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Translating the FAITH Frame: A Study of Two Translated Egyptian Novels

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Abstract. This study, which is part of a larger study on the use of frame semantics in the translation of cultural elements from Arabic into English, isolates the instances where the characters from two modern Egyptian novels use language to identify themselves as members of a particular religious group, which corresponds to the frame generic→faith, and examines the manner in which these instances are translated into English. In this sense, faith is a generic frame because it dictates a particular set of behaviors, both linguistic and ideological, that is enforced by the faith community and practiced by the individuals within it. This faith community is a subset of the language community that uses a set of expressions considered typical of this community to the point where its members are recognizable through the use of these expressions. The translation issue at hand is that the TL may not offer the same possibilities to evoke a similar frame reflecting religious identity.
Keywords: semantic frames, generic frames, translating religious expressions, English translation of Arabic literature.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Objectives

This study, which is part of a larger study on the utilization of frame semantics in the translation of Arabic cultural elements into English, aims at bridging the gap between linguistics and translation studies by highlighting the contribution the former may offer to explain the issues in the latter. In this case, the focus is on both translator and translation, as the mental processes involved in decoding SL (Source

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Language) terms and encoding them in the TL (Target Language), namely categorizing knowledge and language into semantic frames, are brought to the forefront and analyzed as the motivation behind translation choices. However, the study refrains from suggesting any translation frameworks or so-called solutions to translation issues, since such suggestions rarely apply in a uniform manner to all texts and issues.

1.2. Background

1.2.1. Frame Semantics and Translation

The notion of frame semantics is based on the proposition that encoding and decoding meaning in natural languages is based on a cognitively stored scene or experience (Fillmore 1976) and that frames are conceptualizations of pre-programmed stereotypes of known items and experiences (Gawron 2011). Using frames as a vehicle for translation is, therefore, about more than translating words or even ideas; it is about translating the whole miniscule universe associated with each concept in the Source Language (SL) into one that evokes a Target Language (TL) experience that is as similar to its SL counterpart as possible, given the constraints of culture and language.

Since frame semantics is a field closely associated with Artificial Intelligence, many of the pervious works relating frame semantics to translation are more concerned with machine translation and constructing automatic cross-language semantic networks (See Sowa 1991; Pedersen 2000; Boas 2002; Dorr et al. 2002; Ploux and Ji 2003; Fung and Chen 2004, 2006; Tonelli and Pianta 2009). However, the use of frame semantics as a tool for translation extends beyond machine translation; Boas (2013) cites the FrameNet Project (Baker, Fillmore and Lowe 1998) as the main catalyst for spreading the use of frame semantics in translation in general, both manual and automated. In the context of manual translation, it provides an insight into the inner workings of the method by which the human brain identifies, interprets, and catalogues the SL as a carrier of knowledge and experience, after which it attempts to locate an equivalent in the TL that can duplicate the same process as closely as allowed by the two languages and accompanying cultures.

1.2.2. The Frame Typology

The frame model on which this study relies is one proposed by Rojo (2002) as an expansion of the original frame typology presented by de Vega (1984). De Vega identifies a frame typology categorized into five frame classifications: social frames, situations frames (otherwise known as scripts), domain frames, visual frames, and self-concept frames. In her elaboration of the original typology, only part of which is relevant to this study, Rojo included the self-concept frame into the more inclusive generic frame, which adds the manner in which a person views him/herself to the manner the community expects the person to act based on their background.

1.2.3. What are GENERIC Frames?

The present study is driven by the concept of generic frames, which are frames that describe a class of objects (Jones 2015), namely the way objects or people are stereotypically expected to be, think, speak, or act based on who, what, and where they are. Jones gives an example of the generic frame archer, defining the weapon used by the archer as a bow, which then has the sub-frame longbowman, inheriting all the properties of the original generic frame archer but adding a specific type of bow to the description. An archer, represented by the frame generic→archer, is all that an archer is expected to be in terms of actions, weapons, and space. A longbowman, represented by generic→archer→longbowman is an archer who uses a slightly modified weapon. Every sub-frame, therefore, builds upon the information provided by the one before it. The original generic frames introduced by de Vega (1984) were divided into generic and self-concept frames, both of which were part of the more general social frame. The frames were combined into one category, generic frames, and used as a separate frame by Rojo (2002), which is the approach adopted in this study.

In this sense, faith is a generic frame because it dictates a particular set of behaviors, both linguistic and ideological, that is enforced by the faith community and practiced by the individuals within it. This faith community is a subset of the language community that uses a set of expressions considered typical of this community to the point where its members are recognizable through the use of these expressions.

1.2.4. Arabic and Diglossia

As a diglossic language, Arabic has two varieties which coexist within the same language community, each having its own distinct function (Albirini 2016). Whereas Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the language of the media, higher education, and intellectual and academic writing, Colloquial Arabic (QA) is the spoken variety, which is structurally and phonologically different from MSA. The differences depend on such factors as geographic location, social status, gender, idiolect, and even the social setting in which the language is spoken. The distinction must also be made between MSA and Classical Arabic (CA), the language of sacred and classical texts. Whereas MSA has distinct phonological variations depending on the country from which the speaker comes, and therefore the aforementioned religious expressions, although said in MSA, often betray where the speaker is originally from, CA is revered as the *lingua franca* of Islam and is expected to always be pronounced according to its original standards. This is the variety used when reciting or quoting the Quran or delivering religious sermons and lessons. While using the predominantly-written MSA in daily, nonacademic speech is usually for the purpose of sounding more educated and refined, the use of CA in everyday speech is more associated with ultra-conservative Islam than an average person trying to sound religious, or even sophisticated or intellectual.

The data has evidence of the two main varieties of Arabic found in Egypt: Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA). It is noteworthy in this context that Christian-based expressions in the data do not bear the same degree of adherence to MSA or CA displayed by Muslim expressions.

This is due to the fact that, whereas all sacred Islamic texts and classical texts related to jurisprudence were originally written in CA, Arabic Christian texts in Egypt were mostly translated into a variety of Arabic that combines MSA and ECA, thus favoring intelligibility by the average layperson over rhetorical aestheticism. This distinction contributes to the generic frame evoked by the expression and becomes one of the properties of the class identified as either Christian or Muslim.

2. Method

2.1. Corpus

Two modern Egyptian novels, Khaled Al-Khamisi's *Taxi* and Bahaa' Taher's *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery,* were chosen as data sources for this study. They represent a variety of styles in terms of the use of Egyptian Colloquial Arabic (ECA) and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), ranging from being almost fully written in MSA to almost fully written in ECA. Their characters also represent the two major religious communities in Egypt, Islam and Christianity. The choice to extract data from two different texts is an attempt at ensuring result objectivity rather than the outcome being one translator's *modus operandi* based on the style of one writer and the patterns of one text.

2.2. Process

2.2.1. Example Selection and Analysis

The main issue explored in this study is the manner in which self-identification as a follower of a certain faith is expressed through language (in this case, Arabic in its various forms) and, subsequently, the manner in which this expression is translated into English. Accordingly, the examples selected from the corpus all reflect this manner of expression. As a qualitative study, the number and frequency of expressions is not key; the focus is rather on the quality of the examples as adequate representations of generic self-identification based on faith.

The study isolates the instances where the characters from the two novels use language to identify themselves as members of a particular religious group, which corresponds to the frame generic→faith, and examines the manner in which these instances are translated into English; the frame reference evoked by the SL term is identified and compared to that of the TL term, after which the study explores the possibility of alternative TL terms which may render the SL frame reference more accurately.

Each example is cited within the context of its passage, both in Arabic script and transcribed script, the latter of which is done according to the recommendation of Bo Isaksson's Transcription of Written Arabic (cited in 5.4. Electronic sources) as seen in Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics (vol. I, 2006). The translation of the passage as found in the published translated text is then provided and, in cases where it is necessary, an alternative translation is also suggested.

3. Data analysis

Arabic, as a product of its religiously-inclined environment, uses a wide variety of faith-inspired expressions, which aids in expressing the speaker's religious identity, simultaneously connecting them to their own religious group and asserting their differences and separation from individuals belonging to other religious factions. In this sense, it is sometimes possible to deduce the religious philosophy to which a person subscribes by analyzing their Arabic speech. In ECA, the matter of distinguishing a speaker's religious affiliation, and therefore identifying the speaker's generic class as belonging under the frame Muslim or Christian, is a matter of relative simplicity when one compares how people choose to refer to the same concept or person across faith lines. For instance, whereas a Muslim would typically refer to the Virgin Mary in everyday speech as *السيدة مريم/ as-say-yida Maryam* 'Lady Mary', *ستنا مريم sit-tina Maryam* 'Our Lady Mary', or *العذراء مريم/ al-ʕaḏrāʔ Maryam* 'The Virgin Mary', the latter pronounced in formal MSA tradition, a Christian speaker would refer to her, also in everyday speech, as */العدرا/ al-ʕadra* 'the Virgin', pronounced in informal ECA tradition.

At the level of the language as a whole, the influence of religion on the culture which has given rise to the language as we know it today is evident in rhetorical expressions based on faith but not indicating personal affiliation to faith, seamlessly integrated into everyday language usage. These expressions have lost some or all of their literal religious significance and become frozen expressions, such as *إن شاء الله/ ʔinšāʔallāh* ('God willing') or *الحمد لله/ ʔalḥamdulillāh* ('thank God'). These do not necessarily reflect a certain generic frame related to faith, as they do not contribute to the speech patterns of the members of a certain faith community, but rather extend over the entire speech community.

The following is an analysis of religiously-motivated speech in the two texts, categorized according to their functions, either as indicators of religious affiliation or reflections of the role played by religion in the Source Culture (SC).

3.1. Expressions Used by Christian Speakers of Arabic

Expressions motivated by Christianity in the data are found exclusively in *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery* due to the fact that one of its central characters is a Christian monk and a significant part of the events take place in a monastery.

One of the representative expressions in the data is used to refer to a dead person, particularly a member of the clergy as *المتنيح/ almitnay-yaḥ* 'the late X', which means someone who has been brought to eternal peace in Heaven or otherwise someone who has been relieved from the burdens of mortal life. The word has origins in Hebrew, as can be observed in Ruth 1:9 "The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept" where, according to the Westminster Leningrad Codex, the word *rest* in Hebrew is מְנוּחָה (*minūḥa منوحه*). Another example can be found in Psalm 95:11 "Unto whom I swore in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest", where *my rest* in Hebrew is מְנוּחָתִי (منوحتي). The word has been borrowed into Arabic where, according to Arabic dictionary *Muʕjam al-Maʕāni al-Jamiʕ*, the transitive verb *نيح nayyaḥ* means 'to rest' or, in cases where the subject is God, 'to call to rest in Heaven'. The word remains in use today in reference to a

deceased member of the Christian clergy, although it is also used in prayers for the souls of non-clergy in *أوشية الراقدين ʔūšiyat ar-rāqidīn* (a modified Coptic version of the Litany for the Departed).

In Arabic, the word invariably evokes the frame generic→Christian. Even though it has been borrowed into Arabic, it has failed to remain in active usage outside the Christian community, possibly due to its Old Testament origins and its absence from any non-Christian texts. The following example from *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery* is an example of the use of the word in reference to a deceased monk:

*صحيح أنه لم يشهد الرواية من أولها ولكن **المتنيح** باخوم الذي عاش حتى جاوز المائة..والذي لازمه المقدس بشاي عندما أتى إلى الدير في شبابه كان قد حكى له أشياء.*

*šaḥīḥ ʔannahū lam yašhad ar-riwāya min ʔawwalihā wa-lākin **al-mitnayyaḥ** Bāxūm ʔal-laḏī ʕāša ḥattā tağawaza ʔal-miʔa wal-laḏī lāzamahu al-muqad-dis Bišāy ʕindamā ʔatā ilā ad-dayri fī šabābihī kāna qad ḥakā lahū ʔašyāʔ*

*To be sure, he had not witnessed the events from the beginning, but he had been told things by the **late** Bakhoum. This Bakhoum had lived past the age of a hundred. Bishai used to follow him around here and there, when he first came to the monastery as a novice, in his youth.*

The generic frame which acts as an identity marker is lost in translation in the TT, where the word *late* is used. The issue in this case is the absence of a TL term that reflects the same identity marker. The TL term *late* is not exclusive to a specific faith or affiliation, and simply points to the frame deceased. The missing frame reference does not necessarily impact the overall frame reference Christian in reference to the deceased monk, as the identity of the monk is clear to both the Source Text (ST) and Target Text (TT) readers throughout the text with the help of contextual clues.

Another expression associated with the Christian faith and Christian practices is *أقدس ʔaqaddis* 'to go on a pilgrimage', found in *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery* in a conversation between gangster Hinein, who is only Christian by birth, and the leader of his gang. The term specifically refers to the pilgrimage to the Holy Land in Palestine, Jordan, and Israel performed by Christians from all around the world. The pilgrimage was banned by the Christian Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt in 1980 following the Camp David Treaty between Egypt and Israel. Since the events of the novel take place prior to 1980, Hinein casually (and sarcastically) refers to the Holy Pilgrimage performed by Christians to the Holy Land as God's saving grace that might redeem him after a life of crime. The term evokes the frame generic→Christian, or, more accurately, generic→devout_Christian. Unlike the previous example, this expression has a TL counterpart which transmits the same frame reference, *going on a pilgrimage*. To avoid confusing Muslim pilgrimage (or *Hajj*) and Christian pilgrimage, *going on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem* may be used. However, in the TT, the translator misinterprets the term and uses the TL term *ordained*, which evokes the frame generic→Christian_clergy. This was possibly motivated by Hinein's reference to Bishai, a monk he sarcastically claims he wants

to emulate, and his mention of the possibility of becoming a monk himself, although the ST indicates he meant emulate Bishai's good standing with God rather than his position among the clergy:

غير أن واحداً من المطاريد، اسمه حنين، كان يسرف في العبث معه. إذ يتظاهر بالجد الشديد ويسأل المقدس بشاي عن أسرار الدير والرهبنة قائلاً إنه يفكر هو أيضاً أن يترهب. وكان المعلم فارس يرده أكثر من مرة في شئ من الغضب فيقول حنين متكلفاً البراءة: أنت تكره لي الخير يا معلم؟ يمكن **أقدس** وأصبح مثل هذا الرجل الطيب.

*Ġayra ʔanna wāḥidan min al-maṭārīd ʔismuhū ḥinīn kāna yusrifu fil-ʕabaṭi maʕhū. ʔiḏ yataẓāharu bil-ǧad-di ʔaš-šadīdi wa-yasʔalu al-muqad-dis Bišāy ʕan ʔasrār ad-dayr war-rahbana qāʔilan ʔin-nahu yufak-kiru huwa ʔayḍan ʔan yatarahban. Wa-kāna al-muʕallim Fāris yarud-duhu ʔakṯara min marratin fī šayʔin min al-ġaḍabi fa-yaqūlu ḥinīn mutakal-lifan al-barāʔa: ʔanta takrahu liya ʔal-xayr yā muual-lim? Yumkin **ʔuqad-dis** wa-ʔuṣbiḥu miṯla hāḏā ʔar-raǧulu ʔaṭ-ṭy-yib*

*[...] although one of the outlaws, a Christian whose name was Hinein, would sometimes go too far in teasing him. He would look very serious and ask the miqaddis Bishai about the secrets of the monastery and monasticism, saying that he was thinking also of becoming a monk. The mi'allim Faris responded to this more than once rather irritably, but Hinein said with exaggerated innocence, "Do you begrudge me some happiness ya mi'allim? Maybe **I'll be ordained**, and become like this good man."*

The suggested translation substitutes *go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem* in order to maintain the ST frame reference generic→devout_Christian: "*Maybe **I'll go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem** and become like this good man".*

The use of *الرب/ ar-rab* 'the Lord' in the ST presents a rather complicated prospect for the translator. This analysis is concerned with the SL terms *الرب/ ar-rab* and *الله/ al-lāh* 'God', and the terms *God* and *Lord* as representatives of the data and the problem it highlights.

The word *رب rab* is not exclusively Christian or Muslim *per se*, as it can be found in many classical non-Quran Muslim texts, notably in Al-Nasa`i (2001), Ibn Taimiya's (2004), Ibn Maja (2010), and Muslim (2016). The word, however, does not occur in this form *الرب/ ar-rab* in Islamic tradition or in the everyday discourse of Muslims, but rather in the genitive form (*muḍāf*), as in *رب العالمين rab al-ʕālamīn* 'Lord of the Two Universes' or *ربنا rab-banā* 'our Lord'. In the Quran, it occurs in various forms, 971 times, as opposed to *الله/ al-lāh* which was mentioned 2699 times (The Quranic Arabic Corpus). In various translations of the Quran, the word *الله/ al-lāh* is either translated into *Allah* or *God,* the former adopting a philosophy where الله is a proper name rather than a translatable noun, whereas رب *rab* 'Lord' in its different manifestations is translated into *Lord*. الرب *ar-rab*, however, is not found in Islamic tradition or Muslim discourse.

Conversely, a close examination of the occurrence of the two terms in the Arabic edition of the Bible compared to the King James Bible, reveals that *الرب/ ar-rab* occurs 5469 times in the Old Testament and 411 times in the New Testament, whereas الله occurs 1235 times in the Old Testament and 1014 times in the New Testament (St-Takla.org). While *الله/ al-lāh* invariably refers to God except for three instances where it refers to Jesus (John 1:1, John 20:28, and Isaiah 9:6), in the New

Testament,الرب/ *ar-rab* refers to both God and Jesus, sometimes within the same verse (e.g. Matthew 22:44). In King James' Bible, the word *God* was mentioned 3090 times in the Old Testament and 1354 times in the New Testament, whereas *Lord* was mentioned 7234 times in the Old Testament and 712 times in the New Testament. In the New Testament, the word *God* only refers to Jesus in the same three instances as the Arabic translation, whereas Lord refers to both God and Jesus, as well as other figures of authority (Daniell 2003), the last of which is a feature it does not share with the Arabic translation. The discrepancies may be attributed to the point where the two translations depended on slightly different Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, as well as the fact that the use of *Lord* to indicate a non-divine figure of authority is translated into السيد/ *as-say-yid* 'the Master' in the Arabic Bible. When parallel texts were compared, the researcher observed that instances of *God* in the King James Bible correspond to الله in the Arabic Bible, whereas *Lord* was translated into الرب/ *ar-rab* or السيد/ *as-say-yid*. The frames correspondence is therefore generic→God for *God* and الله/ *al-lāh*, generic→God or generic→Jesus for *Lord* and الرب/ *ar-rab*, or generic→figure_of_authority for *Lord* in the Biblical context. It must be noted in this context that these frame references do not apply to John 1:1, John 20:28, and Isaiah 9:6 as mentioned earlier, where *God* and الله/ *al-lāh* indicate the frame generic→Jesus.

As far as the data is concerned, الرب/ *ar-rab* occurs twice in *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery* as part of the generic→Christian frame. The use of الرب/ *ar-rab* in the SL, according to the aforementioned corpus statistics, is more parallel to *Lord* than *God*, but in the TL it is translated as both *Lord* and *God* in two instances throughout the text:

(1)
فيخرجهم من القدس كما أخرج الانجليز من مصر **الرب** ينصر جمال

Ar-rab-bu *yanṣuru ğamāl fayoxriğuhum min al-qudsi kamā ʔaxrağa l-inğilīz min miṣr*

"May ***God*** *grant victory to Nasser and drive them from Jerusalem, as he drove the British from Egypt."*

(2)
وشاء **الرب** لحظتها أن يأتي الراهب جرجس ففهم، ولكنه طلب من االرجل أن يلف حول الدير وأن يأتي دون سلاح ويترك رجاله جالسين أمام بوابة الدير.

Wa-šāʔa ***ar-rab-bu*** *laḥẓatahā ʔan yaʔtī ar-rāhibu ğirğis fa-fahima wa-lākin-nahu ṭalaba mina r-rağuli ʔan yalif-fu ḥawla d-dayri wa-ʔan yaʔtiya dūna silaḥin wa-yatruku riğalahu ğālisīna ʔamāma baw-wābati d-dayr*

And at that moment ***the Lord*** *willed Brother Girgis to come. Brother Girgis was able to make some sense of the situation, but he asked the man to go around the monastery, to go unarmed, and to leave his men sitting in front of the monastery gate.*

It is suggested that both instances be translated into *Lord* in order to preserve the non-definitive ST frame reference generic→God/Jesus, instead of the definitive generic→God used in the second example:

(1)
*May **the Lord** grant victory to Nasser and drive them from Jerusalem, as he drove the British from Egypt.*

(2)
*And at that moment **the Lord** willed Brother Girgis to come. Brother Girgis was able to make some sense of the situation, but he asked the man to go around the monastery, to go unarmed, and to leave his men sitting in front of the monastery gate.*

3.2. Expressions Used by Muslim Speakers of Arabic

Arabic expressions based on Islam are derived from Quran and Hadith, as well as expressions commonly used in Islamic jurisprudence, and are usually said in MSA in an everyday colloquial conversation to distinguish them from their more common, less formal ECA cousins. In the SL, using such expressions usually confirms the speaker's identity as a Muslim, and reflects his or her status as a religious person. Where translation is concerned, the TL presents a problem where Muslims sometimes identify themselves by using MSA and CA loan words in their non-Arabic speech in matters pertaining to their faith, or even in everyday speech when injecting expressions such as *Inshallah* 'God willing' or *Alhamdulillah* 'thank God' into their conversations in order to preserve their meaning without distortion. This reinforces the view held by many Muslims that Arabic, namely CA and MSA, is the official language of Islam, which more often than not attaches undue sanctity to the language itself due to the belief that it is the language in which God transmitted his message to his Prophet (Peters 2003). Within a predominantly non Arabic-speaking community, this sentiment makes learning Arabic a holy quest for Muslims and creates a niche where self-identification using MSA and CA loan words creates a sense of camaraderie and possibly serves as a tool of exclusion, since it is unintelligible to non-Muslims and many of the second- and third-generation Muslims who were born into an English-speaking community (Mujahid 2006). The much-ridiculed term *Islamic English* (Faruqi 1986), which refers to the use of MSA and CA loan words in non-Arabic speech produced by Muslims living in non Arabic-speaking communities, was even coined to refer to the phenomenon, although it has been criticized and satirized for its absurdity (Bilici 2012 and Leonard 2003). The use of so-called Islamic English or, more recently, Muslim English, successfully and fully transmits the frame generic→Muslim and functions as a tool of identity assertion. Its use, however, is more common with single words or shorter expressions, such as *Zakat* 'alms', *Salah* 'prayer', *Janna* 'heaven', *Inshallah* 'God willing', or *Alhamdulillah* 'thank God'. Longer expressions, on the other hand, are more problematic because of their complexity. As can be observed in the data, translating them into English, while it may transmit the core frame generic→religious, does not necessarily do the same for generic→muslim (or generic→devout_Muslim, depending on context), because the reference is fully dependent on the expression being used in CA or MSA. This leaves this portion of the

interpretation for the context. These observations raise the question of whether the problem is due to the use of "Islamic English" in the first place, in that using the expected non-Arabic translations of the Arabic terms might have normalized these terms in the new language, making the language more seamless and inclusive instead of borrowing Arabic words into another language and only having members of the Muslim faith community fully understand the conversation. The current state of affairs has imposed a transliteration reflecting the original generic→Muslim frame, as well as a functional translation reflecting the sub-frame generic→religious. In a world where Islamic English does not exist, the norm would be a universal generic→religious frame, motivated solely by the mention of general references to God, except for expressions evoking concepts specifically tied to Islam, such as Prophet Mohammed.

One such expression can be found in *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery*, when the narrator's father, the preacher at the local mosque, refers to Prophet Mohammed as *الحبيب المصطفى ʔal-ḥabīb ʔal-muṣṭafā*, a commonly used epithet that literally means 'the loved one, the chosen one'. The epithet was not directly derived from a specific religious text, but has come to reflect the veneration and love devout Muslims have for Prophet Mohammed. The use of the term automatically identifies the speaker as a devout Muslim and poses a problem in the translation of the text into a language where no similar expression exists:

استمع إليهم صامتاً، ثم قال في بطء أمام الجميع: أو لم يرسل ***الحبيب*** *عليه الصلاة والسلام أول المسلمين إلى النجاشي حرصاً على حياتهم؟ أنا أتأسى* ***بالحبيب المصطفى.***

ʔistamaʕa lahum ṣāmitan ṯum-ma qāla fī buṭʔin ʔamāma ʔal-amīʕ: ʔawa lam yursilu ***ʔal-ḥabību*** *ʕalay-hi ʔaṣ-ṣlātu was-salāmu ʔaw-wala ʔal-muslimīna ʔilā ʔan-naǧāšiy-yi ḥirṣan ʕalā ḥayātihim? ʔanā ʔataʔas-sā* ***bil-ḥabībi ʔal-muṣṭafā***

My father listened to them in silence. Then he spoke slowly, in the presence of the whole crowd, saying, "Did not ***our Beloved Prophet****, blessings and peace be upon him, send the first Muslims to el-Nigashi, in defense of their lives? I take solace in* ***the Beloved, the Chosen One.****"*

In the TT, referring to a person *as the beloved, the chosen one* would not decode any frame in the mind of the TL reader unless he or she held the same understanding of the Muslim faith as the ST speaker and was familiar with the terms used to describe certain concepts within the framework of Islam. The first reference to *الحبيب al-ḥabīb* 'the Beloved' in the passage may as well be interpreted as social→interpersonal→romantic_partner if it were not for the subsequent *عليه الصلاة والسلام ʕalay-hi aṣ-ṣalātu was-salām* 'peace be upon him' which clearly points the ST reader to generic→prophet_of_Islam. A TT reader of a different or nonexistent religious affiliation may fail to recognize the reference, which explains the use of *our Beloved Prophet* to provide further background. The addition of *Prophet* also provides context and points the TT reader to the frame generic→Prophet_of_Islam for *the Beloved, the Chosen One* later in the same passage, which would have left a gap in the flow of information in the TT if its reference to Prophet Mohammed had not been explained.

Another example of an expression motivated by the Quran is also found in *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery*, used by the narrator's father. The expression *حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل ḥasbiya al-lāhu wa-niʕma al-wakīl* 'God is my only solace/God will take care of everything' is common in conversational Arabic, usually used when the speaker is in a position of weakness or has been treated unjustly, and literally means *God is enough for me and He is the best support*. It is taken from the Quran in a slightly different form *حسبنا الله ونعم الوكيل ḥasbu-na al-lāhu wa-niʕma al-wakīl* (3:173) in reference to those who hold on to their faith in the face of adversity and animosity. The expression is therefore directly associated with generic→Muslim, although the sub-frame devout is not necessarily attached to the reference:

ولكن أبي لوح بيده وقال: فعلت ما يرضي ربي. **وحسبي الله ونعم الوكيل**.

Wa-lakin-na ʔabī law-waḥa bi-yadihi wa-qāl: faʕaltu mā yurḍiya rab-bī wa-ḥasbiya al-lāhu wa-niʕma al-wakīl

But my father waved his hand, saying, "I've done as my Lord would have me do, and that's good enough. ***Leave the rest to God****."*

The TT in this case provides a feasible functional translation, with the mention of God evoking the frame generic→religious, but not necessarily generic→Muslim. Transliterating the term would be futile due to its length and complexity, and would not add anything to the TT reader's experience. This is a case where context may be left to cover the remaining aspects of the frame reference, identifying the speaker as a Muslim by the prior mention of his function as the preacher at the local mosque.

A similar issue can be found in *Taxi*, also in reference to God. In Islamic tradition God has one-hundred names by which he may be called, usually used individually or in pairs as used in the Quran. Common examples are *الرحمن الرحيم ar-raḥmān ar-raḥīm* 'the all-merciful' and *السميع المجيب as-samīʕ al-mujīb* 'the one who listens and answers' , the latter of which can be found in the example below:

كان الاثنان في صلاة..كل يناجي الآخر، وكلاهما وجها وجهيهما للسماء عسى أن تفتح طاقة فيها وتصل توسلاتهما إلى **السميع المجيب**.

Kāna al-iṯnān fī šalātin kul-lun yunāği al-āxara wa-kilāhumā waǧ-ǧahā waǧhayhumā lis-samāʔ ʕasā ʔan taftaḥa ṭāqatan fīhā wa-taṣilu tawas-sulātihimā ʔila ***as-samiʕi al-muǧīb***

The two were praying, each whispering to the other, both turning their faces to the heavens on the chance that a portal would open there and their prayers would reach ***the One who Listens and Answers****.*

Handled in the same manner as the TT in *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery*, the expression is translated functionally, providing an accurate interpretation of the meanings of the two names used in the ST, the One who Listens and Answers, and capitalizing the first letter of each word to transmit the sub-frame generic→proper_name, motivated by the capitalization of all nouns and pronouns asso-

ciated with God in Latin-script Islamic tradition as a method of indicating sanctity and divinity. Similar to the previous example, the translation does not directly evoke generic→Muslim except to TL readers familiar with English expressions motivated by Islam. Without the help of the context, it would not even evoke the frame generic→God, but rather a more general generic→deity or generic→higher_power. Contextual information indicates that the events take place in Egypt and that the SL is Arabic, which some (but not all) TL readers may identify as a language containing numerous expressions motivated by monotheistic religions. *The One who Listens and Answers,* therefore, could refer to any lowercase god if it weren't for context.

The term تبرج *tabar-ruǧ* 'adornment' is another word associated with Islamic discourse. According to ArabiCorpus, the Arabic language corpus compiled and tagged at Brigham Young University, the word is exclusively found in the Quran and, more commonly, discourse admonishing women for lack of modesty. The word carries a largely negative frame reference visual→immodest (and, some might say, an implied visual→slutty and/or generic→immoral), except for cases where the discourse is more geared towards encouraging women to show such immodesty around their husbands, in which case the frame transforms itself into visual→permissibly_appealing and visual→permissibly_seductive, the sub-frame permissibly here being a key component in the frame reference due to its background in religious discourse where a woman is expected to look appealing for her husband. The term was only mentioned in the Quran itself twice (33:33, otherwise known as the Verse of Purification) in the context of forbidding the immodest attire associated with pre-Islamic times, which is the source of later usage in Islamic discourse. The different translations of the word in various translations of the Quran and the subsequent texts of Islamic discourse is problematic; whereas sometimes it is translated into 'display', some other times it is translated into 'adorn'. The former indicates the inadvisability of displaying a woman's body to the outside world, whereas the latter implies that any form of adornment is forbidden, which takes the term across a variety of meanings, ranging from the general frame generic→modest to the more restrictive frame generic→plain or generic→unadorned, the latter of which is commonly associated with a more austere, puritanical Islamic doctrine and patriarchal religious discourse.

In the following example from *Taxi,* the ultra-conservative form of Islam adopted by the speaker, one of the taxi drivers encountered by the narrator, is clear throughout the dialogue. The use of the word تبرج *tabar-ruǧ* itself is associated with the same brand of semi-radical discourse, evoking both generic→Muslim and generic→ultra_conservative of the speaker, as well as the aforementioned visual→immodest and its associated implications. The use of *adornment* rather than *display* in the translation seems fitting in this context, evoking the same image of the religious zealot in the TL as its SL counterpart does in the ST:

التبرج اليوم أصبح عري، البنت تلبس فانلة وبنطلون وكأنها لا تلبس شئ

At-tabar-ruǧ *al-yawm aṣbaḥā ʕuriy. Al-bint talbis fanil-la wa-banṭalūn wa-kaʔan-nahā lā talbasu šayʔ*

Today ***adornment*** *means nakedness. Girls are wearing T-shirts and trousers as though they were wearing nothing.*

As mentioned in 2. RELIGIOUS JARGON, colloquial expressions evoking the name of God can be divided into two categories: expressions directly indicating the speaker's faith and others used across all creeds. The latter, represented by expressions like *الحمد لله al-ḥamdulil-lāh* 'thank God' may be considered frozen expressions which have lost their specific religious significance, derived from the use of *الله al-lāh* 'God', and become automatic responses to everyday queries. The former is represented in the following example from *Taxi*:

السائق:ماعرفش ايه اللي حصل بعد كده الدنيا اللي اتغيرت ولا أنا اللي أتغيرت ..تصدق بالله

أنا: لا إله إلا الله .

السائق :أنا أول مرة أتكلم في الموضوع ده ..وماكنتش واخد بالي أني بقالي حوالي حاجة وعشرين سنة مشفتش فيلم .

*As-sāʔiq: maʕrafš ʔeh ʔil-li ḥaṣal baʕd kida id-dinya ʔil-li itġay-yarit wal-la ʔana ʔil-li itġay-yart..****tisad-daʔ bil-lāh?***

ʔana: ***lā ʔilāha ʔil-la al-lāh***

As-sāʔiq: ʔana ʔaw-wil mar-ra atkal-lim f-il-mawḍūʕ dah wi-makuntiš wāxid bāli ʔin-ni baʔali ḥawāli ḥaga wi-ʕišrīn sana mašuftiš film

*I don't know what happened. The world changed, or it was me that changed...****Want to hear something amazing?***

Sure, go ahead.

This is the first time I've spoken about this. I hadn't realised that I haven't seen a film in about twenty-something years.

The idiomatic expressions *تصدق بالله tisad-daʔ bil-lāh* 'do you believe in God?' and its response *لا إله إلا الله lā ʔilāha il-la al-lāh* 'there is no God but the one God' are not intended for their literal meaning, which is inquiring about the addressee's religious belief, but rather to convey the frame used by the translator in the TT, which is topic introduction. The idiomatic use of the expression in the SL, however, has an additional, equally relevant frame of asserting the interlocutors' religious identity as Muslims, so the expression, in addition to its function, has the subfunction of identity assertion and, therefore, evokes the additional frame generic→Muslim. It is, in other words, an idiom used exclusively by Muslim speakers of Arabic. The expression combines features from the two categories mentioned above in that it lacks a direct religious meaning linked to God while simultaneously identifying the interlocutors as being Muslim due to the use of the exclusively Muslim proclamation of *لا إله إلا الله lā ʔilāha il-la al-lāh*. The functional translation

in the TT conveys the idiom frame topic introduction adequately, but fails to do the same for the generic frame, which is an expected consequence of translating idiomatic expressions, where one or more frame references are lost in translation due to the multiple layers of reference. The issue here is a matter of setting frame priorities and deciding on the frame reference more relevant to the context and thus more worthy of transmission. In this case, it was the translator's choice to go the functional path and dispense of the more secondary generic frame, which does not add relevant information to the TT.

3.3. General Expressions Derived From Religious Tradition

This part of the study examines expressions motivated by faith in general, without indicating the specific religious affiliation of the speaker, but rather pointing to a general generic→faith frame, whose sub-frame depends on the term at hand.

The concept of *حرام ḥarām* 'forbidden' is one that is omnipresent in Arabic religious discourse. The term originally means a sinful or prohibited act, or a sacred place or object. In ECA and some less formal MSA texts, it has also acquired the meaning 'unfair' or 'unspeakable'. This is a case where the distinction between the two polysemes is necessary in order to verify which frame is being referenced. The first frame, indicating sinful or prohibited behavior, would point the reader/translator in the direction of religious (for the interlocutor) and sinful_act (for the behavior). Alternately, the less formal frame would reference unjust (or outrageous) both for the agent of the act and for the act itself. Misinterpretation could result in a false religious sub-frame and different interpretation of the TT than was intended in the ST, which is a common problem of polysemy in translation. Interpreting the term involves knowledge of both the culture and the underlying religious beliefs to be able to discern what the interlocutors would classify as outright sinful and what they would otherwise identify as unsavory behavior without the religiously-motivated outrage.

In *Aunt Safiyya and the Monastery*, the context of the term *حرام ḥarām* is a visit made by the narrator's mother following his father's altercation with the young widow over naming her manure donkey after her husband's killer. The context does not reveal any religiously objectionable behavior and no overtly sinful actions, which is why the TL term *unspeakable* is sufficient in this context:

أما خالتي صفية فلم تطأ قدمها بيتنا بعد هذا اليوم. لم يذهب أبي إليها ولكن أمي زارتها مرة واحدة بأمر منه ثم عادت مكفهرة الوجه وقالت بمجرد أن دخلت من عتبة الباب، وكانت أول مرة أسمعها ترفع صوتها عليه: فضحتني يا حاج. لم يكن ينقص إلا أن تطردني صفية. أنت تعرف النار التي تعيش فيها، فلم جعلتني أذهب إليها؟ نحرمها من ثأرها ثم نذهب لنشمت فيها؟ هذا ***حرام*** *والله.*

ʔam-mā xālati šafiy-ya fa-lam taṭaʔ qadamuhā baytanā baʕda hāḏa al-yawm. Lam yaḏhabu ʔabī ʔilayhā wa-lākin-na ʔum-mi zarat-hā mar-ratan waḥidatan bi-ʔamrin minhu ṯum-ma ʕadat mukfahir-rat al-waǧhi wa-qālat bi-muǧar-radi ʔan daxalat men ʕatabati l-bāb wa-kānat ʔaw-wala mar-ratin ʔasmaʕuhā tarfaʕu ṣawtahā ʕahayhi: faḍaḥtanī yā ḥāǧ. Lam yakun yanquṣu ʔil-lā ʔan taṭrudunī šafiy-ya. ʔanta taʕrifu n-nāra al-latī taʕīšu fīhā fa-lima ǧaʕaltani ʔaḏhabu ʔilayhā? naḥrimuhā min ṯaʔrihā ṯum-ma naḏhabu li-našmatu fīhā? hāḏā ***ḥarāmun*** *wal-lāh*

As for Aunt Safiyya, she did not set foot in our house after that day. My father didn't go to see her, but my mother visited her one time because he asked her to, and she returned grim faced. She announced the moment she walked in the door-and this was the first time 1 ever heard her raise her voice to my father- "You've disgraced me, ya hagg! No less than drive me away, that's what she did! You know the hell Safiyya is living, so why did you make me go to her? We deprive her of her revenge, then we go and rub her face in it? My God, this is ***unspeakable****!"*

Later in the text, however, the concept of religiously-prohibited acts surface when Safiyya's bodyguards refuse to assassinate her husband's killer, Harbi, inside the monastery, objecting that it would be *حرام ḥarām*, or an act of sin. The word *sin* is used in the TT to underline the interlocutors' ideology regarding the situation and the sanctity of the monastery, both *حرام ḥarām* and *sin* referencing religious for the interlocutor (though without subtle sarcasm at the selectively religious outlaws who refuse to commit murder inside a holy place) and sin for the act itself:

وبعد قليل فوجئنا بصفية وقد طردت الحارسين المسلحين اللذين كانا يقفان أمام بيتها. لم ينطق الرجلان بشئ عن السبب، ولكننا سمعنا أنها أصدرت لهما أمرًا بأن يذهبا إلى حربي في الدير وأن يقتلاه ـ قال الرجلان: يا ست صفية إن خرج من الدير قتلناه ولكننا لا نستطيع أن نقتله في الدير. حتى المجرمين والمطاريد لا يفعلون ذلك ـ هذا ***حرام****.*

Wa-baʕda qalīl fūǧiʔnā bi-šafiy-ya wa-qad ṭaradat al-ḥārisayn al-musal-laḥayn al-laḏayn kānāyaqifān ʔamāma baytihā. lam yanṭiq ar-raǧulān bi-šayʔin ʕan as-sababi wa-lākinnana samiʕnā ʔan-nahā ʔaṣdarat lahumā ʔamran biʔan yaḏhabā ʔilā ḥarbī fi d-dayr wa-ʔan yaqtulāh - qāla r-raǧulān: yā sit šafiy-ya ʔin xaraǧa min ad-dayri qatalnāhu wa-lākinnana lā nastaṭīʕu ʔan naqtuluhu fi d-dayr. ḥat-tā l-muǧrimīna wal-maṭarīda lā yafʕalūna ḏālik - hāḏā ***ḥarām****.*

*A short time later, we were startled to learn that Safiyya had driven off the two armed guards who had stood in front of her house. The two men didn't explain the reason, but we heard that she had ordered them to go to Harbi at the monastery and kill him. The men said, "Madame Safiyya, if he comes out of the monastery, we'll kill him, but we can't kill him within the monastery grounds. Even criminals and outlaws don't do that-****it's a sin****!"*

The same concept is also seen in *Taxi*, where the driver mentions that the only reason more people are not committing suicide is because it is *حرام ḥarām* or, in this context, *prohibited,* both indicating the frame religious for the speaker and sin for the act:

السائق: مش للدرجة دي، هئ هئ، إنت عارف لو الانتحار مش ***حرام****، كل اللي عارفهم كان زمانهم اتحروا من زمان.*

As-saʔiq: mish lid-daraga di hiʔ hiʔ. ʔinta ʕārif law al-intiḥār mish ***ḥarām*** *kul il-lī ʕarifhum kān zamanhum intaḥaru min zamān.*

Not to that extent? Haha. You know, if suicide wasn't ***prohibited****, everyone I know would have committed suicide ages ago.*

None of these expressions indicate a specific religion practiced by the interlocutor, but they do indicate the general tendency toward injecting religion or actions related to it in everyday conversation. Maintaining these references, where possible, give the TL reader a flavor of the cultural background of the ST.

4. Conclusions

Generic frames reflect both external and internal cognitive representations of what the individuals, as well as the culture from which the individual hails, considers normal and expected. Faith and religious beliefs are one aspect of what cultures may consider generic, normal, and expected. The different functions of faith-motivated expressions, whether they indicate the speakers' religious beliefs or merely act as a frozen expression based on the culture's propensity towards religious traditions are among the important aspects of texts that translators need to acknowledge. Given the colossal difference in what individuals and cultures consider generic, the translator's mission must be to focus on transmitting the idea of what is generic in the SL, and therefore the SC, which may include a significant amount of explanation in the body of the TT.

The utilization of semantic frames in the process of translating religiously-motivated expressions provides a framework through which the translator may separate the different layers of meaning intended by the SL and attempt to duplicate them in the TL, with the chance to prioritize layers in cases where not the entire frame package is transferable into the TL. The idea to use frame semantics as a vehicle for translation is one based on the ability to catalogue and analyze knowledge, and appreciate the various levels of information that may be offered by a single concept.

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