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TRANSLATION ANALYSIS OF DAMMAJ’S
THE HOSTAGE

Introduction

From the theoretical point of view, literature can be divided into two types. The first type could be termed as the 'serious literature'. The second one could be labeled as the 'less-serious literature' or 'entertainment based literature'. Both sorts are essential for human beings. These two kinds are different in their function. The first one, for example, basically deals with serious issues directly bound up with human beings' hopes and frustrations. Such a noble, serious literature is always hand in hand with human beings' sorrows, sufferings and concerns. This type of literature tries to dig deeper and deeper to feel and reflect the man's daily life miseries. Fortunately, the authors of this kind do not live in ivory towers; rather, they are very close to the man's hardships. This kind of literature is always in contact with those who are unfortunate, homeless, oppressed, prisons' dwellers, slum dwellers and displaced ones. On the contrary, the second type of literature stands completely on the other side of the corner. This kind tries to create happiness, pleasure and entertainment which are very demanding for people. But when? When poverty is shrinking rapidly, when famine is relatively abolished among the poor people in the world. But most importantly when there is no one oppressed and another one is oppressor. And here we are, face to face, with Dammaj's novel, The Hostage, which, as this researcher thinks, belongs to the first type of literature. Dammaj's novel and the rest of his literary works
were not written for merely pleasure and entertainment, rather he wrote to reflect just a small piece of the hidden miseries a whole society is exposed to.

**Dammaj’s Life and his Contribution to the Yemeni Literature**

Zayd mutee' Dammaj was born in 1943 in Ibb governorate, in a village very close to the city where his splendid novel's incidents took place. Because of his father disobedience to the Imam, Mutee' (the father) was imprisoned in Taiz's dismal, gloomy and slough prison. Luckily, he escaped the jail heading to Aden (the south). There in Aden, along with the other regime's dissents, Mutee' started his struggle and protest against the Imam's primitive political regime.

Zayd, like the rest of the Yemeni children, received his Quranic studies in his village school. After he memorized the holy Quran by heart, he was undergone to a special home education under his father's observation. When he finished elementary school in Taiz in 1957, he was sent to Egypt where he studied the preparatory and finished his higher study in 1963. Once he was ambitious to see himself graduated from Cairo University, he soon joined faculty of law in 1964 but two years latter he left it to the faculty of Art, Journalism Dept. Because of his father's ailment, he left Egypt heading to Yemen where he occupied very high ranking posts.

In 1970, he was elected an MP for his district and in 1972, he was appointed as the governor of Al-mahweet. In 1980, he shifted to the diplomatic mission when he was assigned as ambassador plenipotentiary to Kuwait. In 1982, he was elected a member of the permanent committee of the General Progress Congress (ruling party) and the political committee reporter.
In 1997 he was assigned as a counselor for the foreign minister and then a minister plenipotentiary in Britain where he died in 2000.

His Publications

Noman, in Yemeni Society as Reflected in Zayd Muttee' Dammaj's Al-Rahina opines out:

Zayd's literary career dates back to his secondary education in Egypt when he started writing short stories. These short stories are collected in an anthology called Tahish Al-Hawban (1973). This anthology was followed by four other collections, namely:

4- Al-Medfa al-asfer “The Yellow Canon”

Basically Dammaj's fame as a Yemeni reputed writer sprang to the Arab World's attention with the publication of The Hostage, 1984. Hence, and for its much welcoming reception among Yemeni and Arab readers, it reprinted in three editions. Moreover, The Hostage’s popularity does not stop only in this point; rather, it staged him up internationally when it was translated into different foreign languages. Its first translation into French was in 1991 by EDIFRA Publishing House: into English by Interlink Books Publishing House 1994. And the German translation was in 1999, and finally, the Hindi translation has been completed and published in India by Mrs (Dr.) Jyostna Prasad, the wife of professor Prasad, Department of English, Ibb University, Yemen.
Other translated versions of *The Hostage* in Russian, Japanese, and Spanish are on the way.

Al-maqalih, a reputed Yemeni critic and poet, while reviewing the literary situation in Yemen before and after *The Hostage* appeared, writes.

"...As such, authors had no opportunity to hone their techniques in the new fictional arts... until the September-October Revolution decisively opened the way for Yemen enter the world... affording Yemeni writers the right to assimilate the new trends of contemporary literature life."^3

For Al-maqalih *The Hostage* is the only novelist work Dammaj has attempted yet and which in turn gives him the considerable reputation not only in the Arab world but also internationally through its translations.^4

But what is the Hostage? According to Al-maqalih, *The Hostage* is "an urgent cry of protest, an attempt to depict the gross contradictions which were prevalent in the years before revolution."^5 In other words, Al-maqalih wants to say that the novel is a humanitarian cry of protest against tyranny dictatorship.

Robber Burrowes describes *The Hostage* as both darkness and light at the same time. Darkness as being hostage to the past tradition as well as to the Imam. And the light of struggle for freedom. Al-maqalih highly recommends the novel's local characteristics dominated the scenes of the novel. In this context he says, Dammaj's stories therefore, like pictures which not only reflect the life around him, but also depict a specific time, space and milieu, making readers wherever come from feel they are reading the work of a story
writer from Yemen and no from other Arab countries. By reviewing the other short stories of the same writer, Al-maqalih views that they could be developed into full-length novels.6

Dr. Jytsana Prasad who lives in Yemen with her husband professor Prasad for more than a decade, translated Al- Rahina (The Hostage) into Hindi under the name "Bandhak". Here are some of her reflections about the fiction and the reasons stand behind translations:

"I translated Al-Rahina not only because it is a great novel- and to my mind it should be read by Hindi readers not only of India but also by those who live elsewhere on this globe but because I believe that this translation is a step to improve intercultural competence of the readers and enable them to appreciate such a kind of work."7

According to her, Al-Rahina is a great literary work she discovers. In this regard she remarks:

"I also have been living in Yemen for more than a decade and I got this opportunity to enjoy and appreciate some of the significant literary works."8

And for the importance of the fiction socially and historically, she states:

"This translation is the result of this opportunity towards enjoying and appreciating a work of art. Al-Rahina is an important landmark in the history of Arabic fiction and at the same time it is a historical document depicting the period of Imamate."9

It is worth noting here that the new translated edition comes with a
In chapter two, we have already shed the light on the different situations in Yemen before the Revolution, economically, socially, politically and intellectually. At the main time, we have known that Yemen was two separate parts, southern part and the north part. We have also mentioned that the southern part was under the British occupation while the north was an independent state after the Turkish occupation was over and becomes under the rule of a very tyrannical retracted and primitive political system, the imamate Royal Family. Hence, from now on, our discussion will center around the situations in the north part of the country since the novel under consideration took place there.

It is north Yemen. During the late 1940s, towards the end of the Imam period and the beginning of the Republican era. Here, time, history and life sound standstill, motionless, and valueless. The only eyewitness on that horrible period is The Hostage. Along with its ordinary characters will lead us discovering a new world. A world of secrets, superstitions, corruption, ignorance, depression and oppression, the Imam's regime depends entirely upon, to govern the Yemeni society. The North Yemen's 1940s represents a turning point in the Yemen history. This period could be termed as the worst period in the recent Yemeni date. Basically, the period represents an interval between two critical periods; the ending of the Imam's era and the beginning of the Republican era. At this specific point of time, the novel is set, and within its bright pages it records and detects the hidden secrets of the primitive and corrupted political and social system. Under this individual
monarch Yemenis were deprived from their basic humanitarian needs, dignity and freedom in particular. Modern education for instance, was prohibited to be adopted over the assumption that this kind of education is western oriented ideology. Religious based education was adopted instead. Ignorance and illiteracy were common among the people. Religious based education itself was provided only for the elite. Thousands of citizens died of serious ailments for there was lack of medicines and hospitals. All these unbearable situations and others were reflected in the novel under discussion. For more facts related to this period of history let start with Robert D. Burrowes whose comments, and remarks would be our valuable guidelines in this prospect. Burrowes, and in order to give a real portrait on Yemen under the rule of that harsh political system, remarks:

"On the eve of the 1962 revolution, North Yemen was one of the world's last extent examples of a relatively complex, large scale traditional social system. A highly tribalized conservative Islamic society."10

Burrowes makes the following comparison between Afghanistan in 1900 and Yemen in 1940s. He writes:

"Perhaps most like Afghanistan of about 1900, it was (Yemen) virtually devoid of piped water, surfaced roads, motor vehicles and engines electricity, telephones or radios."11

Regarding the country's primitive economy, he says:

"Yemen traditional economy, based upon subsistence agriculture and human and animal energy, was to remarkable degree self contained and self-sufficient."12
Pointing out to the novel with its relationship to that stage, Noman writes:

"The novel is set in the forties of the twentieth century, one of the most crucial periods in the recent history of Yemen."\(^{13}\)

Regarding the corruption and the decline of the social and moral norms the Royal family's members are involved in, he indicates:

"It (the novel) depicts the political, social corruption and the decline of moral values in the royal establishment of that time."\(^{14}\)

"North Yemen was almost closed to the rest of the world except for importing some basic requirements north Yemen and the modern world had little economic need for or interest in each other, and traditional Yemen remained intact partly for this reason."\(^{15}\)

It is worth stating here that after the First World War, fresh ideas like nationalism, modernism and self-determination overwhelmed the Arab countries, including Yemen. However such new ideas did not find their way among Yemeni people for the Imam Yahya strove to contain the new ideas and practices that had entered Yemen with the Ottomans. Moreover, the two Imams, Yahya and his son, successor, Ahmad changed Yemen from a country into a private prison.

"... They guarded Yemen's ramparts from 1962, allowing as few Yemenis as possible to leave the country and even fewer outsiders to enter Yemen with their alien ideas and artifacts."\(^{16}\)

Since the regime lacks of modern constitutional and systematic organizations, law corpus, lack of popularity, it resorts to primitive and
traditional practices to achieve its totalitarian policy against the subjects.

Burrowes's statement will make this idea more clear:

"Skilled practioners of traditional politics, they (Yahya and Ahmed) used military campaigns, the hostage system, gifts and subsidies, factional manipulation and other arcane devices both to consolidate their power vis-à-vis challengers at the center and to extend their sway slightly on the periphery at the expense of local notables and the tribes."^{17}

Burrowes's statement above reflects an interesting political game the regime is playing with. In other words, instead of applying a reasonable policy to solve the society's urgent issues, according to the law (if any), the regime falls back upon the law of the jungle. And instead of solving the problems, the regime created more complicated ones.

And in order to have a tangible and unshaking testimony of Yemen's 1940s, let us read some of what Mrs. Claude Faian, a French doctor who worked in the only hospital in Taiz Governorate within the periods 1949 to 1952. She writes:

"I read as so many other people have read the horrible stories of the extermination camps during World War II but here I saw-as I think- a more horrible scene than those of the World War II. I saw a mother lying on her waste, releasing her last breath while trying her best to stand up handing her little baby to me crying and begging for help."^{18}

Another inhuman and horrific scene recorded in Faian's famous book I was a Doctor in Yemen is the following unhygienic health condition in the same hospital in Taiz:
"I wanted to visit the patients' rooms but the doctor refused to accompany me. I started visiting these rooms alone accompanied by unwilling nurses. In every room I entered, I saw the same shocking, horrible scene; unbearable smell, hand-made beds with no sheets on, sickly thin bodies laying on these filthy beds with nothing to hide their bodies. I felt that I was suffering from a horrible nightmare... I went then to the women's rooms. They were narrow and low without windows. They were real stables. Every woman was lying beside the other on the filthy floor of these stables."^{19}

And since the Imam's adopted policy was unscientific related foundation, hundred of superstitious stories were evolving around his metaphysical power. Basically, the purpose of such fabulous musings is to create fear people's thinking and ensures their obedience blindly. The following funny story is given by Claude Faian.

People believe that he has supernatural powers. In my residence, there was a cook who spent his childhood years in the Imam's palace. This cook assured me that he saw the Imam throwing a bundle of timber sticks on the ground which suddenly turned into snakes quickly spreading all over the room. At another occasion, he saw him entering his dark room and heard him talking with his spirits. It is said that in this way the Imam knew about a treasure guarded by a group of devils in a well. So, he, the Imam went down the well and after a legendary battle he defeated these devils and came up with the treasure with his beard white.^{20}

Essentially, the Imams felt that their system is shaking, weak, and not welcomed by people, and for security purposes, they turned to have protection from some powerful tribes and notable Shayks.
“The constraints on the Imamate are perhaps best seen in its relationship to two major tribal confederations in Yemen's north and east, since their standing army was small, ill-equipped, and for the most part poorly trained, the Imams for centuries had been forced to depend on these ‘confederations-Imamate’, as they were called for subsidized tribal irregulars. The paramount shaykhs gave this support and provided defense in exchange for a great measure of local autonomy the result being that the tribes were less the loyal subjects than the sometime allies of the Imams.”

It would be more interesting if we finalize this part of discussion with what Burrowes describes the Imams ruling system. He writes:

“The Imamate fit comfortably into sociologist Max Weber's category of patrimonial traditional political system.”

The Socio-Political Background of the Novel

According to the "Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary", the word "hostage" means: “Some one who is taken as a prisoner by an enemy in order to force the other people to do what the enemy wants.” And to move closely to the meaning of the word relating to the novel itself, here is what Robert Burrowes says in his Historical Introduction to the Translation of the Novel:

“....young boys the Imam regularly took from their families in order to secure the obedience of their fathers, tribes, or villages, the boys lived together, often in harsh circumstances, often separated from family and childhood friends for many years.”

Hence, both definitions appear to be the same with only tiny differences. In other words, let us put it this way. In our day- today life, we
hear, listen and read from numerous media sources about innocent people who are kidnapped by illegal groups for different purposes. These kidnapped people might be small children, politicians, businessmen or government officials. Hence, they are held and threatened to be killed if their relatives or may be the government couldn't free them by paying the kidnappers the amount of money they order. Likewise, it happens when unauthorized armed groups, especially during wars, hold or kidnap people who are not actually involved in the interest of the war, till they are released for a huge ransom; otherwise, they might be killed by their kidnappers. But what it is unbelievable in our case under discussion is when a certain government, allegedly, its job is to protect the law and system, and at the same time commits vital crimes against its society! In other words, the enemy in our case is not that terrorist who holds or kills innocents and threatens the society's security and stability, rather, it is the political system itself.

In this case, the forthcoming questions could be raised: Why do some regimes resort to such inhuman and aggressive practices against their societies? Is it because these regimes are afraid of their people? Is it because of the bad relationship between the rulers and society? Or is it because the regime's lack of rightfulness? Finally, why do some regimes create wide gaps between them and society?

Essentially, the novel revolves around an unfair political system. It is about an arrogant and simple minded monarch holds everything and gives nothing in turn to his people except fear, oppression, corruption and agony. In the other side of the scene stands a small and innocent boy used to live happily under his family's care, and all of a sudden, a gang of the monarch,
identified as soldiers, come and takes him away out of his mother's arms. Undoubtedly, the boy is not aware enough of the alleged wrongdoings his father commits against the Imam's wishes. What the boy hears may be from his mother or perhaps from his peers, is that his father is disobedient to the Imam. But what "disobedient" means for the small boy? What does the word "disobedience" represent in his small world? At this age, he can not distinguish among abstract words like this. His world is still young like him. There are beautiful words the boy should be exposed to instead. Words are closed to his young world like for example, mother, father, God, school, love, friends, book, goodness, pen, freedom and passion.

In his new and undesirable confinement, the boy comes across a new wild and graceless world, a world he does not belong to. A world doesn't match with what he once had dreamt about, a world is not similar to that he had been familiar with. May be he once dreamt to go to school, finishes university and becomes a useful member in his society. Moreover, the world he is exploring now is appropriate only for those who commit crimes against society not for the innocent ones.

And for the boy's sudden surprise, he discovers that he is not the only boy in his new confined atmosphere, for there are so many almost similar to his age. From now on, the little boy's new world will get bigger and bigger. His experience too, will grow up the same as his age till they lead him to answer for many puzzled and longstanding queries.

From the roof of the Governor's palace, the boy starts recalling his first journey. He recalls for example, al-Qahira Fortress where his freedom is first
curbed. Here, from the roof of the palace, he gives his small mind full freedom to fly. He had a panoramic view of Taiz city with its remote suburbs. His distant view almost touches the mountain which embraces his small village. In this point, he remembers his beloved mother whom he had been taken away from, his playmates whose names are still engraved in his mind. Such soft memories are interrupted by painful ones; they are the blue uniformed soldiers who mercilessly deprived him away from his mother's lap.

“How beautiful this city was! I have seen it first when I was taken away from my village and imprisoned in the fortress of al-Qahira as one of the hostages of the Imam. His soldiers had come in their blue uniform and torn me away from my mother's lap…” (P.23, The H.).

Inside al-Qahira fortress which is considered the most powerful stronghold of the Imam, we are accompanied by the narrator, the hostage, where he describes the miserable life the hostages live. Then we come across with the misfortunate and disadvantaged hostage-students who are always in trouble with their old furious religious instructor, the faqih.

The faqih, or the instructor, with his old educational methods actually reflects the Imam's traditional and the primitive educational system which is entirely a religious based scholarship. Hence, the instructor's task is only to keep his hostage-students silent. If it happens, for example, that one of the students asks the faqih for more explanation, the impatient faqih loses his temper and starts shouting:

“Be quiet, you riffraff. You animals! God saves us all from you.”

(P.26, The H.).
Actually, the instructor not only represents the backward and the traditional system but he himself is a micro-image of the Imam's political system too.

Intentionally, the Imam was resisting any kind of reformations including modern education which leads to more modern social improvements. Modern education for the Imam means the first step towards importing radical ideas into the country in which people start thinking intellectually. Hence, he entirely turned out to the religious based education which, as a matter of fact, devotes his clerical political system. As a matter of fact, it is imperative to stop for a while and cite a short story reflecting the traditional education in Yemen. Basically, and as any country in the Arab World, traditional education in Yemen takes its roots in the earlier Islamic principled educational system which mainly focuses on religious principled heritage. That is to say, its theories and philosophies are purely Islamic based tradition. In the history of education in the Arab world, Mosques' corners and circles are the proper places where education is provided. Some of those mosques were being to be, and still, very celebrated Universities within some of the Arab countries, Egypt, Baghdad, Morocco and Tunis, to cite only few. The syllabus is mostly religious oriented one.

Moving the situation to Yemen at that time the following two features are to be noticed:

In the country side, where non-government schools were established, parents took their children (those who are at the school age) to special unorganized schools known as "Ktateeb" where children are trained and
educated by religious instructors called faqhi (al-fukahaa). At the beginning, children are exposed to short and easy verses from the holy Quran. They repeat such verses after faqih in chorus. Then they are taught to read and write. As soon as they finish memorizing the holy Quran (30 parts), they become qualified in reading and writing.

The situation in the cities is slightly different from that in the countryside where children go to mosques instead. Since children finish memorizing the Holy Quran by heart, read and write, few of them pursue further education in the government schools. Similarly, those who fulfill their high schools and like to continue, they go to special schools or colleges which are basically based in different areas. This sort of schools provide more further religious based education in which their graduates are prepared to be either judges or judges' assistants. After their graduation they work in the few courts scattered in the country. It is worth saying here that those who work as judges should come from special chosen families. In other words, those who come from poor families or from farmer oriented families are not accepted, or they themselves can not afford for further education due their poor conditions.

To show the iron political system of the Imam's regime here is a scene in which the regime set his hunger, barefoot and barbarous soldiers free over the poor subjects who delay their alms tax and other dues payment after the Governor's son's arrival with his new car.

"They (soldiers) were playing their parts in the festivities, in the expectation that the Governor would reward them next morning by
giving them authority over the subjects who were late paying their alms tax and other dues which would mean profit for them. Every soldier went to bed that night dreaming of the power he might be given over the people in the particular region he wanted, knowing well enough just how much that power would yield" (P.65,The H.).

And to show the real picture of the Imam's political system during that period of the Yemen history, here is another savage and an inhuman incident the Imam's regime commits against his peace loving citizens. It happens when the Crown Prince, Ahmad announces Sana'a, the capital ' an open zone ' for the tribes' spoliation. Such an incident comes as retaliation for the assassination of his old father, the Imam Yahya in the foiled attempt upheaval in 1948.

"The new Imam had won the victory, and I knew beyond doubt that that my father had been among those beheaded in the town of Hajji. Saif al-Islam (Ahmad) had followed this by declaring Sana'a an open city for his men to loot and kill and destroy as they wished" (P.143,The H.).

And to find out the real bad healthy conditions over the whole country, here is our handsome dawaydar dies in his early age with chronicle and epidemical ailment (tuberculosis) due to the absence of medical facilities.

"There was only one foreign doctor in the city, and perhaps in the whole country... I fetched my friend out of the surgery, and the doctor went down to look at his rabbits" (P.143,The H.)

We end this part of discussion by highlighting on the dawaydar, when many other funerals with their mourners were approaching the graveyard
from diverse directions, which clearly indicates the high rate death in the city and the whole country as well due to the absence and lack of healthy care establishments.

"It was a small funeral. We walked, with my friend's coffin carried on our shoulders, to the city graveyard, now thronged with so many other funerals with their mournful chants."(P. 145, The H.).

Characterization Analysis

It is known that a novel should be built on many different of artistic elements. Out of these elements are theme and characterization. As a matter of fact both elements, that are theme and characterization, go in parallel way in a novel. Since the theme is considered to be the central message or the general insight into life that the author conveys in story, characterization is the way a writer brings a character to life, characters are shown or reflected through their roles or parts they are playing in the development of the novel. They are mirrored through the positive and negative attitudes, argumentative and conflicting actions and ideas. "Sometimes a writer uses direct characterization-directly telling you about a character's personality. More frequently a writer uses indirect characterization, revealing personality through a physical description of the character; through the character's thoughts, words and actions; and through other character's comments."^24

Accordingly, characters can be classified as either static or dynamic. Static characters don't change during the course of the story. They remain the same no matter what happens to them, while dynamic characters change and sometimes learn as a result of the events of the story.25
In his “Introduction to characters”, John Leggett indicates six main ways of revealing character:

1) Stating directly what the character is like.

2) Letting the reader enter the head of the character to become familiar with his or her thoughts and feelings.

3) Allowing the reader to hear the character speak. The reader can then draw conclusions based on what is said and how it is said.

4) Showing the reader how the character acts. Actions can tell a lot about someone:

5) Describing the appearance of a character.

6) Telling the reader what other characters think or say about the character.26

Going back to the theme and characterization of the novel under consideration, we notice that it is a multi-thematic novel, though politically dominated. Along with the narrator, the novel takes us to the Governor's palace where we explore two conflicting worlds; world of evil and world of virtue. The people of the world of evil are plunged into the life of corruption, immorality, exploitation and atrocity whereas the people of the other one are those who are fighting to restore their extorted freedom and their individual dignity. The following discussion will shed the light on the major characters who play major parts in the development of the novel up to its high matrix.

The hostage boy

The first important character in the novel is the hostage boy. Originally, the hostage boy comes from an ordinary social background and
because of his special circumstances as a hostage; he is exposed to a new social situation he does not belong to. His first acquaintance with the handsome duwaydar helps him gradually enlarging his small child-like mind. And in order to inform the new boy with his new job, as a new duwaydar, the handsome duwaydar takes him in a tour inside and outside the palace. Furthermore, he introduces him to everyone they come across with. The handsome duwaydar thinks that it is not enough for him to inform the new boy only with issues relating to his new job but also to give him full description about everything and everybody inside and sometimes outside the palace. And to do so, he starts with the palace's women. He gives him a full description for every woman, including their ages, their relations to the governor, each one's importance in the palace, marital status and each one's influence upon the governor.

The handsome duwaydar's explanation to the new boy does not limit itself to the nature of the job the new boy brought for, but he went further to give him more detailed information relating to his own adventures since his arrival to the palace. Out of these adventures are his sexual affairs with some of the palace's women, especially with Sharifa Hafsa and Zuhra. Furthermore, the handsome duwaydar gives the boy full information about the other women's sexual relationships with other guys inside the palace. Since the new hostage comes from an environment glorifies morality and praises virtue, he finds the new one more poisonous and corrupted. So at the beginning he tried to be cautious by putting himself in the safe side but unfortunately his efforts proved to be in vain. Finally, he found himself one of the corrupted members of the palace.
It would be worth mentioning that the feeling of frustration, depression and the slave-like attitude lead him to revenge from both himself and the others. For himself, he indulges into sexual affairs with some of palace women. Secondly, he becomes an alcoholic addicted. For the others, he becomes more stubborn and aggressive towards both Sharifa Hafsa and the crown prince's poet whom he slaps at the face. Other disrespect is shown when he turned out the Crown prince's dawaydar's boat into the pool for self-defense.

Unlike the handsome dawaydar, who proved to be content and irresistible, fulfills all the palace's dwellers' orders, including the woman's sexual desires, the new hostage did not show his full surrender. On the contrary, he continued his resistance even in his dialogue with the Governor, who represents the top political official of the Imam's regime. Such self-esteem and self-respect continued to the end, the time of his final escape. According to Hatem Al-sakr, a celebrated Arabic literary critic, “The old dawaydar represents the old Yemeni generation who actually fails to revolt against the Imam's political system while the new dawaydar represents the new generation whose struggle and resistance never stops. Accordingly, the palace, where most of the events took place, regards a micro-image of the total Yemeni homeland. Similarly, Sharifa Hafsa is considered to be the real political power in which she tries to have full control over the hostage's fate.”27 (my translation)

Sharifa Hafsa

Sharifa Hafsa is the second important character in the novel. Sharifa Hafsa is the governor's most beautiful and youngest half-sister. She is the
only female character who took a major part in the narration. A quick analysis to Sharifa Hafsa's overt and covert behaviour, the following contrasting characteristics are to be traced:

She is beautiful, wealthy, warmhearted, stubborn and hesitant at the same time. Her always changeable behaviour and attitudes created true obstacles for readers to arrive to a reasonable judgment. Sometimes she shows real passion towards the hostage boy but sometimes she looked aggressive towards him as well. Sometimes she is warmhearted woman and sometimes she even hates to look at him. Sharifa Hafsa is probably disordered woman. She suffers from disharmonious personality. She is always in trouble only not with the new hostage but with herself and the other women in the palace. Though Sharifa Hafsa sometimes shows mercy upon the hostage boy, she often punishes him. She rarely expresses her satisfaction or appreciation towards what he does for her. Her world is mixing up with happiness and with more sadness. Though she lives in a huge luxurious palace, wears priceless jewelry and ornamented hands, she looks unsatisfied. She is aimless woman. She truly doesn't know what she wants. Although she shares the huge palace with other royal women, and being served by numerous of servants, she feels lonely, deprived, lost and sad. Probably one of the reasons behind that is due to her previous failure marriage. Her relationship with the Crown Prince's young poet is not clear enough. Apparently she is in love with him and at the same time she hates him. Actually, we don't know what kind of letters she is writing to him. What we know is when she orders the hostage boy to deliver them to the poet and brings back his reply which is mostly torn up by her. Once, Sharifa Hafsa knows the secret sexual relationships among
some of the palace women and some ordinary young men (Zohra and the bourerzan), she doesn't care to have the same relation with the young hostage boy regardless of her dignity, pride and her social position. Nevertheless, whatsoever is said about sharifa Hafsa, she is a human being, longing to be free. She has the desire to revolt against the existing social customs. She wants to free herself from the life style she is bound to. It is true that she lives in a palace where whatever she asks for is immediately given to her but still one thing is missing, that is freedom.

Sharifa Hafsa expresses her longing freedom at the graveyard when she begs the hostage boy to take her with him but in vain. Now she is left alone. She might go back to her big and comfortable prison, the palace. She might go to a place much smaller than her palace but where she finds her freedom.

Moreover, and in addition to what has been said about Sharifa Hafsa, she represents the true negative and neglected Yemeni woman's status in that period of the Yemen history. And as a matter of fact, though the whole Yemeni society was removed from its basic human rights, woman's situation was rather worse. Ironically, woman, who is supposed to be the other half of the society, equal to man in both rights and duties is not recognized as a human being by the Imam's political system and the male community too. Both the tribal political system and society impose their tough, severe and traditional restrictions upon her natural rights. Hence, woman, during the period of the Imam's era was completely chained with severe social and religious created usages she has to abide to, otherwise society won't be merciful with her if she violates such traditional mores. Out of these fettering norms are:
1) A woman doesn't have the right to pursue education.

2) Job is not necessary for a woman since she is economically, accounted on her father's or husband's income.

3) It is not allowed for a woman to leave her house and go outside unless she is accompanied by one of the following relatives: her husband, or father, or her son or her brother (only males).

4) A girl could be subjected to an early marriage.

5) A man has the right to marry more than one wife at the same time.

6) A girl of 18 years might get married to a man 20 years older than her.

The handsome duwydar

The handsome duwydar proved to be energetic, dynamic, intelligent, honest, patient and highly competent person in dealing with issues evolving around the palace’s hidden corners. The handsome duwydar's open-minded insights allow him to be a good future reader or teller. He probably succeeds to build up the future predictable major events on the basis of their now related indicators. Regardless of his illiteracy, simplicity and his low position in the palace, he is aware enough of everything around him and everybody he deals with, either the dwellers of the royal palace or those ordinary people like servants and soldiers. His full readiness and accessibility to give full and proved description about anybody is something unbelievable. The handsome duwaydar is the only person who knows everyone's history in the palace, men or women. He is considered the closest person to the governor for he is always with him. Such closeness allows the handsome duwaydar to be informed about many personal and official accounts inside the governor's Royal palace or even at the level of the Imam's iron regime. It can be said too
that he is aware of politics more than the governor. He proved to be well acquainted with local regional and international hot political issues which were sweeping the area and the whole globe after the World War II. Here he introduces the photographs of Hitler, Mussolini and Omar Al-Mukhtar hanging on the wall of his small room, to his friend, the hostage.

"This is the führer", he would, in the tones of a learned lecturer! "Hitler, that is. And this is Mussolini, the king of the Italians. And this venerable Shayk here al-Mukhtar... Omar al-Mukhtar". "We'll hear Big Ben striking, which means that it is four P.m. Greenwich mean time... now it is time for Yunis Bahri’s commentary from Radio Berlin." (p.32, The H.).

The statements pronounced earlier by the duwaydar show two essential issues; Yemen's isolation during the Imam's regime from the rest of the world. Secondly, Yemen's deprivation from the modern communication at that time, radios regard the most important news resources which were not within the reach of the people.

It is worth noting here that though the handsome duwaydar devotes himself to the governor's service, he appears to be more loyal to the Yemenis Liberal Movement based in Aden which was struggling against the Imam's regime in 1948. The following dialogue between the duwaydar and his friend shows that sympathy.

"The Imam's dead? he cried.

"So I have heard."

"Are you sure of it?"

"It is what I've heard."
“And Crown Prince Sayf, where is he?”

“He's left the city.”

Then he concludes his inquiries by saying these statements,

“They have done it all wrong. They should have dealt with Sayf al-Islam First!” (P.135, The H.).

His earlier statements created ambiguity to his friend, the hostage, when he asked:

“what was that?” he quietly answers “Nothing.” His friend reaches his deep bewilderment when he asks him again “Are you feeling all right?” without paying attention to his friend’s question, he answered “I was” (P.135, The H.).

Hence, from what has been mentioned before, one could have the belief that the handsome duwaydar could be a secret agent working with the Yemenis liberals inside the palace of one of the most important Imam's official intimate, the Governor. In other words, he might be one of the liberals who are plotting against the Imam's political regime. Now he is dying of his chronic and everlasting sickness of tuberculosis due to the palace's women's sexual exploitation.

As a conclusion, it is needless to say that the novelist, and through his character, the handsome duwaydar, wanted to make a comparison between the failure of 1948 revolution and the death of the handsome duwaydar. He wanted to state that struggle for freedom and salvation is still not within the reach of Yemeni people, therefore it needs more efforts and sacrifice.
The young poet

The importance of the young poet's character in the novel comes essentially from his strong relationship with the Royal Family, for he is the Imam's and his Crown Prince's poet. This kind of relationship opens the door widely towards the poet to gain big fortune illegally. As a cunning, opportunist and a parasite-like person, he used the governor's son's new car issue to play his own dirty game. He created a big problem between both the Imam and his governor. He told the governor that the Imam was dissatisfied and disappointed with the governor.

And to please the Imam and to avoid his immediate angry reaction, the governor gave his son's new car to the Crown Prince as a gift. And to do so, he requested the poet to be his mediator. And as a reward for the poet's mediation, the governor offered the poet gold and silver. Another fact about the poet's self-seeking and opportunism is his false love with Sharifa Hafsa. He only pretended to be in love with her. Actually he wanted to use her as a bridge to fulfill his personal goals which entirely focus on gathering more money since she is a very wealthy woman. One more point worth mentioning here is that the worst and the ugliest side of the poet's character which was clearly revealed in the middle of the novel was when he proved to be drunkard and sexually,... abnormal.

The Hostage: A Critical Point of View

No need to state here that Zayd Mutee Dammaj's novel The hostage is the only literary work which shot him up to fame. Before that great work,
Dammaj was not popular enough though he started his literary career as a short story writer earlier. Admittedly, Dammaj’s earlier short stories formed the concrete foundation for his later literary work, *The Hostage* in particular. Hence and after *The Hostage*’s first publication in 1984, his fame went up and recognized as a well-known writer among not only the Yemeni intellectuals but the Arabs as well. The novel appeared in three different Arabic editions, the first edition came out from the Arts Publishing House in Beirut in 1984. The second edition emerged from the Cultural Affairs Publishing House, Baghdad, 1997. The Third edition published in 1999 by Reading For All Festival Cairo.\(^28\)

Popularity has not been welcomed only by the Yemeni literary scholars but also by ordinary people too. And due to its widespread translation to many living modern languages, the novel reached the non-Arabic native readership.

The question which can be raised in this point is “Why has Dammaj received all this huge of popularity after *The Hostage* came out to light?” Probably the novel was the first Yemeni literary record touched upon a very sensitive humanitarian issue in Yemen. The novel picturized the unequal relationship between two forces; the force of oppressor, who is here the Imam and the oppressed which is embodied through the child who is a micro-image for the whole society. Hence, *The Hostage* is considered an outcry against those whose thirst is to deprive the other people’s dignity, identity, humanity and freedom.
Briefly, the novel touched upon the deep wounds of a humiliating nation. As it has been stated above and in spite of the novel’s publicity and fervent reception, it has raised hot discussions among those concerned in the Yemeni literature. The discussion almost centers upon the basic artistic elements a novel has to be set up. To put it in a different way, what are the fundamental artistic techniques required for setting up a novel? They went asking: Did this present novel meet these requirements? Or did it meet only the requirements of a story, say a long story? Those who are engaged in the Yemeni literature development raised two contrasting point of views. Some said that the novel is a perfect one while the others denied that claim. Each group has based on some of justifications. Our coming survey will be focused on these two conflicting ideas hoping that we come up to rich and fruitful impressions.

Approaching carefully and closely to the novel under survey, we come across the structure of the novel. The novel is narrating by first person pronoun ‘I’ which means one main character dominates the events of the novel. Readers are informed by the protagonist who went hand in hand with his characters. The narrator or the protagonist reports to us his characters’ actions, feelings, attitudes and disagreements. Events are tightly controlled. Readers are confused since they cannot differentiate between the narrator and the author, who is really engaged in with this bad experience. It might be a ‘sameness’ or integration between the writer and his narrator, as if the hostage boy is a reflected image for the author.

It seems that the writer puts himself aside not to be involved in the
developments of the story and pushes his hero to the battle ground instead. Probably, the writer resorts to that technique to achieve two points:

First, to be a neutral eyewitness to the ups and downs which were taking place during that period of Yemen history. Secondly, his hero or the narrator has been chosen from an ordinary social background in which it gives the narration more credibility and effectiveness. Hatem Al-Sakr, a critic and a literary scholar and one of Dammaj's supporters comments on that particular point. He writes:

"The Hostage is narrating by the first person- the hostage in this sense- who really stands in the centre of the developments revolving around him... such a good position given by the writer to his hero is considered a further privilege to the novel as to have more unique dimensions and figurative significance."\(^{29}\) (my translation)

And whether the novel is a multi-thematic story or no, Al-Sakr suggests two possible thematic elements which are combined within its structure. Under his article "The Hostage: The possible Readings and the Accessible Interpretations", he points out:

"Even though The Hostage belongs to the realistic Literary Movement, it is open to wider interpretations including historical and ideological tradition."\(^{30}\) (my translation)

He goes on:

"With regard to the historical reading, the novel along with its theme and events revolve around the Yemeni history during the Imam's era (including its institutions and its political system) and
with respect to the ideological background, readers and critics could implicitly perceive the author’s political ideology that always stands in the side of freedom and progress.” (my translation)

According to Al-Sakr, while he is commenting on the characters’ performance, he points out that the hostage boy’s significance in the novel is more than a main character. He represented the new Yemeni generation whose desire is to revolt against the bad social conditions. Even the royal palace itself, with its walls, rooms, men, women and servants represented “homeland”. Therefore, Dammaj wanted his hero to symbolize the whole Yemeni generation who is jailed inside the big palace. For Al-Sakr even the dawaydar and Sharifa Hafsa are merely symbols for ideas. He writes:

“The handsome dawaydar symbolizes the old generation who used to live in content and meek and never wanted to live in a better fresh environment.” (my translation)

The same situation is applied to Sharifa Hafsa too. In that sense he points out:

“Sharifa Hafsa, as a woman, embodied authority. She holds power and through power she wanted the hostage boy to be her own obedient slave boy who always carried out her legal and illegal requirements including her sexual satisfaction. In this case sex means nothing more than power.” (my translation)

At the end of the novel, we noticed some rapid changes taking place particularly over the hoped revolution which was the dream of the new generation. But unfortunately failure was the fate of that beautiful infant

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dream. Such failure was mirrored by the boy's run away. Al-Sakr comments thus:

"We will see that the oppressed revolutionary generation was not within the reach of erecting a real foundation for a visible future yet. And since the hostage was still a young boy, the same would be true for the other revolutionary new comers."^34 (my translation)

Abdulmalik Murtaz, another famous literary figure and critic in commenting on Dammaj's artistic creativity, writes:

"Dammaj probably succeeded to use his artistic skills by depicting a unique portrait for the Yemeni environment with its uniqueness and peculiarity. And through his writing he shed the light on many different social concerns the Yemeni society experienced."^35 (my translation)

Murtaz and while analyzing Dammaj's inner behavior and its relationship with characters writes:

"Dammaj's literary narration reflects his own individual personality which dominates his characters' actions. He shows his heroes as introvert individuals."^36 (my translation)

To understand the writer's dominated character on his writings as well as on his characters, the present researcher refers that to two reasons.

First, Dammaj's earlier childhood. He spent a long period of time away from his father particularly during his father's hunted by the Imam and then when he headed to Aden. Secondly, and accounting on his biography which was stated earlier in this chapter, Dammaj and after he stopped his study, as a
degree student, in Cairo due to his father’s ailment, came back to Yemen (after 1962 revolution) and was appointed as a governor for Al-Mahweet Governorate. Then gradually he took positions in different formal higher jobs. Such official posts created an upper hand personality in which he likes others to carry out his orders. Hence, it is natural to see his characters overwhelmed with his personality. The following Murtaz’s statement discloses some of Zayd’s hidden personality, “Once, it happened that a group of his friends (including myself) visited him in his house for a qat session. He was sitting in the head of the big diwan. As soon as he started speaking we all kept silent. Otherwise, nobody can speak unless Zayd agrees.”^37 (my translation)

Another pro-Dammaj’s symphizer, Mohamad Abdulwakeel Jazem, a short story writer and a poet, regards The Hostage as a perfect novel. He first introduces the following definition for the novel:

“A novel is a long story contains imaginary characters and incidents with exciting and mysterious adventures. It let us participate in all human experiences and share their cultures. This is because the novel’s structure includes all sorts of literary expressive genres.”^38 (my translation)

Jazem goes on:

“Regardless of The Hostage’s message and content, it is first and foremost an artistic phenomenon added to the Yemeni modern literature.”^39 (my translation)

From the comparative point of view between The Hostage and the other Yemeni novels preceded The Hostage, Jazem states:
“The Hostage’s new creative artistic tools and crafts make it peculiar to its previous Yemeni novels tradition.”*40 (my translation)

Jazem, as a skillful and a literary craftsman tries to bring us close to the boy’s zooming image, “Despite that the narrator is an ordinary boy, came from a remote village with limited world knowledge and lacked of experience, he overcame all his physical and psychological shocks he had experienced in the palace.”*41 (my translation)

Setting of the novel

According to Mario Klarer, An Introduction to Literary Studies, setting is defined as “The term setting denotes the location, historical period and social surroundings in which the action of a text develops.”*42

Pat Kubis and Bob Howland in their book The Complete Guide to Writing Fiction and Non-Fiction define setting as:

“Setting is the frame within which the story occurs; it can be considered the scenic backdrop of the story.... The setting of the story usually is shown very clearly, often in the first.”*43

To apply these two setting definitions for the present novel, we find that all the setting elements are almost reachable and applicable. Here we are:

- **Location**: The incidents of the novel take place inside the governor’s palace.

- **Historical Period**: The novel records the incidents preceded the 1948 Constitutional Revolution.
Social Surrounding: It shows the bad social and political conditions within the 1948 period.

In this respect, Mohammed Abdulwakeel Jazem cites the following reflections:

"The novel has been performed in one limited location; that is the governor's palace. Time is not shown in its small elements such as hours and days but it has been indicated through the events and characters' actions which finally poured to the 1948 Constitutional Movement's direction."^{44} (my translation)

Referring to the transition of the boy from one place to another, within the structure of the novel, Jazem writes:

"The Shift of the hostage boy from his village to the Qahira Fortress, then to the governor's palace goes smoothly without any interruption of the strings of the novel structure which added another plus mark to the novel."^{45} (my translation)

Jazem appreciates the handsome dawaydar's performance and praised Dammaj's choice.

"Another positive technique added to the author's creativity is his successful choice to the dawaydar character who emerges coincidently with the hostage boy's first appearance, lived together till he died prior to the hostage's run away."^{46} (my translation)

Space of freedom or the amount of free expression as it is coined by Jazem played an important element in the novel. From the present researcher's point of view, such an element gave the novel less credibility and
more overstatement. We do not exactly know why the writer gave his hero more than what he deserved. For example the conversation between the governor and the boy was not realistic. The boy showed boldness and the situation ignored the proper behavioral standards between the boy as a servant and the governor as the representative of the Imam.

It is no doubt that such a stand weakens both the authenticity of the novel and the author’s seriousness and his stiff attitude towards the Imam’s political system. However, Jazem regards the boy’s position against his oppressors a kind of bravery. But in reality it is not existed particularly from a powerless and hopeless child. Jazem introduces his excuse to defend his client, the boy, by stating:

“In my opinion, the structure of the novel has been built on the space of freedom. This element incorporated in the hostage’s character. In spite of the bad treatment the boy has been exposed to, he proved to be courageous, quarrelsome and stubborn. He never gave up or surrendered”^47 (my translation)

Jazem is finalizing his reviews with Sharifa Hafsa. Unlike Hatem Al-Sakr, who gave Sharifa Hafsa power and authority, and who used her beauty to trap her victims and her body to carry out dirty tricks, Jazem on the contrary sees her as “a hidden motivation” in the story where most of characters begged her acquaintance.

“Sharifa Hafsa is considered to be the hidden motivation in the novel, holding most of the novel’s strings in her hands. Every major and minor character rotates around her orbit, beginning with
her brother, the governor, ending with servants of the palace. Everyone is yearning to come close to her, though some hate her and others adore her for she is most attractive and beautiful woman in the palace.”48 (my translation)

Under his title “The Hostage between the Creativity of a novel and the absence of an experienced Artist”, Abdullah Al-Baradoni, a very noted and widely known Yemeni poet, writer and critic starts his critical remarks with the following:

“After the appearance of Dammaj’s first collection of short stories Tahish Al-Hawban, we were stormed with much relief as to see a great writer like Zayd Mutee’ Dammaj speaks on behalf of his people. In that collection, he loved to put faces on stories taken from life. The language of the stories served the common people. Even characters and their names have their own special relish and locality.”49 (my translation)

After Al-Baradoni gave a brief revision relating to the place of the Yemeni novel development, preceding The Hostage since 1960 onwards, he raises the following question: Is the Hostag a novel? Then he answers, ‘Yes! That is what the author called it’. Then Al-Baradoni goes on:

“Probably the writer was not far from the truth since The Hostage did not present a single human phenomenon nor it introduced a personal opinion as most stories did. What actually the author did here was making up a revolutionary novel from 1948 foiled revolution perspective. That was shown through his characters whom he employed them to act and utter their conversations on
behalf of the author himself though he was one of these characters,
yet he was the main character.\textsuperscript{50} (my translation)

And to give his discussion more credibility, he states the following definition
for the novel:

"A novel usually gives more detailed descriptions relating to
different phenomena. It records developments according to
concrete logical ground such as causes-effects, motives but the
most important thing it based on is the conflict philosophy and the
social reference. All these peculiarities should be presented
through a competent and a highly experienced writer."\textsuperscript{51} (my
translation)

In accordance with what has been stated above by Al-Baradoni, it might be
concluded that \textit{The Hostage} might not be elevated to the level of the novel
place. However, let us see what his remarks on that crucial point are.

"\textit{The Hostage}, can be labeled as both a long story and a novel at
the same time. A novel, for the access of its artistic merits,
characters and for its adequate presentation. And as a long story
for the lack of information given to some characters and for the
gap between cause and effects as well."\textsuperscript{52} (my translation)

Al-Baradoni immediately clarifies his idea with the following remarks:

"\textit{Sharifa Hafsa}, for example, whose background was drawn to us
only through her unsuccessful marriage to her impotent cousin in
which she started looking for other men to satisfy her sexual thirst,
but the writer dropped much more information for instance about
her family raising or her inner psychological feelings, while he left
other heroes unidentified, even the main hero- the writer himself-
was left without a proper name...., albeit the absence of the hero's name distorted the course of the novel and change it into a false impression.”53 (my translation)

Al-Baradoni concluded his fruitful remarks by summing up both the novel’s strength and limitations as follows:

a. Positive points:

1. Overlapping situations.
3. Narration accuracy.
5. Reasonable combination between the historical element and the narration artistic creativity.

b. Passive points:

1. Events location was limited to one place. The governor palace was the only place where developments took place.
2. The author’s falling back to an overstatement trap by giving a minus portrait about his people.54 (my translation) The following is a description for the people in the city which was regarded a kind of degradation:

"Everywhere were faces of pale, sickly, yellow, bellies swollen not from food but from sickness, feet bare are sticky with dirt and cuts. At every corner, in every ally, square or street, we jostled amid crowds of exhausted beggars and people sick or mad."
The following general remarks should be stated briefly for their significance.

1. **The Language:** It is noticed that the original language of the novel (Arabic) was simple, intelligible and free from rhetoric with less standard Arabic, though he is not sometimes fortunate in his word choice. Abundant of foreign language terms are borrowed, especially those connected with Turkish military terms.

2. **Figurative Language:** The author used many language devices, particularly,

   - Simile, universal and locals.
     - Her face is as bright as the moon.
     - Her fingers like a red wax mingled with the purest milk.
     - ...like a jaunty bird.

   - Very few metaphors are used.

3. **Characters:** Dammaj introduced only small number of characters and almost two settings. He kept the structure and content of the novel flat and direct. His main characters are coming from one ordinary social class except Sharifa Hafsa who is from the high class.

4. **Dialogues:** According to Pat Kubis and Bob Howland, One of the most important thing every writer must master is dialogue. It reveals characters, gives necessary plot information, builds emotion...and develops local color. Dialogue adds “freshness” and life to the page. It
enables the writer to convey information in life like way, rather than bore the reader with long narrative passages.55

In spite of the various advantages dialogues added to any literary creative piece of work, it is noticeable here that such an important element is almost ignored.

5. **Tone:** Tone is a quality in the voice which expresses the writer's feelings, emotions or thoughts towards his/her readers or audience. In our case, it is difficult to think of any specific tone since the protagonist himself was the first-person narrator: He speaks to his readers (as if they are listeners) and what happened to him and the others only from his point of view. So it can be said that Dammaj used the “Descriptive Tone”, or might be mingled with pessimism.

Before we conclude this section which focused basically on the critical side of the novel under study, we would like to state that the different viewpoints presented here represented different reputed literary scholars who were close friends to the late author Zayd Muthee’ Dammaj. In the meantime, these scholars were always in touch with his literary works during his lifetime and after his death. Another essential point should be added here is that regardless of what has been reflected by the critics and whether Dammaj’s *The Hostage* is a novel reached the required novel artistic criteria or not it is after all a great effort fulfilled by the author. Such a creation paved the way to more creative work added to the Yemeni literary body. *The Hostage* came out at a time when the Yemeni literary life, particularly, the novel, was absolutely
rare and poor. A final element should be taken into consideration is that literary standards at the time of its issue were not encouraging enough.

**Introduction to Literary Translation**

Whatever improvement translation has achieved and the high level of development it has reached, and irrespective of its long history along with human long journey, it remains an everlasting problematic issue among its theorists and scholars. That is probably because of the lack of systematic, organized and approved principles.

Unlike the field of applied sciences, which is based on objective, systematic and non-controversial parameters, translation on the other hand, is a subjective human bound phenomenon. Although the long history translation had passed and in spite of its recent developed theories and the abundance of its literature, it is still a source of painstaking effort for its scholars. Here is one of its most successful advocates, Peter Newmark, who strongly rejects to coin translation as 'science', or give it the term of "theory". According to him what exists in reality are fragments of scattered individual experiences, rather than organized and systematic theories. In his *Approaches to Translation* he describes translation as "a misnomer, a blanket term, and a possible translation". He adds:

"In fact translation theory is neither a theory nor a science but the body of knowledge that we have and have still to have about the process of translating."\(^5^6\)

Our forthcoming discussion centers on various essential matters which can be briefly stated in the form of the following queries:
1. Do cultural elements represent real challenges to translator?
2. Are cultural ethos and aspects important to be conveyed or transferred to the target culture readership?
3. What difficulties encounter translators translating literary works?
4. Which is more difficult to translate poetry or prose?
5. What is the difference between translating literary works or technical texts?
6. What strategies and techniques a translator uses when he faces difficulties?
7. What is a translator's task?
   - A translator?
   - A reader?
   - A Writer?
   - All above?
8. What is faithfulness in translation?

   It seems to be hard for a translator to be both a bilingual and a bicultural at the same time. Yet, if a translator has such two drives, surely a perfect translation is to be introduced in the part of culture in particular. To borrow Panchanan Mohanty’s words in this view, he writes:

   “If a translator is both bilingual and bicultural, he can identify, understand and translate the cultural ethos of a text in a more satisfactory manner than who is just a bilingual not a bicultural.”\textsuperscript{57}
What is the writer meant by his above remarks is that when a translator belongs to the same cultural setting of the TL, he would successfully reflect that setting with all its peculiar differences and sensitivities.

And to make this point more clear, let us have Robert Frost’s poem “The Dust Snow” as an illustration for the above point.

“The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree
Has given my heart
A change of mood
of a day I had rued.”

The poem mentioned above has a deep sorrowful mood and at the same time it has a deep rooted western cultural reference. The non-English native audience can not perceive the poem’s profound reflections, shades and connotations unless he/she is familiar with English culture and literature or he/she might have experienced that culture. The following shades and connotations are to be observed: In this poem, we are exposed to two symbols; the hemlock tree which is a poisonous tree and the black crow sitting over the tree. Both of them symbolize death. Hence, here is no possibility for such a poem to be grasped by readers other than the English ones. This example shows us how culture plays a major role in literary translation process. And to emphasis such a cultural element, another example stated by C. Sivashanmugan when he writes:
"The problems involved in translating the works on arts increase the responsibility of a translator. A translator of works on arts is translating not only the original work into the target language but also the culture, habits, custom, civilization as so on of the source language."^59

And in order to present the core point of difficulty, Sivashanmugan puts it like this:

"The problems of a translator get multiplied when he undertakes the translation of a work which is abundant with the social regional dialect forms."^60

And to stand on the great responsibility of a translator, we read Y.C. Bhatnagir’s reflections in this respect. In his article “Translation – A basis of cross-cultural understanding”, he points out:

"To test the closeness of any translation to its original, David Lodge has said: One would have to be not only bilingual but to coin an ugly phrase-bicultural i.e. possessed of the whole complex of emotions, associations and ideas which intrinsically relate to a nation’s language to its life and tradition, but possessed not only of one such complex, as we all are to some extent, but of two."^61

In the same event and to reflect the strong interconnected relationship between culture and translation, another illustrious translator reflects the following rich ideas: In his article entitled, “Procedures and Strategies for Translation of Culture”, Vladimir Ivir comments:

"Translation is a way of establishing contacts between cultures ... the reason for this is the fact that language and culture are
inextricably interwoven... and that the integration of an element into a culture cannot be said to have been achieved unless and until the linguistic expression of that element has been integrated into the language of the culture... Translating means translating culture, not language."⁶²

Entitled, “Cultural elements in Translation, the Indian Perspective”, C. Thriveni gives more stress on cultural aspects. He writes:

“The process of transmitting cultural elements through literary translation is a complicated and vital task. Culture is a complex collection of experiences which condition daily life; it includes history, social, structure, religion, traditional customs and every day usage. This is difficult to comprehend completely.”⁶³

And to show the real obstacles a translator has to overcome; C. Thriveni equips us with examples taken from the Indian life. He writes:

“In the Indian culture, people show respect to their elders by addressing them in plural. A simple ‘he/she’ cannot be substituted, because then the idea behind the use of plural address would be lost. So, in addressing an elder person, either choice-retaining the plural form or replacing it by a simple ‘you’ lead to ambiguity.”⁶⁴

And regarding social relationship, he says:

“... Most Indians to live with their extended families... there are different words in all Indian languages to refer to each relation. There are words to address a wife’s mother or father, a wife’s sister or brother, a husband’s sister or brother ...”⁶⁵

Food too represents a real translation resistance, in this respect he writes:
"For instance, certain foods are prepared only during certain festivals, and such foods remind Indian readers of the season or some religious story. But this is not experienced by an audience of different culture. Customs and tradition are part of a culture. Be it a marriage or funeral, be it a festival or some vows, the story and the significance of hidden symbolism behind it become a stumbling block for translation."

And with respect to the literary translation and whether it is difficult or no, let us counsel H. L. Lakshmi’s article ‘Literary Translation’. Lakshmi refreshes our minds with the following remarks;

"Literary translation is much more complex and challenging than any other translation. Every literary text is linked to the literary and cultural tradition of the language in which it is written.... Words are very rich in their connotative meaning. In addition to the explicit meaning, a literary text contains implicit and suggested meaning which is equally important. The translator has to be prepared for every possible meaning."

H. L. Lakshmi puts the responsibility on the translator's shoulders when he says that literary translator is responsible for his readers and his author at the same time. Faithfulness of the translator is essential to the original "With respect to the form, meaning, style and spirit ... he has to be sure that his translation is in conformity with the linguistic and literary tradition of the TL."

And to establish a full idea on faithfulness and credibility in translation, here is Dashpandi in his article ‘Poetry Translation: A Dilemma’ gives us sum of his thought. He views faithfulness as thus:
"... an ideal work of literary translation cannot be expected to be too faithful or too free from the original. If it is too faithful, it suffers in readability and aesthetic appeal. And if it is too free, it ceases to be translation at all and becomes adaptation."69

So, what are the qualities of a good literary translation for Dashpandi?

According to him, a good literary translation should have to have the merits of authenticity, particularity, precision and accuracy. Culture of the SL should be involved in the target language along with its 'race, time and melieu'70

Interestingly, what can be understood by Dashpandi’s remarks cited earlier is that a good literary translation should be a half way between freedom and faithfulness in translation. But what cannot be understood in his four strict words (authenticity, particularity, precision and accuracy) for a good literary translation due to their ambiguity and similarity in their meaning.

To differentiate between translation of prose and translating poetry and which one is more difficult, H. L. Lakshmi in his article ‘Translation of Prose’ states that translation of prose is difficult and problematic, equally to poetry, for its “difficulty of determining translation units.”71 And to put in a different way, Lakshmi says:

“A text is a prime unit which has dialectical relationship with other texts and is located within a specific historical context. But while the translator of poetry can more easily break the prime text down into translatable units, line, verses, stanzas, the translator of prose has a more complex task.”72
Truly speaking, what is perceived by Lakshmi's statement is that a text of prose cannot stand by itself like in poetry for example, due to its interwoven with other different textures and intermingled aspects of social references. Therefore such an overlapping phenomenon should be carefully considered; otherwise big mistakes are likely to be committed in translation. And to find out the significance of connotative value and denotative value among translating texts, L. S. Dashpandi's views can be paraphrased in this way. He says that scientific translation is pregnant with denotative value than everyday language which is heavy with connotative value. So, scientific translation becomes re-rendition rather than formulation like the former one. At the main time, the message in everyday language is 'relatively easier to translate than the one in literary language' because the former has lesser connotative value than the latter. Therefore, translation in this case is more a reformulation than recreation.\textsuperscript{73}

And to have a duly lucid picture about the difference between literary translation and technical translation let us read Savory's contrasts. He enumerated these contrasts as thus:

1. **Matter and manner:**

   In literary translation, the manner of the original is essential (Style and mode of expression), while content is more important in scientific translation since it needs to be accurate.

2. **Skills:**

   Translator of literary translation should be knowledgeable in two literatures, experienced in the art and mechanics. In scientific texts, SL
translator should have good linguistic background and translation skills, reasonable knowledge in the subject.

3. Motivation:

In literary translation, motivation comes as a result of a personal interest for the translator. He wants to share his interest with others. But for scientific translation because of intrinsic significance of the original work.

4. Connotation:

Words in literary texts have a number of different meanings and connotations, but words used in scientific texts have only one meaning.

5. Evaluation:

Literary translation cannot be evaluated objectively. But scientific translation can be evaluated objectively.

6. Machine Translation:

Literary texts resist machine translation while scientific translation doesn't. Regarding the question raised at the beginning of this discussion 'What is the translator's task?' MD. G. R. Al-Zoubi and Rajul Bhargava, in their article "Some constraints, problems and misconceptions in Literary Translation" state that difficulties of translator lie on the level of equivalent terms which are not matched between the source language and the target language. In this case the solution according to Al-Zoubi comes only from the translator who should be not only a translator but also a writer and reader.
"... The translator must be close in one way or the other to the writer and have some understanding of him and his ways. The translator must also, like the critic and the scholar be a reader and a writer of some standing- a writer who can work in more than one language."\(^7^5\)

The other question which could be asked here is, 'What are the translation procedures and techniques translators use to encounter translation difficulties when translating? But such a question should be preceded by another question 'What words which commonly pose difficulties for literary translation?'

These words can be roughly divided into five groups:

a) Words related to ecology.

b) Material cultures.

c) Social cultures.

d) Non-verbal communication (gestures and facial expressions).

e) Translation of proper names (names and nicknames).

And moving back to the main question erupted above; the procedures would paraphrase as thus:

1. **Borrowing**: A translator resorts to borrowing when he finds himself/herself in a real confrontation with words of SL texts that have not equivalent terms in the TL. Especially words with strong cultural connotations or names of dress.

2. **Definition**: Definition is another method for dealing with element of culture. In this process unfamiliar word is explained. Such a method is
inadequately to solve problems charged with meanings and associations related to the other culture.

3. **Literal Translation:** It was commonly used in the early days of translation. Its main drawback may sometimes result in un-idiomatic or coarse language.

4. **Substitution:** This method is adopted when two cultures overlap partially ... the main advantage of such method is that it makes reading easy for the target text readers.

5. **Lexical Creation:** Lexical creation is a procedure used when the other commonly previous procedures failed to do so.

6. **Transliteration:** Transliteration is commonly used when the SL term cannot be substituted with an adequate TL term and the SL term cannot be translated into the TL.

7. **Omission:** Omissions are made by translators when they don’t hinder but facilitate communication. It is used when a cultural or linguistic element has less significance and its omission doesn’t make big effect.

8. **Addition:** Addition is legal in instances where the cultural features of the source text are totally new to the target language receptors. Addition can be in the form of sentences added to the text itself, notes glossary given at the end of the text.76

Finally, and in spite of the conflicting ideas taking place among scholars of translation, their efforts in tackling translation problematic issues are endless since their ultimate goal is to serve humanity. We will conclude
our present discussion by borrowing Mallikarjun Patil's "Literary Translation: Its Importance, Ways and Difficulties" effective remarks when he writes.

"In spite of that the mysteries of human experience, the shades of sense and sensibilities, ambiguities, language change cannot be rendered from one to another language, human mind has already succeeded in rewarding one's mind and heart into another."  

Analysis of the Selected Literary Work the Hostage

Introduction

The coming discussion will be focused on the translation analysis relating to the present translated work under consideration, The Hostage. Priority will be given to areas we feel translators did their best on them. Such a step is to be achieved through analyzing some translated texts chosen from the literary work. The other significant point which will be explored here is the areas which are proved to be the real challenges for the translators. That is to say that translation weaknesses and limitations will be dictated, analyzed and discussed in depth. The field of analysis will center around cultural bound aspects, lexical patterns, structural usages and stylistic issues. It is worth mentioning that most of the challenging issues the translators encountered are those emerged via cultural bound aspects. Such issues lead translators to lose their way and hinder them to achieve a perfect translation. The method the present researcher follows is practical rather than theoretical. The method can be summed up in the following points:

1. Go through the specific translated text.
2. Read it thoroughly and carefully with the comparison to the origin text.
3. Spot any irrelevant lexical, structural and cultural point emerges within the context.

4. Providing comments on a particular problem.

5. Giving alternatives and reasons.

What makes some great people be involved in a risky business, especially if they are not sure of its final products? Perhaps some of the reasons are:

1. Self-satisfaction.

2. Share the business with the others.

3. The significance of the business itself.

4. The heartening outcomes finally achieved.

This is exactly what happened to the translators of this work. They exerted themselves to fulfill a work deserves to be appreciated and praised. What they have actually done is attributed to their energy, patience and the commitment to the values they believed in. As a research scholar belongs to the same source culture of this literary work, admits, appreciates and considers the translators' endless efforts and the countless difficulties they faced. The literary work under discussion was selected for translation, almost the first work to be translated into the English language. Secondly, it should be admitted here that the intended work was a real challenge for translators for its unfamiliar discourse nature which is a half way between colloquialism and standard Arabic language. The work, in a nut-shell, has its own specific expressions, foreigners; including Arabic native speakers are unfamiliar with, let alone the cultural based norms and aspects, which, as a matter of fact,
represent the most factual challenge faced translators. Furthermore, the pure Yemeni rooted proverbs, similes, idioms and sayings which are mainly charged with cultural oriented references. Not only this, but also the kinship terms, dress and food specifics which were real obstacles for the translators. All these lead to hinder the translators’ great achievement.

According to what has been mentioned in the previous chapters, the translator’s task is not only translating words of the SLT into the TLT but most importantly transferring the culture of the SL to TL’s readership due to the interconnection between language and culture. Accordingly, the translators of the present work probably succeeded to:

1. Transmitting the language and culture of the source language into the target culture.
2. Be faithful to the source work.
3. Reflect the effect of the message of the source text to the target foreign receptor.
4. Maintain the local Yemeni color, taste, flavor and spirit in the TL.
5. Explore the Yemeni environment with all its social, political and cultural uniqueness. All these points reflected in their translation.

In the following translated texts, the translators proved to be more aware to deal with the language and the cultural based terms which exactly reflected what has been stated in the source text. The language of the translated aspects is more expressive, intelligible and easy to handle. A set of language expressions were used to facilitate intelligibility between the SL and the TL, among them was the phrasal verbs, idioms and collocations. Such a
use of language would be more effective and accepted for the target language receptors for their familiarity with it.

- The following selected translation texts are shown below.

- “In the city, you always seemed to take with the feeling you’d been beaten black and blue.” (P.49, The H.)

في المدينة بقوم الشخص النائم وكانه مضروباً ضرباً مبرحاً (الرهينة، 34)

The SL idiom probably matches the TL idiom and therefore intelligibility is achieved.

- “Nevertheless, my friend got up early as usual, even though he’d been racked all night by fits of hoarse coughing.” (P.49, The H.)

ومع ذلك فصاحبي يقوم مبكراً كعادته رغم سعاله الشديد (الرهينة، 34)

The vocabulary item “racked” was chosen perfectly since it gives us critical details relating to the handsome dawaydar’s chronicle sickness. Such a word gives a clue as if the dawaydar is actually tortured by coughing.

- “Now, in the midst of it, in its very bowels I saw it for what it truly was, a pit of plaques.” (P.35-6, The H.)

لكنها الآن ومن وسطها وفي أحضانها عرفتها على حقيقتها (الرهينة، 42)

A bowel in the dictionary means ‘long tube that carries solid waste from the stomach out of the body.’ Here ‘bowels’ is used completely in different context. It describes Taiz city, bowels embodies suffering, poverty and sicknesses the people of the city suffer from. The translation matches the
Arabic version without loss or skew in meaning. At the meantime the effect of the SL message has been already transmitted to the TL readership with the same degree.

- “I said nothing to him that nigh, so as to preserve my dignity.”
  (P.60, The H.)

لَم أَكْلِمَهُ تَلَكَ الْلِّيْلَةُ حَفْظًا عَلَى مَاء الْوَجْهَ" (الْرَّهْنِیَةِ، 47)

Deviation is clearly observed here due to the difference between the SL and TL expressions. It would have been better to use the most widely common expression or idiom “face-saving” instead of “preserve my dignity.”

Nevertheless, such an expression is close to the “face-saving” and probably gives the same effect.

- “… Where I’d share their usual breakfast of stale bread and peas…”
  (P.61, The H.)

أَنْتَ أَقْبَلْتَ مَعَهُمْ وَجْهَةَ الأَفْطَارِ الْعَادِيَةِ المَكْوَنَةَ مِنَ الْكَدَمِ وَالْبَرْعَيِ" (الْرَّهْنِیَةِ، 48)

Two SL cultural elements lost in this translation. Instead, translators resorted to a sort of compensation. The ‘bread’ and peas replaced the two SL cultural elements ‘Kudam’ and ‘bora’e’ due to their non-identical equivalents.

- “I prefer to leave. Our Master’s very concerned.” (P.73, The H.)

افْضِلُ الْذَّهَابَ، فِمَوَاتِي عَلَى أَحَرَّ مِنِ الْجَمْرَ" (الْرَّهْنِیَةِ، 60)

To show the governor’s impatience and pining, the adjective ‘very concerned’ is not enough, comparing to the source language phrase.
The translation of this phrase could be:

“... Our master's on pins and needles.” However, ‘concerned’ is to be close to the meaning.

• “That I didn’t come from people whose noses could be simply rubbed in the dirt” (P.79, The H.)

(اللهجة، 142)

ويأتي من قوم لم تمرغ أنوفهم التراب

Total correspondence is observed here between the TL and SL idioms. Intelligibility therefore is available.

• “...catching hold of him by the front of his shirt, I threw him down on the ground and started raining blows and kicks on him....” (P.100, The H.)

(اللهجة، 93)

فأمسكت بتلايبته وانهلت عليه لطماً وركلاً بعد أن بطحته أرضاً...

The translators were highly qualified and efficient to translate such a living scene to the hostage boy's fighting with the Crown Prince's son as precisely as it is found in the source version. The TL idiom “... raining blows and kicks” matches the SL idiom “”

Hence, intelligibility and effect are to be guaranteed for the foreign audience.

• “... I'd even thought the crown prince's wild beasts might come and devour me as I was watching them” (P.100, The H.)

(اللهجة، 93)

 كنت أتوقع مثلًا أن تتمهمني وحوش سيف الإسلام ولي العهد الكاسرة وأنا أفتحر عليها
The verb ‘devour’ denotes danger and fear. According to its semantic meaning ‘to eat something eagerly in large amount so that nothing is left’. The same is true with the source semantic verb which has the exact denotation. Hence, the translators were skillful choosing such SL semantic item.

- “... and I’d learned that the boy was the son of the crown prince, Sayf Al-islam, and the apple of his eye.” (P. 101, The H.)

وأوضح لي بعد ذلك أن الصبي المدلل هو فتى الأمير سيف الإسلام ولي العهد الذي يراه الدنيا بكمالها” (الزهرة، 94)

Actually a deviation is clearly observed between the translation text and the original one. However this deviation is restored to some extent. According to the source text, translation should be thus:

“... and I’d learned that the boy was the son of the crown prince, Sayf Al-islam who compares him to the whole world.”

And to avoid ambiguity in translation, and to be clearer for the target language receptor, translators favored to use the most widely common phrase “the apple of his eyes”, which became more expressive and effective than the original text.

- “She looked at the women without a word as they spat out their condemnation of me, full of curses and ugly epithets” (P. 103, The H.)

"كانت صامتة تنظر إلى النسوة وقد أفرغن كل كلامهن الغاضب علي من لوم وشتم وتجريح
إنصب على رأس" (الزهرة، 97)
To spit out means to get rid of the contents of the mouth, especially saliva. 'Spat out' was successfully used here to show how dreadful the royal women's attitudes towards the poor hostage boy. The use of such semantic item is highly appreciated for its deep connotative references. The women's condemnation against the boy's unintended behavior denoted their truly hatred and malice towards both Sharifa Hafsa and the hostage boy. The translators' word choice was aptly chosen.

• "...because I had more reason to be on the alert than he had."
  (p.136, The H.)

"عجبت ولت نفسي ... وأنا صاحب قضية وبهمني الأمر أكثر منه" (الرهينة، 138)

Here the hostage boy compares himself with the handsome dawaydar for his open-mindedness and cleverness. Translators were keen enough to choose the expression 'on the alert' which explained the original text briefly and appropriately, otherwise, if translators resorted to literal translation, it would create difficulties and misunderstanding for the TL readership.

• "I had refused point blank to mix the kerosene and ashes the torches... " (P.143, The H.)

"كنت قد رفضت بشده أن أعجن الرماد بالغاز وأشععه ... " (الرهينة، 143)

Again the idiom 'point blank' has achieved the target of the SL text perfectly.

It is obvious that the translators had resorted to collocation which is a combination of two or more words that occur together. Falling back upon this
method gives the hint that translators are versed enough to handle such a significant language skill. Below some examples are displayed to show translators’ success in their translation process.

1. “When I arrived at the governor’s house, my new friend, the dawaydar greeted me with a warmth which quite took me back.” (P. 26, The H.)

2. “Don’t be taken in by the way our room and our beds are…” (P. 45, The H.)

3. “Don’t play about. I really want to know.” (P. 4, The H.)

4. “But you put up with me, right from the start.” (P. 120, The H.)

5. “Then What’s worrying you so much you look as if you were a hundred miles away.” (P. 122, The H.)

6. “Fleeing from her wounding sarcasm, which tore me to the very depth, I rusted to the main gate.” (P. 126, The H.)

Analysis of the Selected Text the Hostage on Cultural Based References

• “It was the month of Allan, when people were getting ready for the harvest” (P. 2, The H.)

The above translated text is different from the source text. “Allan” is translated as a month. Allan, as it is footnoted in the original text is a star. It appears during the harvesting time. Such a term “Allan” is used by farmers. The word ‘people’ is added by translators unnecessarily. And since, ‘farmers’ themselves who get ready for harvesting, ‘people’ is useless here. Translation could be like this:
“It was the time of Allan, when farmers were getting ready for the harvest.”

Or: it could be like the following:

“It was the month of Allan, as it is called by Yemeni farmers, when they were getting ready for the harvest.”

Or: the term ‘Allan’ footnoted as the original did.

Therefore, the item ‘month’ is substituted by a word close to it. ‘Time’ in this case is better. First it is a general term. It is accepted and doesn’t make any distortion for the sentence. In the second sentence addition was essential in order to limit the use of “month” within the farmers only. In other words “It is a month as the Yemeni farmers call it.”

* Another misinterpretation committed by translators when information is given about the “faqih”. Here is what the translated text says:

“So much I gathered from the faqih who was given the job of instructing us in the Quran, and in our duties as obedient prisoners.” (P.24, The H.)

Basically, translators failed to pick up the real meaning of the words “duties”, and “obedient”. The word “duties” was rendered as an equivalent to the word task or chores. Translators take only the overt meaning and left its masked meaning. Both the words “duties” and “obedient” have religious referential background. Duties mean the five daily obligatory prayers performed by Muslims. The same is true with the word “obedient”, which doesn’t simply mean “to behave properly inside their prison”. The word
obedient bears a further religious connotation. It means submission to God, to be loyal and obedient to God's instructions, according to the Quran. And since you are faithful to God, naturally you will be faithful to your parents, elders and all the people. So the statement could be retranslated like this:

"... who was responsible for teaching us the Quran, the five religious duties (five daily prayers) and submission to Allah..."

- It is clear that the situation of Sharifa Hafsa and her marriage to her cousin sounds difficult to be understood. This is because the issue is related to the Islamic difficult inheritance system. Such a failure in translation results due to the translators' restricted knowledge of the Islamic inheritance law. However, this inheritance system is too difficult not only for translators but also for many Arabic native speakers leave alone the other culture readership.

The second point which leads to misunderstanding is the confused system of kinship in Yemeni society. Hence, confusion, perplexity, and misunderstanding will cast shed on the intended receptor. The following translation might help to explain the situation.

"Her marriage to her cousin was to the Governor's advantage who himself is married to her husband's sister, so the marriage was arranged to prevent the inheritance going outside the close relatives" (P.29, The H.).

- "It is for the host to decide where the guest goes" P.32, The H.).
Culturally and traditionally, the proverb mentioned earlier reflects the Arabs hospitality, generosity and openhandedness towards their guests in their early days. The proverb literally means that a guest of someone stays in his host’s house at least three days including his free food. But the guest should do what his host asks him to do, of course, for the guest’s interest. Translation of such a proverb seems to be unclear in the intended target receptor due to its cultural roots. According to Hasan Ghazala, in his book Translation as Problems and Solutions. He writes:

"...Proverbs are special, fixed unchanged phrases which have special, fixed unchanged meanings. Proverbs cannot be translated or understood as a collection of the individual meanings of its words."78

And since there is no equivalent in the TL, the following suggestions might be cited here to solve the problem.

1. Translate the meaning of the proverb like the following: (Literal Translation)

"You are my guest, so you have to do exactly what I ask you to do"

2. It can be put like this which is very close to the original one.

"The host is the only person who can decide." Or

3. A third solution is to omit the proverb from the translated copy since it is unimportant and doesn’t carry any essential significance for the TL readership.

- Ramadan is a religious and cultural based reflection. Ramadan has a very special religious meaning in the hearts of all Muslims. In Ramadan, the
Holy Quran came down from heaven. In Ramadan too, most of the Islam’s battle grounds against its enemy in the Arabia were won. In addition to that, Ramadan is the month when all Muslims announce their fasting from the sunrise in the early morning till the sunset in the evening for 30 days. It is difficult to find an equivalent word to Ramadan from the TL culture; translators could add a culture modifier to the word “Ramadan”. Translators dealt with the word of Ramadan as if the intended readership is familiar with “Ramadan”. Interestingly, the term “Ramadan” was mentioned four times in the text but no explanation was added.

Translation: “The next day was the first day of Ramadan, and this was evident…” (P.56, The H.).

Retranslation:

“The next day was the first day of Ramadan, when Muslims over the world stop eating and drinking from the sunrise to the sunset for 30 days…”

Therefore, readers of other cultures can understand at least one of Ramadan’s functions, i.e. fasting.

- Translation: “My friend had already got up and tidied his bed, and now he came back carrying a small coffee pot.” (P.35, The H.)

كان صاحبٌ قد نهض مبكراً قبله بعد أن ركب فراشه… ثم عاد وفي يده (جمنه) صغيرة من القهوة وحفظة وألقى بحسية الصباح باسمًا كعادته” (الريحنة، 17)

Two elements were dropped from the translating paragraph mentioned above. The first, the translators did not say what sort of “coffee pot” his
friend was carrying as mentioned in the original. Secondly, there is something missing, translators left it out deliberately for its cultural reflection and it is very hard to find a TL equivalent. But to solve this problem we can give the nearest equivalent meaning.

Retranslation:

“My friend had already got up and tidied his bed, and now he came back carrying a small earthen coffee pot and a bowl full of bread”.

Hence, the “coffee pot” is not Chinese or English coffee pot, it is “earthen coffee pot” made of earth not of metal or glass. Dropping cultural element like this is unacceptable due to its cultural uniqueness.

• The same mistake is repeated in another place when the governor was taking his coffee. Read the translated text below:

“... and he blew the smoke out into the air, and in front of him was a coffee pot in the middle of a white tray.” (P.44, The H.)

Interestingly both the governor, who represents the Imam, and an ordinary person in his palace are drinking their coffee with similar coffee pots, earthen pots.

For unknown reason, the translators added this phrase to the above translated text

“...in the middle of a white tray” which is not found in the original. And they omitted the following original phrase:

"كانت ج منه القهوة القشر أمامه برشفها بوسط صينية بيضاء."
The paragraph could be retranslated thus:

“... and he blew the smoke out into the air, and in front of him was an earthen coffee pot from which he was sipping his coffee by a white Chinese cup.”

A bad habit the Yemeni people have is the habit of chewing some sort of green leaves coined as “Qat”. People use such green leaves first to create social relationship with others and to enjoy themselves through meetings, discussions and celebrations. Secondly, “Qat”, as the users think, gives more energy to people working in different difficult situations or work needs more accuracy and exactness. However such substance has its own bad negative effects too. First, it is money-consumer since people spend millions and millions of Riyals buying such material everyday. Secondly, it is time-consumer as people spend a lot of time chatting and discussing.

The translators of this literary work, unfortunately wrongly, coined “Qat” as a “narcotic” in their translation copy. It is footnoted as:

Qat: A plant with green leaves chewed as a narcotic in Yemen (P.30, The H.)

Now let us see what “narcotic” means in the dictionary. According to Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary:

1. An illegal drug such as heroin or cocaine.
2. A drug which makes you want to sleep and prevents you feeling pain.

And according to what has been stated, “Qat” is not narcotic either in its properties or in its effects. For instance, and in conformity with the dictionary:

“A drug which makes you want to sleep and prevents you feeling pain.”

“Qat” on the other hand:

1. Gives you more energy to work very hard.
2. Gives your work more accuracy and perfection.

- A historical reference is lost in translation when a reciprocal accusation took place among the women of the palace over the hostage boy’s misbehavior with the Crown Prince’s pampered dawaydar. Piercing words used in such a battle between Sharifa Hafsa from one side and the rest of the women from the other side. The victim of this bad battle was the new hostage boy. And to show the real jealousy, one of the women uttered this statement in a sarcastic way:

  “Don’t take yourself for Zulaykha, the pharaoh’s wife.” (P.104, The H)

  And in order to show her inattentive attitude towards the boy, Sharifa Hafsa’s immediate reply was:

  “Well, he’s not Joseph either, you stupid woman.”(P.104, The H.)

(98 cAijA Jl)
Two names were mentioned in the above translated texts, Zulaykha and Joseph. The two names denote historical and religious reference addressed in the old scripts. According to a legendary, Zulaykha was the most beautiful and charming woman in Egypt. Her beauty was the people talk all over Egypt. The same is true with Joseph who was the most handsome man in the whole of Egypt. According to old scriptural records he was not allowed to show himself in public, particularly in front of women, for his attracting appearance. According to a story, Zulaykha, and because of Joseph's handsomeness tried to tempt him sexually but he resisted her temptation.

Going back to the translated text and asked these questions:

1. What do Zulaykha and Joseph mean for the intended language target receptor?
2. Where did they live?
3. When did they live?
4. Is the name Pharaoh enough to indicate Egypt?
5. Does everybody of the target message readership know about Pharaoh?
6. Is the name Joseph enough to indicate Egypt at that era of history?

Let us suppose that readers of the target culture knew who Zulaykha and Joseph were but what is behind mentioning their names in the text? Is it because they are superstars?

And to cover this culture gap translators should have added more information to both names.
“Don’t take yourself for Zulayka, the most beautiful woman in Egypt.”

“Well he is not Joseph, who was the most handsome man in Egypt.”

Another big mistake committed by translators is that Zulaykha was not the Pharaoh’s wife but she was a wife of somebody else called ‘Alaziz’.

- “… and he had a side dagger with a genuine Syfani blade…” (P.37, The H.)

As it has been mentioned earlier, that the lack of full intelligibility and comprehension of Yemeni culture, translators gave incorrect information regarding one of the famous tradition Yemeni people are proud of; that is Janbia or dagger. Such a Janbia is placed round someone’s waist. Unfortunately, translators put the emphasis on the ‘genuine Syfani blade’ rather than ‘the head’ of the Janbia (dagger) which is very important. Such a ‘head’ is called ‘Syfani’ which always renew itself for it is made of special animal horns such as elephants or rhinoceros. Hence, such a translated text should be translated as thus:

“... a round his waist placed a Janbia, a Yemeni traditional dagger, with a genuine Syfani priceless head.”

Stress here lies on the Syfani head instead of the Syfani blade. And since the absence of cultural equivalent of the TL, the term Janbia, which is connected to the SL culture can be retained and make a kind of translation.
• "...they were Wahhabis and Saayda, and we were Yemenis both Sunni and Zuyud." (P.122, The H.)

كانوا (وهابيين) و(سعايد) .. وكما نحن يمنانيون .. (متوكليون) و(زيرود)" (الرهمة، 119)

When historical aspects, related to any given society, are involved in a literary work, responsibility of a translator multiplied. To overcome this difficulty, a translator is either neglects such pitiful events (especially in our case) or more clarification should be considered. We have to remember that we are translating to an alien readership not familiar with the SL culture.

The text translated above is about an event took place in the past years. The Bourezan witnessed the event or the battle. It was between Saudis and Yemenis. In that battle Yemeni troops were defeated. What the problem here is that the story which was told by the Bourezan, was not clear enough for he is illiterate person. Adding to its ambiguity the wrong proper names uttered by the Bourezan, “Saayda” means “Saudis”. Moreover, names such as “Sunni”, which is actually not mentioned in the original, and “Zuyud”, are very sensitive terms among Yemeni people for their sectarian connotation. Yet, the problem gets worse when translators introduced information not existed in the original. Therefore, such insignificant information should be omitted in translation.

• "He was the only one, in fact, who owned a pair of Adeni shoes."

(P.37, The H.)

It sounds as if translators, in most cases, forward their translation to readership of the source culture not for the target language readers. This is
evident in the phrase “Adeni shoes”. What is Adeni shoes for a foreign reader? Is Aden a trademark? Or is it a city?

To show the reader what Aden is, one of the following solutions might be introduced to the translated text:

1. Either translators give notes at the end of the text to show what Aden means.
2. Or give glossary?
3. Or footnotes as it exists in the original.

We think the best alternative is giving footnotes at the bottom of the page, for example:

“Adeni shoes: Shoes traded via Aden, which is a very important Yemeni city with its international sea port. Aden was under the British occupation.”

• “I embraced him, then washed him with my own hands, and stood looking at his naked body…”

According to the Islam principles, when a person died, he/she must be immaculated before he/she is buried, except those who died in battlefields for they are martyrs.

Translators of the above text did not tell why the hostage boy washed his friend’s body after his death. Such an unexplained issue would generate a number of questions in the minds of the readers. Therefore, a cultural modifier might be inserted after the reference for the sake of clarification.
Retranslation:

“I embraced him, then washed him with my own hands, according to Islamic principles...”

- Another culture and religious aspect is completely neglected and left ambiguous for the alien reader.

“As we placed the coffin next to the small grave, to recite the usual Sura of Yasin over it, I ....” (P.146, The H.).

- What is “the usual Sura of Yasin”?

- Does the foreign reader know the “Sura of Yasin”?

Two essential elements should be known in this case:

- Sura of Yasin and

- Over it.

For the first one, a religious reference should be added for more clarification. And for the second one the pronoun “it” is open for different interpretations. It might be

- The grave.

- The body.

- The coffin.

And to overcome this ambiguity, the translated paragraph could be retranslated thus:
"As we placed the coffin next to the small grave to recite some verses from the Holy Qura’n (Surat Yasin) over the dead body."

"Surat Yasin" is retained in the source culture since there is not an identical equivalent in the target language. But the most important thing we emphasized on is that "Surat Yasin" is a part of Qura’n. The other thing is that such a Sura is recited when peoples bury their dead bodies in particular.

- "The Imam and his heir, the Crown Prince Sayf Al-Islam, have the horses taken to their own palaces." (P.28, The H.).

"Sayf Al-Islam" probably creates a cultural problem for the foreign audience. They might wrongly think that it is the name of the Crown Prince. Sayf Al-Islam is his royal nickname. All the members of the royal family are nicknamed as Sayf Al-Islam. And to solve such a kingship trap, it would be better to omit this nickname and give his name instead.

- "The Imam and his heir, the Crown Prince, Ahmad…"

"Sayf Al-Islam had followed this by declaring Sana’a an open city for his men to loot and kill and destroy as they wished." (P.143, The H.)

Sana’a, as the capital of Yemen, is not identified. Readers of the other cultures do not know what Sana’a is. Translators should add a necessary modifier for identification.

"Sayf Al-Islma had followed this by declaring Sana’a, the capital, an open city…"
Misinterpretation and Ambiguities

Misinterpretation or misunderstanding is another translation feature put its shades over the translated work. A part of this misinterpretation comes from the translators' negligence. That is because their reading of the original source was not in depth. In other words, translators caught only the surface meaning and left out the hidden meaning. Another thing might be the reason for that is that they found difficulties to be not familiar with some special Yemeni expressions or terms.

“Although the coffin and the body in it were so light, I felt as though my neck was going to break, and I was utterly worn out ...” (P. 146, The H.)

Such a careless translating mistake gives an impression that we people carry our dead bodies over our heads rather than our shoulders. Such a translated paragraph was translated exactly the same as the Arabic. But the Arabic version mainly provided to native readers who can easily understand the situation. It can be retranslated like this:

“Although the dead body was so light, I felt as if my shoulder was going to break.”

The following situation shows that translators couldn’t grasp what happened inside Al-Qahera Fortress. The ambiguous setting resulted to misleading the reader’s intelligibility.

Let us read the translated text.
"We'd stand close to watch the firing of the cannons at sunset, then we'd break our fast and go quietly off to bed, waking in the morning, when the soldiers and their commander and the faqih were still asleep, to play amid the open spaces and passageways and high places overlooking the fortress." (P.57, The H.)

"To overlook" means to look at something from above or high position. It means you are higher than that thing you are looking at. The situation in the fortress is as follows:

The hostage prisoners are playing within the limitation of the fortress not outside. For example, they might have gone to the mountain which is overlooking the fortress, but "to play amid the open spaces and passageways" of the fortress itself. What the reader understands, according to the above translated text, is that the hostage prisoners had left the fortress and they now are overlooking the fortress from a higher point. Such a conclusion comes through the verb "overlook". The paragraph will be much clear if it is retranslated like this:

"... to play amid the open spaces and passageways and mounted the high places of the fortress overlooking the city."

- "As the governor arrived alongside us carrying a bottle with a long neck and a white liquid inside it. Foolishly, I tried to stand up as he arrived, out of respect, but the poet pulled me back." (P.82, The H.)

The phrase:
“out of respect” created confusion and made the paragraph difficult to be caught. It didn’t serve the situation because it is not within the context."

It is an additional phrase.

According to the original text, the paragraph could be retranslated as thus:

"... Foolishly, I stood up in the honor of his arrival, as I thought, but the poet pulled me back to recline next to him."

- It is clear that when translators are encountered by cultural referenced elements, their perplexity multiplied and increased. Based on that, let us read the following translated text.

"I had thought I might fall off the back of the mail van, or get crushed under the bundles of Qat.”(P.100, The H.)

The situation in the previous translated paragraph is that the hostage boy is reviewing all his misfortunes in the Crown Prince’s palace. And instead of having good time, he had a bad one. One of his concerns is, according to the translated text, to “get crushed under the bundles of Qat.” Basically, Qat is not a vehicle or a huge rock that he might have been crushed under, it is simply, as it has been explained before a “plant with green leaves chewed…” So, why didn’t translators go back to the original text? The hostage boy was concerned of losing some bundles of Qat not “get crushed under the bundles of Qat.”
"I had thought I might fall of the back of the mail van or losing some bundles of Qat."

- The most striking example to prove that translators of the text are falling short with the Yemeni tradition is to be shown in the following translating paragraph:

"Even the Bourezan had gone this time, with a warrant of authority to collect a whole year’s dues from an oppressive ‘Shaykh’ in a fertile valley." (P.66, The H.)

What was wrongly perceived by translators is that the Bourezan, as an official soldier, went to that “oppressive Shaykh” who refused to pay behind hand dues to the government for a whole year, went to Shaykh and collected that amount of money which belongs to the government. What exactly happened is that the Bourezan went to Shaykh to blackmail him and came back with a lot of money for himself not for the government.

The above translated paragraph could be translated thus:

"Even the Bourezan had gone this time with an official warrant over an oppressive Shaykh and came back with a lot of pocket money given to him."

- Another misleading situation which needs more accuracy from translators is when the new hostage boy asked his friend the handsome dawydar about what happened to his father and the rest members of his family and the handsome dawydar replied:
“All that’s left in your houses is the women and babs in arms along with the Imam’s soldiers and the cavalry guards.” (P.53-54, The H.)

There is one important element missing here in which might have raised a question in the mind of the target culture readership. Such an element could be put in a form of a question. Why are the Imam’s guards and soldiers in the hostage boy’s houses?

The Imam, and to show his frightening power against his disobedients, used to put their houses along with their families under siege for months until dissidents come back from their secret hideouts and surrender, otherwise, siege continues. Soldiers, who carry out such orders, have to live at the expense of these families. This last part of the translation is missing which considers the heart of the message. Therefore, translation could be retranslated as the following:

“All what is left in your houses are the women and babies in arms, together with the cavalry guards who shared the family’s daily expenditures till men comeback and surrender.”

لا يوجد في دياركم سوى النساء والأطفال المرض والعساري والعكش بقاء عليكم.

(الرهينة، 40)

- The situation in the following paragraph is not clear enough either in the original copy or in the translated one. The problem too, is that both copies are unmatched. The following is the translation of the original version:

- She is the governor’s sister.
- The unmarried one.
- Unmarried?
- Yes.
- But...
- But... she has her own special methods.
- She can memorize the moon days perfectly.

- هي أخت النائب... العائس؟
- عائس؟
- نعم.
- ولكن...
- ولكن... لها طرقها الخاصة.
- لم أفهم.

Now read the translated copy.

- ‘She is the governor’s sister’ he said. ‘The unmarried one.’
- Unmarried?
- Yes.
- But...
- But what? She has her own ways of dealing with that ‘I can tell you.’
- I don’t understand.
- She knows all there is to know about the human mouth.
  (P.38, The H.)
What is noticed in the previous texts, both the original text and the translated copy is that unintelligibility totally covers the situation. This is because, as this researcher thinks, the situation includes sexual implications Zahra indulged in, and due to the restricted moral standards, the author favored to give only some hints related to Zahra's involvement in sex with ordinary people inside the palace.

This is so noticed through hesitation and the unfinished dialogues took place between the handsome dawydar and his friend, the hostage boy. So a question could be raised here “Why is the translated copy not matching the original one?” Actually, the big difference between the two versions is in the last two sentences, compare:

The Translated copy:

“She knows all there is to know about the human mouth.” (P.38, The H.)

The original copy:

“She can memorize the moon days perfectly.” (الرهينة، 22-21)

Surely, there is no solution for this riddle except in the minds of the author and translators.

- Translation of the following text needs to be improved enough since its overstatement and lacking of reasonable thinking. The original, on the other hand, might be accepted for it is forwarded to readers of the source language, in spite of its falling short of logic. It is noticed that translators, from one hand, follow exactly the
original copy in their translation, and from the other hand, an unimportant phrase added to the original. The new born text, unfortunately, has been totally distorted. Three translated copies will be introduced here, one the translated copy, the other is the literal translation of the original Arabic and the third is the suggested version of translation.

“The way they treated me, you would have thought I’d violated the heavens by committing some crime unknown since the birth of humanity.” (P.103, The H.)

Literal translation:

“Their negative reaction towards me as if I had penetrated the heavens and committed a crime never any human being had before since the beginning of creation until now.”

The suggested translation:

“The way they treated me as if I had violated the law of heaven and committed capital crimes against humanity.”

The above suggested translation could be accepted for its clarity, intelligibility and acceptance. Such a suggested translation depends on Nida’s communicative approach which seeks to achieve the same effect on the readers of SL and TL. Moreover, its quality is probably better than the original. Its meaning too is preserved in the target language.
Going back to the translated message, it is noticed that translators used the word “the heavens.” And referring to the *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*, we find two different words for heaven:

1. ‘heaven’ as a singular and without the article ‘the’ which means: “The place where god or gods live and where good people are believed to go after they die.”

2. ‘the heavens’, plural, which means sky; for example: “we stared up at the heavens trying to see the comet.” So, what would be suggested here is that the translators’ intended goal is ‘heaven’ not ‘the heavens’ but unfortunately, their word choice is wrong. The phrase “you would have thought” which is added to the translated passage functionally useless.

- Sometimes it is very imperative for translator to explain, to add and to define a word he knows that could be a problematic issue for the reader of the other language, especially if the word is a culture bound item. Otherwise, the target culture receptor might wrongly interpret such a given word as something exists in his own culture. In the following translation the word “stoves” denotes something different from its general definition in the dictionary. According to the dictionary ‘stove’ is a piece of equipment which burns fuel or uses electricity in order to heat a place(*Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*). But according to the translated text its meaning is completely different for its connection with the local community.

“On some nights, they would be surprised by a visit from the women of the royal family, from the palaces of the Crown Prince,
their perfume overwhelming the smell of the smoke rising from the nargilas and the stoves.” (P.58, The H.).

It would be better to add a cultural modifier to make the situation clear.

“...rising from the nargilas and the wood coal stoves placed in the room”.

- What a silver riyal in the following text is? The foreign reader can’t grasp the conception of this “silver riyal”. He doesn’t know it is the standard unit of currency used in Yemen. Translator should add any significant indicator, like for example footnotes.

“One night he pressed a silver riyal into my hand...(P.58, The H.).

Silver riyal: is the standard unit of currency used in Yemen.

Or translators might have put a cultural modifier like the following:

“One night he pressed a silver coin into my hand”.

- A part from the following translation text contains wrong information related to “sugar cane plantations” which is not mentioned in the original copy.

“I remembered my mother who had fled with...through the plantations of corn and sugar cane” (P.124, The H)

The reason behind such a mistake as the researcher believes is that translators mixed up between two close Arabic phrases mentioned in the original,
Which literally mean:

“Corn cane”

“Sugar cane”

The mistake committed as a result of “eye deception”.

“At the Fortress Ramadan had always followed the same pattern for the soldiers and their commander…” P.57, The H.)

**Pattern - routine**

Pattern is a particular way in which something is done, organized or happened.

Routine is a habitual or fixed way of doing things.

The above translation reflects two significant points. The most significant one is the translation logically needs improvement. Read: “At the Fortress Ramadan had always followed...instead of “During Ramadan, soldiers and their commander follow...”. If we accept that it means that Ramadan is personified and it means that Ramadan fasts not the people. The other point is “routine” not pattern is to be used according to the definitions.

“Is it the governor’s cousin, or the one who is looking at you as if she could eat you.”(P.96 ,The H).

This is what Sharifa Hafsa said to the hostage boy in the mail van, accusing him of sexual relation with the governor’s cousin. What is meant by this expression is that the governor’s cousin is so eager to sleep with the
hostage boy. The verb denotes a strong sexual desire. No doubt that such an expression would create misunderstanding to the foreign reader. It would be better to put it this way:

“As if she is calling you to her bed”

“Your mother, oh dawydar, is distracted by her loss, her tears fall like rain”

This refrain is repeated by the soldiers is not a part of traditional or popular song. The soldiers repeat such a refrain as soon as they see the handsome dawydar. It reflects a deep emotional impact. However, and in order the refrain to be more expressive, effective and more poetic too, it might be improved as the following:

“Oh dawydar! How much your mother missed you!! How broken-hearted she is without you.”

“Every man has his day.” (P.88, The H.)

This is a very famous saying which is charged with an indirect implication and connotation. Its translation in such a poor way doesn’t reflect even the least of its significant meaning. Unfortunately, though the translation is insufficient, it intends the opposite meaning. The nearest translation to such a text could be like the following:

“Every period of time has its own leaders and heroes.”

“كل عصر رجالة.” (الرهينة، 78)
Lexicals

Our preceding discussion shed the light on problems emerged as a result of cultural nature, which at the same time, misled translators to avoid them in their translation. Another kind of problems appeared owing to wrong interpretation, partially due to their cultural nature too. The present researcher believes that such serious problems in the translated version came to the scene due to:

1. Translators’ falling short of the Yemeni culture and tradition.
2. The specialized words and expressions which reflect the Yemeni tradition used in the original.
3. The translators’ non-thoughtful and profound reading of the original.
4. The language of the original text is a half-way between colloquialism and Arabic Standard Arabic.

The following part of the discussion will focus on the lexical difficulties disclosed in the translated work.

Grin: is a wide smile,

(I assumed things had gone well for him as he had a big grin in his face).

“And all the while, my friend was grinning from ear to ear.” (37).

كنت أتفرحز... بينما زميلي يضحى ملى شدقيه.” (الزينة، 8)

Based on the original text, it wasn’t a grin; rather it was a big laughter. When somebody laughs, he produces sounds. But when he grins, he shows it in his face.
• Clucking – noise

Insects – food

“All mingled with the clucking of chickens disturbed by our arrival as they forged for insects.” (P.28, The H.)

Two lexical items used in the above text inadequately. The first “clucking” used as a noun, though it has only the verb form. The item, “insects” gives a clue that chickens can’t live without insects. Translation would be better if it is rendered as the follow:

“All mingled with the noise of the chickens disturbed by our arrival as they were searching for food”

• Music-rings

In the following translation, translators seemed to be too faithful to copy the exact original text. Such fidelity is an unacceptable in some situations. Sometimes translators are bound to make significant shifts based on the new situation simply they are transmitting from a culture unknown to audience of different culture. In this case, the lexical item “music” used in its inaccurate usage. Brass bills never give music, they give rings or sounds.

“I remembered how my father had always been to keep brass bills fastened round the necks of the bulls. Whenever I went through the lower part of our house, or to the spring, or to the meadows, their music would fill me delight” (P.28, The H.)

• Milking – milk – diary

Milk means to obtain milk from animal
Ex. Milking a cow by hand is a skilled process.

“All I saw through the whole length and breadth of the Governor’s stables was a couple of mules, his milking cows...”
(P.2, The H.)

In the above translation, the vocabulary item “milking” used as an adjective. Such an adjective is not existed in the dictionary. Alternatives for that wrong word choice are either:

- milk cow
- diary cow

• Proud - thick - long

Proud (adj.) feeling pleasure and satisfaction. Accordingly, mustache can’t feel pleasure or satisfaction simply because it is not a human being. We can for example say:

“India is proud of its first journey to the moon” What is meant by “India” here are the Indian people but not its trees or mountains. So the adjective “proud” is never to be used as it is used in the translated text. We say:

He is proud of his thick/long mustache.

“He was the only man without a beard and his proud mustache was dyed with henna.”P.37, The H.)

• Man - soldier

A translator should be always on alert and keen enough to reflect the exact setting he is depicting. The following translation text is reflecting martial life. Lexical should be chosen carefully.
“He was the only man, in fact, who owned a pair of Adani shoes”
(P. 37, The H.)

Translators should have chosen specific lexicons and since the Bourezan is a soldier among the rest of his comrades, the word “man” should be replaced by “soldier” instead.

“He was the only soldier, in fact, who owned a pair of Adani shoes”

- **Cloak- wrapper**

Cloak: is a loose outer piece of clothing without sleeves, which fastens at the neck, and is worn instead of a coat.

Wrapper: is a piece of cloth covers the lower part of the body.

“Beneath the spotless cloak, which fell only to his knees...”
(P.38, The H.)

Unluckily, and for their lack of the Yemeni traditional dress, translators mixed up between a piece of cloth covers the whole body and the one covers only a part of the body. What actually the Bourezan wears is not a cloak which covers the whole body; rather, it is a Yemeni traditional piece of cloth covers the lower part of his body. Yemenis call such a piece ‘magtab’, so ‘wrapper’ is the nearest equivalent word to this local word ‘magtab’

- **Gently-urgently**

**Urgently:** urgently is to do something very soon, especially before anything else, because it is important.
The following situation shows the hostage boy trying to convince his friend, the dawydar to go with him to the city, when he asked to do that he showed his politeness since he expects his friend’s refusal.

“I like to go and walk in the city today”, I said urgently. “Just for an hour.” (P.53, The H.)

“I like to go and walk in the city today, I said gently”

- **Proud- lofty**

“I called back to mind the nights of Ramadan in my own home village that nestled within the folds of its proud mountain, set amid the dozens of other villages…” (P.56, The H.)

Again the adjective “proud” is used in its improper usage. It is used only with people not with inanimate beings. Such a wrong word choice draws itself from Arabic interference. The word “lofty” is better to serve the purpose.

- **Bad way- bad condition**

There is a difference between these two sentences.

1- Your village is in a bad way.

2- Your village is a bad condition.

The first one implies that the situation is bad but it could be resolved while the second implies that the situation is actually serious and if there are not urgent solutions, it could be worse.

“Your father’s fled, and he’s stirring things up by attacking the
Imam in the newspapers in Aden and your village is in a bad way” (P.53, The H.)

So the situation is not normal. It is frightening since the village and the houses of the family besieged. It would be better to describe the state as

“...in a bad condition”.

- **Craned-peered**

“The main gate was opened as far back as it would go. Necks were craning from every window, inside the palace and outside, and the turmoil was growing” (P.62;The H.)

To crane means to stretch your neck up or forward.

To peer means to look carefully or with difficulty.

Ex. When no one answered the door, she peered through the window to see if anyone was there.

According to the definitions cited above, the situation in the previous translation doesn’t need the crowds to crane their necks to watch the Governor’s procession with his son’s new car, since the celebration is taking place in the courtyard of the palace. So people, according to the original version were peering from the windows of the palace and the buildings surrounding it. So,

“People were peering from every window, inside the palace and outside...”

- **Employees – farmhands.**

- **Colleagues – sharecroppers.**
Employee: is a person is paid to work for somebody.

Farmhand: is a person who is paid to work on farm.

Colleague: one of a group of people who work together.

Sharecroppers: farmers who rent land and who give part of his crop as rent.

“Crowds of people, colleagues or employees of the Governor in the city and countryside, had gathered” P.62, The H.)

And based on the definitions given above, translators failed to choose the right lexicons for the right translating context. Their wrong choice of the lexical items showed their unawareness of the social system in Yemen at that time. In other words, and based on different theories, a text of translation should depict the real phenomena of any given community including its surrounding environment socially, culturally, religiously and linguistically as well. Words do not stand by themselves, rather, they express the surrounding setting they represent through their denotative and connotative reflections.

In other words, what do we expect from an unjust and an uneducated governor towards his subjects? What kind of relationship connects these poor people with a hostile governor? Is it employer-employees relationship? Or is it Lord-slaves relationship? Or is it feudatory-slavery relationship? Thus the above translating text might be retranslated this way:

“Crowds of people, sharecroppers and farmhands of the governor in the city...”

• Hug: To hug means to hold somebody or something with arms, close to the body.
"I gathered my fetters, hugging them between my knees" (P.62, The H.)

Translators didn’t tell the audience how the boy gathered the fetters since they fettered his legs. Did the boy sit down then lifted the fetters up to his knees then hugged his knees including his fetters? Was the boy standing then he bent down to gather the fetters? Translators made the translation text complicated. And based on the original text, translation could be:

“I sat down and hugged my knees including my fetters”

- **Slap – hit**

To slap something or somebody means to use your flat part of your hand.

Ex. She gave her son a slap.

“She slapped her leg against the side of the limestone encrusted fountain, then placed her hand under her buttocks” (P.63, The H.)

This translation, with its complicated archaic vocabulary could be simply translated this way:

“She hit her leg against the side of the white coated fountain”.

Another significant mistake committed by the translators; an unjustifiable change occurred in the same text. In the translated text we find:

“...then she placed her hand under her buttocks.”

But in the original, it says:

"ثم وضعت يدها على عجزها..." (الرهينة، 51)

“... then she placed her hand on the back of her buttocks”.

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• **Cloaks-turbans**

Cloaks: loose outer pieces of clothes (explained before)

Turbans: a head covering for a man, worn especially by Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus and made from a long piece of cloth which is wrapped around the top of the head many times.

"The guests took off their traditional outer clothes and white cloaks and sat down" (P.78, The H.)

وجلس الضيوف وقد خلع معظمهم ثيابه التقليدية والعمائم البيضاء" (الرحينة, 66)

For the second time, translators committed a mistake relating to the same lexical item “cloaks”. In the preceding translation text, translators wrongly used “cloak” to mean a piece of cloth covers the whole body. Now, they wrongly used the plural form of “cloak” to mean a piece of cloth covers the head. Such a mistake is unjustifiable.

• **Huge**: an extremely large in size or amount.

Ex. They live in a huge house. The costs involved in building a spacecraft are huge. Formally, huge as an adjective can’t be used to describe human beings, but rather, inanimate objects are attributed.

"I finally got board with wandering around outside the palace and began to feel very lonely. Then a huge slave, as black as night and wearing the uniform of..." (P.98, The H.).

It could rather be translated

"...then a tall, well built slave came..."
• Headstone-stone/contents

"We threw the earth over the grave and its contents and placed a stone over it as a sign that a man and not a woman was buried."
(P.146, The H.)

Stone: a stone is a general word used in different usages
Headstone: is the right word which is placed at one end of a grave with the name of the person who has passed away man or a woman alike.

Problems Pertaining the Figurative Language:

It would be worth mentioning here that the figurative language used in this literary art work are restricted to proverbs and similes, albeit their insignificant presence in the whole text. The present researcher attributes such shortage to the factual accounts the fiction centers around. The narration, in other words, deals with live people, live society and a political system lacks the simplest humanitarian values. The fiction intends to be a historical reflection rather than a pure literary work. Further, both of its characters and location are restricted too, so and based on what has been stated, such a kind of work does not give space for figurative language to be highly presented. The following discussion will highlight the problems originated from translating proverbs and similes. A main point needs attention in this context is that similes displayed here are connected with animals and natural phenomena such as the moon, the sun, lion, gazelle ...For example when a beautiful woman is compared, she is compared with particular female animals. At the same time when a man or say, brave man is compared, he is compared with some animals known for strength and bravery. Some instances
like these might be strange for the other cultural readership and might not logically acceptable...but luckily or unluckily that is why we always repeat the term "cultural differences" among nations.

Proverbs

• "You're your mother's son." (P.126, The H.)

This proverb literally means that somebody, especially a young male person, is not his father's son, rather, he is his mother's son. It is well known that when a new baby is born already he/she is given the name of his father but not the name of his/her mother. The proverb used ironically in this context. When somebody says "You're your mother's son", it means that that particular person is still immature and needs more care and daily life experiences. Such a proverb is said only to young male people. Another connotative perception such a proverb might bear is that such a said person was grown up under his mother's nursery and not his father's. Surely, the LT readership will find himself puzzled when he comes across such a proverb for its underlying meaning and cultural connotations.

• "One man's bad luck, so it's said, is another man's good luck"
  (P.47, The H.)

This proverb is widely known due to its fame and popularity. The use of this proverb comes as a result of two significant events occurred inside the governor's palace. The first one is related to the hostage boy's misbehavior during the night party with the governor's son, the poet and others. The hostage boy, and for psychological circumstances, exceeded drinking alcohol,
resulting to be involved in critical problems with the others, especially the poet. Such a scandal becomes known inside the palace. But next morning, and for the interest of the boy, another big incident happened. It was the shameful act of the old Tabashi with the female mule, Zafrana, inside the governor’s stable. This latter incident overwhelmed the hostage boy’s story, so people in the palace started talking about the old Tabashi and Zafrana. However, this proverb can be replaced by one of the most acceptable and notable proverb which is:

“One man’s meat is another man’s poison.”

• “The man who’s down in the valley, wants to be in the mountain.”(P.142, The H.)

Probably, this proverb is the most challenging one for the foreign culture readership. It is totally local proverb (Yemeni version). Its translation doesn’t add any information to foreign readers. On the contrary, it creates problems instead. Literally, this proverb reflects the people grasping nature. They always want to own more than what they possess, always look at the other’s possessions. According to the proverb, those who settle in valleys wish to be mountains’ dwellers, and those who live at the top of mountains wish to be valleys’ settlers.

**Similes**

• “My friend leaped down after the governor like a gazelle” (P.65, The H.)

In Arabic culture, we resemble beautiful female animals with beautiful
women. In the main time, brave men, heroes with some wild animals, tigers, lions.

He is as brave as a tiger.

She is as beautiful as a gazelle.

But in the above situation, the simile is between a gazelle which is a female animal and a male human being. It is a strange resemblance since its unmatched sex. We can not say, for example:

“Ahmad looks like a gazelle.”

So it would be better to say:

“My friend leaped down after the governor like a lion.”

If the translators wants to stress on the Bourezan’s quick movement when climbed out of the car (governor’s son car) a TI. cultural equivalent might be inserted instead of copying the same phrase. Thus it could be retranslated like this:

“My friend leaped down after the governor as swift as a narrow.”

• “One night he (the poet) pressed a silver riyal into my hand, never before had I hold one, or even known what shape it was. It was as though a moon had suddenly come down to me from the sky.”

(P.59, The H.)

In the translation text, translators were not keen enough to adopt the same local figurative speech, simile. In the East, especially in the Arabic culture, the moon, the sun, the stars are used to compare them with women
and other priceless things. But other cultures, surely, have their own figurative language tools. Now imagine that the moon suddenly comes down to your arms from the sky! It would be a catastrophe, the end of the world and the end of the human beings. Therefore, what might be acceptable in one culture might not be so in another. What translators need to do is one of the followings:

- either be replaced or
- paraphrased

For example, it might be rendered like this:

“Silver coin for me was as if I had possessed the whole world”

- “Yet I still saw her tall, slim figure before me, turning sinuously like a smooth-skinned snake, or perhaps, like a huri from paradise” (P.4, The H.)

Two contrasting similes are introduced here. One, you feel like it and the other one is fearful. It might be argued that such kinds of similes were the author’s choices, so translators should be faithful to translate them as they are. Yes, but to whom is translator translating? Is it for another cultural audience? So, why don’t translators make some necessary shift and reach an acceptable equivalent close to the TL culture?

**Style of Redundancy**

Redundancy, according to Hasan Ghazala, is the use of unnecessary, extra words to express something. It is a long boring way of expressing meaning, using two, three or more words instead of one word only. It is
usually considered as a bad style, and is therefore, disposed of in translation. However, and in spite of what has been stated by Ghazala, he is totally side with the style of redundancy in translation. In the event, he points out that the main point in translation is to reflect the style of the SL text, whether good or bad. He is with the view that “Our responsibility, as translators, is not to improve the translated text, but rather to convey it into the TL as it is as much as we can, neither better nor worse.” One question could be raised here; What is the translator’s role? Yes, there is a role, but unfortunately a negative one. In our previous discussion, we mentioned that the translators’ task doesn’t stand only at the level of translation, rather, he is a reader, writer, critic and above all, he is the eye of the TL reader. Ghazala’s statement deprives the translator’s freedom and turns him from an independent into dependent, carrying out his job according to the author’s interest.

Ghazala wants to convince his readers through countless of examples pertaining redundancy, repetition and long sentences, when he compares between Arabic language and English. As a matter of fact, he is right in this regard, since the style of redundancy, repetition and long sentences regard part and parcel of the Arabic language’s characteristics, nonetheless, problems emerge when such style patterns are transferred from Arabic into other languages. In a nut-shell, what might be available in one language might not be so in another. The following examples of redundant sentences are spotted in the translated text.

• “How I admired his energy, and grace, and the smile which accompanied them! He was bright, quick, and tactful, and always ready with a witty remark and understood the character of
everyone...He'd buzz around like a bee, from the palace to surrounding buildings and back again, then sit down for awhile with his usual smile on his face, then get up and start hovering and circling again” (P.36, The H.)

The central point in this long paragraph revolves around the handsome dawaydar's quick movement, cleverness and his rapid reaction towards events and the people he deals with. What we see here is a number of synonymous vocabulary items crowded together. The following lexical words have almost the same meaning:

Bright, quick, tactful, ready with a witty remark, understood, buzz around like a bee, hovering and circling.

Such lavishness in vocabulary discounts some of the text relish and spirit.

Read these two texts and see the difference.

"He laid his rifle gently and carefully on walls by the gate alongside us, looking inquiringly at me through eyes that were skillfully, and strikingly.” (P.38, The H.)

"He laid his rifle carefully on the wall by the gate. Then he sat down alongside us. Finally, he looked at me with inquiring and skillful eyes.”

The first paragraph is loose; one breathless long sentence with squeezing words. The second paragraph is short sentence style, accelerates events and provokes curiosity.

“All I felt able to do for my part was to stand there politely and modestly” (P.40, The H.)
Using 'politely' is enough to achieve the purpose. It doesn’t make difference to use both. ‘Modestly’ is a wrong choice in this situation. Read these examples to differentiate between their usages

- She was dressed modestly.
- He told them politely to leave him in peace.

- Bored: means feeling tired and unhappy.

Depressed: unhappy and without hope.

Tired: it is used here as bored, not happy.

It describes his psychological state, rather than his physical state.

“The days passed, and in spite of my work in Sharifa Hafsa’s house I felt depressed and bored and tired” (P.52, The H.)

- False, shallow, hypocritical, theatrical, fake these synonymous vocabularies were crammed together to describe one thing, that is people’s hypocracy.

“...the poet who entered in a flood of greetings and false of smiles, accompanied by shallow, hypocritical laughter and gestures that were all theatrical and fake” (P.7, The H.)

“I felt anxious, depressed and fretful, struggling against those things” (P.84, The H.)

“It was a round-shaped room and everything in it was clean and tidy and well set out” (P.109, The H.)

“The days passed; and, in spite of my work in Sharifa Hafsa’s house, I felt depressed and bored and tired” (P.52, The H.)
Bored: means feeling tired and unhappy.

Depressed: unhappy and without hope.

Tired: used here as bored, not happy.

**Style of Repetition**

It is obvious that the style of repetition used abundantly in the translation text which gives a clue that the translators were too much faithful to the original text which subsequently means that, to a great extent, the literal translation method predominated the literary work. Translation was too faithful in the number of paragraphs, not only this, but in the number of the pages compared to the original text. In this respect, Hasan Ghazala, a pro-style repetition, in his book *Translation As Problems and Solutions*, considers the style of repetition as a part of rhetoric and a plus point in translation. Ghazala writes:

“In a text where important words are repeated over and again, we are required to render them fully into Arabic (TL in this case) however boring.”^81

He goes on: “...and can be used on purpose to have important functions that affect the message considerably.”^82 Ghazala and to be more clear in his point, presents the following example about football.

“Football is the game my friend loves. Football is the sport he watches on television. Football is his favorite hobby. As a child, his hope was to play football. Here he is now a great football player.”^83

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However, and whatsoever has been said by Ghazala, there is still continuous controversy whether the style of repetition is minus or plus point. What is significant here is that repetition might be important in some specific instances and might be boring in other situations. Extravagance in repetition might harm the literary creative abilities. The following translation texts highlight the issues linked to repetition.

- “He started telling me stories about the things he has seen in the baths, and about the women—the young ones, and the old ones, and especially, the unmarried ones among them and how overjoyed they always were when he went to serve them” (P.28, The H.)

The word “ones” is repeated three times. So, what is the advantage of such repetition? It would be more comfortable if the paragraph is divided into two sentences instead of one due to its ease and smoothness. Here is the retranslated text and how things change to the better.

“He started telling stories about things he had seen in the baths. For example, he told me about the young and the old women and the unmarried ones in particular, and how they become overjoyed when he went to serve them.”

- Grammatically, it is known that a comma has multi-functions. One of these functions is to separate words, phrases or clauses come in series. So, instead of repeating the same word or phrase, we use comma. We also know that when there are more than two expressions, we usually put the conjunction “and” only before the last one. Read.

- “Darkness had fallen now, on the city, and on the palace, including
our room, which had no lighting except a small, rusty lantern thrown down in a corner, so caked with dust and dirt and dead insects" (P.33, The H.).

Such repetition, "on the city", "on the palace", then "on our room", gives clue that darkness falls gradually, first on the city, then on the palace, after that on the room of the dawydar and his friend the hostage boy. The same is true in the last sentence/line of the paragraph,

"...so caked with dust, dirt, and dead insects..."

- "He asked me what my name was, and what my father’s name was and what part of the country I came from" (P.44, The H.)

The text could be easier if it is translated like this:

"He asked me about my name, my father’s name and what part of the country I came from."

- "...then sank down to sleep more deeply than I’d ever seen him sleep before" (P.49, The H.)

The second "sleep" might be dropped since the same word has been introduced before. Repetition of the item is insignificant.

"...then sank down to sleep more deeply than I’d ever seen him before"

- "I climbed the stairs behind him as I had the first time, but this time my feelings were quite different. I felt apprehensive, and alarmed, like a rare bird about to be put in a golden cage for life" (P.50, The H.)
The situation above, takes the psychological dimension rather than the physical one. The hostage boy finds himself face to face with something he doesn’t like to be imposed to, “a servant” for Sharifa Hafsa. Three significant words reflect his real inner emotions: "feelings", "apprehensive ", and "alarmed". And to show such conflicting emotions, the second phrase, "but this time", might be replaced by a phrase expresses his momentary hesitation, the phrase “at this moment” is the best to serve this purpose.

“I climbed the stairs behind him as I had done in the first time, but at this moment my feelings were quite different”.

• “My friend opened the door as usual, and as usual at that time of the day, Sharifa Hafsa was looking out over the courtyard” (P.50, The H.)

Here again, two of “as usual” phrases. Each one follows the other. And since the handsome dawydar has his frequent visits to Sharifa Hafsa’s house, it means that he often used to go there, it is his habit.

“My friend opened the door as he often used to, and as usual at that time…”

• “Everyone was so disturbed it was clear to me there was something wrong, that something had been happening or going to happen”P.135, The H.)

The translation text above grammatically is not built well for the absence of the syntactic markers such as "and", "comma" or full stops. The adjective “wrong” is not enough to express the political situation which will take place soon. The word “wrong” could be used to describe something not as serious as upheaval, for example. The text could be retranslated thus:
“Everyone was so disturbed. It was clear to me that there was something happening or going to happen”

Omissions

Generally speaking, translators usually recourse to omissions probably for the following reasons:

1) When issues in the source language are valueless to be focused on over the assumption that such incidents or events have no serious impact on the significance of the literary work.

2) When translators come across some cultural sensitivities such as sex issues their translation to the TL invokes embarrassment.

3) Religious based matters, especially those based on narrow-minded people who usually don’t confess the others’ rights in religion.

4) Social oriented traditions including East-West customs and traditions like women’s dress fashions, drinking liquor etc.

5) When the source text is pregnant with cultural bound references and echoes.

However a majority of open-minded advocates in the market of translation strongly opposed these unjustifiable claims. Their objection is based on the ground that transferring the other culture, irrespective of its positive or negative reflections, is inevitable and a part of the translators’ task, claiming that such a way of traditions forms the basis of the other social norms and culture. The following omissions are detected in the present analyzed translated literary work.
1) Translators ignored mentioning the name of a very important Turkish military leader, Saeed Basha who headed a military campaign to Lahj in South Yemen. This important historical event should have been considered by the translators.

2) Obadi, is the name of the narrator was completely absent in the translation version. This careless mistake is not tolerable if we know that it is the name of the main character in the narration.

3) The following paragraph is omitted from the translation text which exists in the original.

"استغفرب كلمة الحالية التي تكررت أكثر من مرة كما أتذكر." (الرهينة، 26)

"Right now I did not understand why the soldiers always repeated the word handsome to nickname my friend the dawaydar".

4) In the following translation, translators deliberately neglected translating two words describing Sharif Hafsa’s body.

"She sat down beside me on the edge of the fountain, arranging herself in such a way..." (P.63, The H.).

"جلست بجواري على حافة الفسقية وهي تضع عجزها الفاتن لتصلح جلستها حتى شعرت أنها تزحني." (الرهينة، 50)

While in the original "With her tempting buttocks, she sat down beside me on the edge of the fountain ..."
Grammar

- "The features of most of them, I noticed changed. Their faces were pale now while their bodies, on the other hand, had taken on a general smoothness of texture." (P.2, The H.).

For the convenience and smoothness of the translation text, sentences can be reconstructed again and omit unnecessary lexicon and phrases. Phrases and words as "I noticed", "new", and "on the other hand" are unnecessary additional items. A new translation could be like this:

"The features of most of them had changed. Their faces looked pale while their bodies had taken on a general smoothness" OR

"The features of most of them had, as I noticed, changed. Their faces looked pale while their bodies had taken on a general smoothness..."

Change occurred for these reasons:

1) "Now" as an adverb indicates present time not the past. It contradicts with the time of the sentence. There is no relation between "now" and the past time.

2) "On the other hand" is used when comparing two different factors or two opposite ways.

3) "while" means although

4) "I noticed" could be termed as an interruptive phrase to show emphasis but could be preceded by "as" to be more emphatic.

"Oh you'll, he said pulling me off towards the deserted stables." (P.28, The H).
Stable (sing) changed to plural according to the original.

- “None of this surprised me in the least, and I felt no need to inquire further but I continued to…” (P.3, The H.).

Usually “none of” is followed by noun plural. “None of” means “not any of”

Ex. None of the furniture got wet.

None of my friends live near here.

When ‘none of’ is used with plural noun, the verb can be either singular or plural; a plural verb is more common. In the same sentence, the adjective ‘further’ is not in its right position. “None of this surprised in the least, and I felt no need to inquire further” This could be shifted like this: “…I felt no need to any further inquiries.”

- “There were pictures of a succession of beautiful golden haired girls with blue eyes, a kind of girl I had never seen before; he had told me later that he’d cut them out from paper” (P.31, The H.)

The phrase ‘a kind of girl’ is inappropriate here. The preposition ‘from’ in the sentence should be replaced by ‘of’. The new translation could be like this:

“There were pictures of a succession of beautiful golden haired girls with blue eyes that I had never seen before. Later, he told me that he had cut them out of papers”.

- “He was proud of knowing so many things I didn’t, and his air of superiority would grow still more pronounced as he talked about listening to the international news…” (P.31, The H.).
It is noticed that the phrase ‘I didn’t’ inserted in this long sentence aimlessly. It creates more ambiguity and to be clearer, this long sentence might be split into two sentences.

“He was proud of knowing so many things. His air of superiority increased more when he was listening to the international news.”

• “There are any number of rooms in this palace, as many as there are days in the year” (P.34, The H.).

It is unusual to use “any” as determiner here. Usually it comes in negative and interrogation statements.

Ex. Is there any of that lemon cake left?

There was hardly any food left? So the text might be retranslated thus:

“There are rooms in the palace as many as the days of the year”

• “I’d like to find someone selling onions or garlic or potatoes in the market from my village and ask them how…” (P53, The H.).

It is noticed, by mistake, that the third person pronoun “them” replaced the second person pronoun “him”.

• “All that’s left in your houses is the women and babes in arms…” (P.53, The H.).

Singular verb “is” replaced plural ‘are’

“All that’s left in your houses are women and babies in arms.”

• “The main gate was opened as far back as it would go.” (P.61, The H.).
Here the position of the word "back" should be after the main verb "opened" to show how the gate opens. "The main gate was opened back as far as it would go".

- "A soldier took me to the main gate, and there I squatted on the ground and stretched out my leg for him to put an iron round it"

Here both of the hostage boy's legs are chained not one "...my legs...an iron round them."

- "They knew my family, my tribe, whose son I was." (P.37, The H.).

Here the conjunction "and" is missing to complete the sentence.

"They knew my family, my tribe and whose son I was."

- "He laid his rifle gently and carefully on the walls." (P.38, The H.).

The Bourezan's rifle must be laid only on one wall not on more than one.

- "What is your name?" He said (P.50, The H.).

This is a question, "He asked."

- "The days passed." (P.52, The H.)

It is common to say: "Days passed" to show indefinite duration.

- "Aren't you comfortable here? He said." Should be, he asked"

- "The governor's reception was thronged with visitors nightly."
  (P.57, The H.).

"Nightly is used as an adverb. Further, its position is before the noun "visitors" "...night visitors."

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NOTES


2. Ibid., p. 20.


4. Ibid., p. 15.

5. Ibid., p. 16.

6. Ibid., p. 18.


8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.


11. Ibid., p. 2.

12. Ibid., p. 3.


16. Ibid., p. 4.

17. Ibid., p. 8.

19. Ibid., p.25.
20. Ibid., p.27.
22. Ibid., p.4.
25. Ibid., p.88.
30. Ibid., p.162.
31. Ibid., p.162.
32. Ibid., p.166.
33. Ibid., p.166.
34. Ibid., p.168.
36. Ibid., p. 173.
37. Ibid., p. 174.
39. Ibid., p. 184.
40. Ibid., p. 184.
41. Ibid., p. 185.
45. Ibid., p. 186.
46. Ibid., p. 187.
47. Ibid., p. 188.
48. Ibid., p. 193.
50. Ibid., p. 235.
51. Ibid., p. 236.
52. Ibid., p. 236.
53. Ibid., p. 237.
54. Ibid., p. 237.


58. Ibid., p. 89.


60. Ibid., p. 127.


64. Ibid., p. 1.

65. Ibid., p. 1.

66. Ibid., p. 2.


68. Ibid., p. 13.

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70. Ibid., p. 99.


72. Ibid., p. 107.


79. Ibid., p. 253.

80. Ibid., p. 253.

81. Ibid., p. 249.

82. Ibid., p. 249.

83. Ibid., p. 249-50.