 defeat (Najīb Maḥfūz, 1996: p. 71).

As a result, Maḥfūz was banned from writing in 1973. Worse, the dramas adapted from his novels on state television were also forbidden after he signed a petition with a number of Egyptian intellectuals that expressed their displeasure with the state of non-peace and non-war that prevailed, and demanded that Sadat, the Egyptian president, make an urgent decision in this regard. Commenting on the attacks he was subjected to at the time, Maḥfūz said,

It was a really painful attack because it was about my own national honour; when I express a political opinion, I expect someone to tell me 'You have done well,' and ten others to say to me, 'You misbehaved,' or to be told, 'Avoid politics and remain in your field of literature!' All of this is acceptable to me, but I call for peace and negotiation and I am told that I am an Israeli agent! (Ibid)

But when Maḥfūz calls for this reform, he does not fear for Arab societies, and for Arab culture, because it is rooted in the deep past, and it is the worthiest of cultural sovereignty over the Middle East region. He says about this, "Egypt is not poor in culture or lost so as to fear other cultures. Since 7,000 years ago it has produced culture and the arts in the best way possible" (Ibid.)

3. Second: Maḥfūz's Hebrew-Translated Novels

Israel translated ten novels by Maḥfūz into Hebrew, and these are:

1) *Midaq Alley* (1947), translated into Hebrew by Isaac Shenboim in 1969, and it was published by 'Am Ovaïd, a public publishing house.

2) *The Thief and Dogs*, which was translated into Hebrew by Menachem Ky-lebok in 1970, and was published by Sefriyat Bo'alim.

3) *Love in the Rain* (1973), which was translated into Hebrew by Yoab Jaffani, and was published by Tamouz in 1976.

4) *The Beggar*, which was translated into Hebrew by Hagita Brenner, and it was published by the Bebrus Publishing House in 1978.

5) *Palace Walk* (1956), (*Cairo Trilogy*, Part 1), which was translated into Hebrew by Sami Mikhail and published by the publishing house of Sefriyat Bo'alim in 1981.

6) *Adrift on the Nile* (1966), which was translated into Hebrew by Mikhail Saila', and it was published by Ketter Publishing in 1982.

7) *Miramar* (1967), which was translated into Hebrew by Isaac Shinopum, and was published by Tamouz Publishing House in 1983.

8) *Palace of Desire* (1957), (*Cairo Trilogy*, Part 2), which was translated into Hebrew by Sami Mikhail, and was published by the Publishing House of Sefriyat Bo'alim in 1984.

9) *Sugar Street* (1957), (*Cairo Trilogy*, Part 3), which was translated into Hebrew by Sami Mikhail and was published in 1987, by Sefriyat Bo'alim.

10) *Children of Gebelawi* (1959), which was translated into Hebrew by David Sageev, and was published in 1990 by La'Am, publishing house (*Abu Ghadir*, 1998: p. 73).

4. Third: Najīb Maḥfūz and the Trilogy

Maḥfūz's trilogy, *Palace of Desire*, *Palace Walk*, and *Sugar Street*, is regraded the most significant novel of Arabic literature in general, and Maḥfūz's novels in particular.

Because the trilogy deals with an important period of time in Egypt's history, the period of English occupation of Egypt, and the Egyptian resistance to it, not to mention the fact it is considered as a new narrative form in Arabic literature that is rare among writers. The trilogy is known as the "Generational Novel" – which appeared in international literature at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries (*Naji Najīb*, 1982: pp. 18-19). The generations in the novel are the true heroes of the trilogy, which is exposed to three generations in one family: *Palace Walk* involves the period from 1917 to 1919, *Palace of Desire* (1957) covers the period from 1924-1927, while *Sugar Street* (1957) encompasses the period from 1935-1944 (*Ghali Shukri*, 1988: p. 49).

According to Najīb Maḥfūz, the trilogy took him four years to write it, and the work was marked by successive interruptions, but eventually he finished writing in April 1952 and published it in 1956-1957. Reminiscing on the experience, Maḥfūz said "The writing of the trilogy has had successive interruptions due to my work in inspection at the Ministry of Endowments, and it took me four years

to work between thinking and writing” (Fatimah Musa, 1999: p. 133). If the novel *Palace Walk* depicts the generation of fathers embodied in Mr. Ahmed Abdul Jawad, and his wife Amina, the novel *Palace of Desire* symbolizes the generation of children represented by Kamal Abdul Jawad, while *Sugar Street* exemplifies the generation of grandchildren represented by Radwan ibn Yassin, his first wife, Abdel Moneim and Ahmed Shaukat, the sons Khadija.

5. Translating the Novel *Sugar Street (Sukriyyah)* into Hebrew

Najīb Maḥfūz’s *Al-Sukriyyah* was translated as mentioned earlier by the Israeli-Iraqi writer Sami Mikhail, who was born in Baghdad in 1926 and emigrated to Palestine in 1948. Mikhail also translated the novels, *Palace Walk* and *Palace of Desire*, i.e. he translated the whole trilogy into Hebrew. Undoubtedly, the most important features of the translator should be his excellent command of both his native language and the foreign language from which he translates. Indeed, Sami Mikhail was skilled at Arabic owing to his upbringing and early life in Iraq, and he had good knowledge of Hebrew, the language which he knew well by virtue of his Judaism, and which became his official language after his migration from Iraq. Nonetheless, his translations were not accurate in some places. For the sake of this research, I will focus my notes on *Sukriyyah* and examine the following points: The title, translations of names, inaccuracies in the translation of time, confusions between singular and plural, not standardizing word translation, negligence of marginal clauses, negligence of punctuations, deletions, and changing the meaning.

5.1. The Title

Sami Mikhail did not translate the title of the novel as it is, but he changed it and called it *Home in Cairo*. Moreover, he added a subtitle, which is “The Cairo Trilogy, Part C, Third generation.” The title chosen by the author has a lot of indications and tells a lot about the author’s message and the content of the novel. Put differently, since the title here reveals the novel’s identity, especially it refers to a place, “Sukriyyah,” one of Cairo’s old neighborhoods, it should have been kept as it is.

Maḥfūz considered the name of the place as evidence to determine the area of events in each part of the trilogy *Palace Walk*, *Palace of Desire*, and then *Sukriyyah*, (*Sugar Street*). Al-Azhar neighborhood is still the home of the characters in the novel (Maḥfūz, n.d.: p. 97). Even when the name of “Sukriyyah” was mentioned in the book, Sami Mikhail did not translate it in its correct pronunciation, but translated it as “Al-Sakriyyah” rather than “Al-Sukriyyah” as it is pronounced in Arabic, especially the translator knew Arabic well. In his *Sukriyyah*, Maḥfūz says, “She was encouraged and so she visited *As-Sukriyyah*” (ibid., 23), but Mikhail translated it in Hebrew into “She was encouraged and visited *As-Sakriyyah*” (Maḥfūz, 1987: p. 2). It should be noted that the word has

been mentioned elsewhere (ibid., 87).

5.2. Translation of Names

Sami Mikhail translated Arabic names into Hebrew, and he should not have done so but should have kept them in Arabic as they are. He, for example, translated the magazine, “*Majallat al-Fekr*” (Thought Magazine) to “*Yarhoun Hahagout*,” in Hebrew. Maḥfūz says in his novel, “He wanted to read, at least in the book, ‘*The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*’” by Bergson, and to review a recent round in the monthly article of *Majallat al-Fekr*. But Mikhail translated it into “*Yarhoun Hahagout*.”

The same is found in the translation of the magazine “*The New Man*” (*Insan Jadeed*), where Maḥfūz says in *Sukriyyah* “Finally, Shawkat found the building of the magazine ‘The New Man’” (ibid., 87). However, Mikhail wrote in his translation, “In the end, Ibrahim Shawkat found the building of the new man” (Mikhail 69). Again, Mikhail should have translated the name of the new human magazine as it is, because it is a name that should not be translated.

Even when Mikhail translated the novel *Bayn Al-Qasrayn*, (*Palace Walk*) he did not maintain the original version, but changed the words. Maḥfūz says in “*Sukriyyah* and *Bayn Al-Qasrayn*,” (23) but Mikhail translated the phrase into “*Qasrayn*,” instead of keeping it as it is, especially the phrase refers to proper nouns. As a matter of fact, it is a name of a place in ancient Cairo used by Maḥfūz to convey the events of the first part of the trilogy just as he did with the other two parts *Qasr As-Shawq* and *Sukriyyah*.

He also changed the translation of the name “Sheikh Mitwalli Abdul Samad.” Maḥfūz says in *Sukriyyah* “Sheikh Mitwalli Abdul Samad” (Maḥfūz, 21), but Mikhail endorsed “The Sheikh al-Mitwalli Abdul Samad” (Micahel, 21), instead. Clearly, he used the definite article “al” (the) before Mitwalli. Sometimes Mikhail used one name instead of another, which is undoubtedly illogical, because it causes confusion in understanding the meaning for the reader. Maḥfūz says in *Sukriyyah* that “Khadija never believed that she was 36” (Maḥfūz, 36) but Mikhail picked another name for Khadija in addition to other words, thus changing the meaning. He says, “Amina did not believe at all that she was only 36” (Mikhail, 19). Strangely enough, Mikhail at times would translate the meaning of the name, and consequently, his style lacked sequence. He, for example, kept the term “al-Nahhaseen” (Coppersmiths) as it is (Maḥfūz 11) instead of translating its meaning just as he did with other names in the book.

5.3. Inaccuracies in the Translation of Time

Mikhail did not commit himself to the accuracy of the translation of time as stated in the novel *Al-Sukriyyah*. When Maḥfūz mentions time that refers to a certain period of time, he aims at referring to a particular goal. Hence, the translator should have investigated the accuracy of the translation of time. Examples of the above are many in Mikhail’s translation. Maḥfūz says in *Sukriyyah* “And

they got back to silence, and to hear the new voice that was singing” (Maḥfūz 10), but Mikhail wrote in the Hebrew translation, “They drowned again in silence for the singer who sang,” (Mikhail 160). Here Mikhail not only neglected the being verb brought by Maḥfūz in his novel but also adds words of his own, which is undoubtedly a flaw in translation. As Joseph Michal Shrim says,

In the face of a difficult process, such as translation, the translator must play an important role and appeal to all his linguistic, mental and cognitive competencies in civilization as well so that he can convey the text that he is translating accurately and faithfully as much as possible. (Shrim, 1982: p. 42)

Elsewhere in *Sukriyyah*, Maḥfūz says, “He wakes up from his dream” (11). Mikhail, however, wrote, “he was waking up” (11). In other words, he used past continuous instead of present. A similar mistake is made on a different occasion where Maḥfūz says in *Sukriyyah*, “He shows admiration,” (13) but Mikhail translated it using the past instead of the present, saying, “He showed admiration,” (13). Mikhail repeated the same mistake in another place when Maḥfūz says, “He watches the owner of the dress,” (13) but somehow Mikhail changed the tense and the meaning when he wrote, “He examined the girl” (13). Strangely, this phenomenon appeared in different places in Mikhail’s translated manuscript (13-14). Clearly, Mikhail did not adhere to the accuracy of the translation of time, for he unduly changed the tenses. Maḥfūz, for instance, writes “he was like the rest of the people of the house complimenting Aisha in the person of Naima,” (13), but Mikhail translated it into “Like the rest of the house, he expressed sympathy with Aisha through Naima.” Notice the translator here neglected the meaning conveyed by the past continuous tense and translated the tense into the simple past. A few pages afterwards, Maḥfūz writes somewhere else, “He was liking his official work,”(14) but Mikhail changed the words and the tense saying, “He didn’t like his government job” (14), thus failing to recognize the difference in meaning as a result of the two different tenses, let alone the inaccuracy of the words chosen.

5.4. Confusion in Translation between Singular and Plural

Mikhail’s translation did not also take into account the difference between plural and singular. On some occasions, he would use the plural instead of the singular and vice versa, the singular instead of the plural. For instance, Maḥfūz writes in his novel, “The master lifted his head off the notebook,” (16). Mikhail somehow translated it into, “The master lifted his head off the books” (16). The “notebook” in the original novel is translated into “notebooks” in Hebrew, and it is not clear why he pluralized the singular. The same mistake is committed a few pages afterwards. Maḥfūz’s sentence is, “On Friday, the branches returned to the origin.” But it is drastically changed in Mikhail’s translation. It becomes, “On Fridays, all were returning to the rule,” (18). Mikhail gave a blind eye to the tense, grammatical category of nouns and content.

6. Not Standardizing Word Translation

Sami Mikhail did not follow a standardized approach in translating *Al-Sukriyyah*, as he translates the same Arabic word into a different word in Hebrew. The examples abound: he translates, for example, the word “master” (*sayyed* in Arabic) (38) into “husband or owner” (*Ba'al* in Hebrew) (39) and at other times, he translates the same word “master” (*adoun* in Hebrew) (45). The word “rizq,” as we find it, is translated into “money,” one time (13) and into “livelihood,” (13) sometimes else. And “*ahlan*,” in *Sukriyyah* is turned into “welcome,” and is maintained as “*ahlan*,” in Hebrew letters in Mikhail’s translated novel (17).

The difference between the two versions can be more extreme as we shall see in the following example. “Time, Sultana, I have long told you truthfully, but you don’t seem to believe it, Sultana,” Maḥfūz said in *Al-Sukriyyah* (19). However, Mikhail translated it into “Times have changed, singer, and I’m telling you the truth over and over again, and it seems you do not believe it, my lady” (18). With Mikhail, “sultana,” becomes “singer,” and “my lady,” in the same sentence.

7. Negligence of Marginal Clauses

We note through Mikhail’s translation of Maḥfūz’s *Sukriyyah* that he neglected the marginal clauses in many places in the Hebrew translation. Maḥfūz says, for example, “Welcome, (Ahlan Wa-Sahlan in Arabic) then while he points to the seat that Hamzawi angrily vacated” (19). In Mikhail’s translation, Maḥfūz’s extract becomes, “Ahlan Wa-Sahlan; he pointed to the seat that Hamzawi vacated and added: Please” (17). Here, he neglected the marginal clause and confused the marginal with the main meaning when he should have maintained the original meaning and phrasing. Likewise, in the following excerpt, Mikhail paid no attention to the marginal clause: Maḥfūz marks, “This is what awaits you, Master of the generous people! Then ‘in a sad tone,’” (18). In Mikhail’s translated version, the excerpt is phrased, “I expect this from you, Master of the generous people and added afterwards with a sad tone,” (18). Clearly, here, he neglected the fact that the phrase “in a sad tone,” in the original versions serves as a marginal phrase that is not part of the main content and turns it as an integral part of the main content written free from punctuation marks.

8. Negligence of Punctuation Marks

Mikhail did not consider the punctuation marks in the novel very seriously, which is reflected in translating numerous sentences without use of these marks. According to Haridy Mohammad Abdul Latif (1989: p. 147), “The translator’s neglect of transferring punctuation from the original leads to confusion of meaning in the mind of the reader”. Maḥfūz says, for example, in his *Al-Sukriyyah* “How difficult is the stairs!” (11). In Mikhail’s translated novel, the excerpt appears as, “So tough to me to go up on the stairs,” doing away with exclamation marks, which leads to a glitch in meaning. At a different place, Maḥfūz says, “from Farouk Street and back and from Musky and to it” (11). Yet,

Mikhail wrote, “From Farouk’s beginning to the end and to the extension of the Musky) (93). Evidently, the translator disregarded the punctuation marks at the beginning and end of the sentence. Another clear example is discerned when Maḥfūz says somewhere else, “I know my duty!” (45). But, Mikhail translated it as, “I know my duty,” without punctuation marks (93). On a different occasion, Maḥfūz says, “Say my aunts...!” But Mikhail translated it free from punctuation marks.

9. Deletions

Mikhail unjustifiably deleted some Arabic words in his translation of *Al-Sukriyyah* into Hebrew, in harmony with the fact that critics believe it is the right of the translator to delete words from a certain phrase or add words to it in the interests of meaning (Mohammad Abdul Ghani Hasan, 1966: p. 53). The truth is that Mikhail dropped some words in his translation, which influenced the meaning rather than serve it. Maḥfūz says, for example, that, “He rose to pray al-’Asr,” (the afternoon prayer) (35). Mikhail, however, finds it sufficient to say, “He rose to pray” (21) without specifying the time of the prayer, thus producing a flaw in the meaning. It is not clear which prayer he intends. When Maḥfūz defines it is the afternoon prayer, he undoubtedly wishes to convey a certain meaning, because if he wanted to refer to a mere prayer, he would have left it undetermined. The same phenomenon recurs in the subsequent few pages, where Maḥfūz writes, “She was content with Abdul Mon’em and Ahmad and her marital life which was generally successful” (24). Mikhail, however, translates the excerpt with some deletions. He writes, “She was content with Abdel Mon’em and Ahmed and her married life” and dropped two words “generally” and “successful” and undoubtedly the deletion jumbled the meaning.

And on another occasion, Maḥfūz writes, “It’s not just the world that’s changed, but people have changed more,” (19). It was translated by Mikhail “Not only the world has changed, but also the people” (18) and dropped some words from the translation which has influenced the meaning of the writer. In short, this phenomenon has been repeated elsewhere in translation indicating that Mikhail’s manner of deletion was not a mere accident (17, 93).

10. Changing the Meaning

In his book, *The Mayor and the Merits of Poetry: Its Manners and Criticism*, Iben Rashiq Al-Qirwani says, “The word is the body and its soul is the meaning, and their association is as the connection of the soul to the body; each weakens with the other’s weakening and strengthens if the other does” (Al-Qirwani et al., 1963: p. 124). Mikhail does not find this rule interesting and chooses to create his own rules of translation. He translated Maḥfūz’s meanings in a way unlike the meaning the author wanted and the examples are numerous. Maḥfūz, for instance, says in *Sukriyyah* “in one of Ahmed Abdo’s coffee shop rooms” (55), which is translated by Mikhail into “in a compartment in a coffee shop by Ah-

mad Abdo” (25). This is not the meaning intended by Maḥfūz, who did not mean a small room or a compartment in a coffee shop. If he had meant this, he would have written it in his books directly, but Mikhail reformed the import, thus endangering the message desired by the author. Maḥfūz says elsewhere, “No, no, no,” (64), which is translated by Mikhail into “No, no” (47). In so doing, he changes the meaning. When Maḥfūz, repeats the negation article three times, he intends to confirm the meaning. In other words, he does not repeat it in vain.

Another example: Maḥfūz says on subsequent pages, “Welcome Hajj Yassin” (57), which becomes in Mikhail’s translated version, “Good evening, Hajj Yassin” (78). This implies Mikhail changed the time of the event in the novel, and decided it was in the evening, although it was not. In so doing, he affects the original meaning of the author.

These changes were not casual or scarce but numerous (1, 17, 87), which indicates that Mikhail was either indifferent to the meaning intended by the author or simply he was inaccurate and did not think the changes were important or he believed he helped explain the meaning of the author.

11. Conclusion

The conclusions drawn by the study are the following:

1) The Israeli orientalist pay special attention to Arab literature in general, and to Maḥfūz’s literature in particular, being an important source of disclosure of the nature of Arab society in general and Egyptian society in particular.

2) The Israeli orientalist were highly interested in Maḥfūz’s literature owing to the richness of his production, his prestige in the international and Arab literature, as well as his own attitudes towards Israel before and after the October War, for which he was criticized, and even prevented from writing because of them.

3) Mikhail’s translation of *Sukriyyah* was not only inaccurate, as his translation was marred by many mistakes that influenced the meaning that Maḥfūz wanted. He, for example, did not translate the title of the novel accurately, although it is one of the places in ancient Cairo. Not only this, but when the name itself appears inside the novel it was wrongly translated. The same happens with other names of places and people when translated into Hebrew, thus bringing about a defect in the meaning.

4) Mikhail did not adhere to the accuracy of the translation of time. Maḥfūz refers in his novel to a certain time, but Mikhail, as we have seen, is not accurate in translating the time intended by the author. Nor is he accurate when translating the nouns for he stumbles between singular and plural.

5) Mikhail did not pay attention to punctuation marks or marginal sentences, which caused a breakdown in translation.

Mikhail deleted some Arabic words in his translation, which influenced the meaning of the translation, and changed the meaning of some words in his

translation contrary to the meaning of Maḥfūz.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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