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Editorial B

EDITORIAL

The Department of Arabic, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin, Nigeria, received generous approbations and encouragements from the Contributors and readers on the maiden issue of this journal, *Alimi Journal of Arabic Studies*. This spontaneous response came from everywhere in consideration of the content of the volume which is replete with well researched articles. It is a manifestation of the total commitment of the onshore and offshore article authors to push forward the wheel of the progress of Arabic language and literature and an attempt to uplift its status as a mirror of culture in this milieu which cannot be obviated for it is the language of the Qur'an.

We of the Editorial Board have resolved not to leave any stone unturned to always improve upon the standard by every issue, God willing, until it reached the goal of serving as the threshold for the quality control for Arabic in style, content and sound reasoning by which this journal will rank among reputable journals of language, literature and culture.

In keeping with the tradition of a learned journal which enjoys international acclaim the present edition attracted research papers from scholars from Kuwait, The United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Malaysia, Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria.

It is hoped that our esteemed readers will derive pleasure and some value in the content of this volume.

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Manfaluti's Ode on Paul and Virginia: Translation and Comments**Dr. Isa Alabi Abubakar****Dr. Aliy Abdulwahid Adebisi****Department of Arabic, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin Nigeria.****Abstract:**

The Egyptian educational contact with Europe in the 19th century yielded good results. The mission led by Tahtawi to acquire modern knowledge in France gave his forty-man team the ample opportunity to see French life and enabled them to have precise observations of the modern world as well as the greatest and most flourishing society of their day. Tahtawi's book published shortly after his return from France entitled: *Takhlis al-Ibriz fi talkhis Bariz* (The History of Paris) where he described his stay in Paris, the manners and customs of the French, their cleanliness, love, work and disapproval of laziness, their intellectual curiosity and social morality as good qualities had endeared the hearts of younger Egyptian writers to French culture. It also created in them the curiosity to know more about the French, their life and literature. They were interested in reading the works of Voltaire, Condillac, Rousseau, Hugo, Musset, La Fontaine and a host of other French writers. Though, Manfaluti did not visit France during his lifetime, but he admired *Paul ET Virginia* a novel published by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre in 1788 which he adapted and translated into Arabic as: *Al- Fadilah* (The Virtue) in 1923 with the uncertainty whether he learned French or not. The aim of this paper is to revive Bernardin original work which was largely forgotten in French in particular and Europe in general. The paper majorly employs Equivalence and Transposition methods of translation on the Manfaluti's ode on Paul and Virginia. The finding revealed that love, loyalty and sacrifice (LLS) were poignantly preached in the original work. It was equally revealed that they (Paul and Virginia) were very good friend since birth and remain lovers till the end of their lives. The ode has 39 verses ending with *hamzah* and composed in meter of *Ramal*. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that the LLS principle should be encouraged as the practice of the day in any given society in order to have flourishing and functioning global village.

Keywords: Manfaluti, Ode, Paul and Virginia, Translation, Equivalence.

Introduction

The Egyptian educational contact with Europe in the 19th Century was beneficial and good result yielding. The mission led by Rifa'a al-Tahtawi (1801-187)ⁱ to acquire modern knowledge in France gave his forty-man team the ample opportunity to see French life; it also enabled them to have precise observations of the modern world as well as the greatest and most flourishing society of their day.

Al-Tahtawi's book published shortly after his return from France entitled: *Takhlis al-Ibriz fi Talkhis Bariz* (The History of Paris) where he described his stay in Paris, the manners and customs of the French, their cleanliness, love of work and disapproval of laziness, their intellectual curiosity and social morality.ⁱⁱ The praise of these good qualities endeared the French to the hearts of younger Egyptian writers and created in them a strong desire to know more about the French, their life and literature. They became interested in reading the works of Voltaire, Condillac, Rousseau, Hugo, Musset, La Fontaine and a host of other French writers.

Though, Manfaluti did not see France during his lifetime, but, he admired greatly French literary works one of which is *Paul et Virginie*, a novel published by Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre in 1788 which he adopted and translated into Arabic as: *Al-Fadilah* (The Virtue) in 1923 with the uncertainty whether he learned French.ⁱⁱⁱ The aim of this paper is to translate and make comments on the Manfaluti's 39 line Ode on Paul and Virginia.

Manfaluti and Bernardin

Mustafa Lufti al-Manfaluti (1876-1924) was an Egyptian writer and poet who was born in the Upper Egyptian city of Manfalut. He received his elementary education at *Kuttab* (Quranic School) in his village, and memorized the Quran before the age of twelve. He later moved to Cairo and joined Al-Azhar University, where he was taught Religious Studies, Arabic language and Literature for ten years. He was fascinated by the jurist, religious scholar and liberal reformer Shaykh Muhammad Abduh, he became one of his disciples and imbibed his spirit of truth, openness, sociality and wisdom.

Manfaluti's interest in French literature was probably stimulated by the aforementioned descriptive book on France written by Tahtawi the leader of Egyptian educational mission to France, which served as a window, through which his people could see Europe. It was also probable that compliments given to the French people in particular and Europeans in general by his mentor Muhammad Abduh who was sentenced to exile for three years, he went first to Beirut and then joined his master al-Afghani in Paris for several months, could be the reason why he loved French literature.

Furthermore, Manfaluti's reason to embark on translating and rewriting the French literary works despite his inability to read or speak French could be a way of showing his talent and ability to produce literary works of any kind. He must not be left behind; he had to keep pace with other intellectuals of his time who were firmly grounded in European literature in particular and Western Civilization in general.

Manfaluti was above all, deeply influenced by pan-Islamism, Egyptian nationalism, and the Syrian School of writing which, who introduced him to Western, particularly French learning.^{iv}

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (1737-1814) was a French writer and botanist. He is best known for his 1788 novel *Paul et Virginie*, now largely forgotten, but in the 19th Century a very popular children's book. He was an avid advocate and practitioner of Vegetarianism, and although he was a devout Christian was also heavily influenced by Enlightenment-era intellectuals like Voltaire and his mentor Rousseau.^v

It is obvious that, when Bernardin wrote his original work he undoubtedly had the French youth in mind as his audience, while Manfaluti, in the same vein, dedicated his translated work to the Egyptian youth, expressing his admiration for courage and fearlessness in a boy and courtesy and modesty in a girl. To him, courage is the best trait of the boy, while modesty is the radiant beauty the girl can have in her life. They should therefore, live in accordance with the virtue as laid down by Paul and Virginia.^{vi}

It appears that Manfaluti had greater admiration for Bernardin because both of them had many things in common, they had profound love for Nature, each of them led a simple life, and they used their literary prowess to serve as avid advocate of the voiceless and down-trodden people of their respective societies.

Paul and Virginia

Paul and Virginia (or *Paul et Virginie*) is a novel by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, first Published in 1788. The story is set in the island of Mauritius under French rule, then named *ile de France*, which the author had visited. Written on the eve of the French Revolution, the novel is hailed as Bernardin's finest work. It records the fate of a child of nature corrupted by the false, artificial sentimentality that prevailed at the time among the upper classes of France.^{vii}

Paul and Virginia, two fatherless children are brought up in poverty and innocence, amid the tropical scenery of the Island. Virginia is recalled to France by a harsh and wealthy aunt. There she is miserable, and after two years returns to the island. But, her ship wrecked and drowned before the eyes of Paul.^{viii} These two children are indeed symbols of love, loyalty and sacrifice, each one of them can do anything or go to any length in order to make his partner happy.

John and David say:

Of the merits of "Paul and Virginia" it is hardly necessary to utter a word; it tells its own story eloquently and impressively, and in a language simple, natural and true, it touches the common heart of the world.^{ix}

On Manfaluti and Uthman Jalal's translated works, Matti Moosa makes the following observation:

Al-Manfaluti's unique techniques are more clearly revealed by a comparison of his adaption of St. Pierre's *Paul et Virginie* with that by Uthman Jalal-Jalal's objective was to Egyptianize this romance and give it a strong Muslim atmosphere, to make it more acceptable to the local audience of unsophisticated readers. Al-Manfaluti's adoption, on the other hand, is written in a highly fluent and polished language and is intended for an elite group of readers, the graduates of Dar al-Ulum and similar "Western" schools established in the time of the Khedive.^x

It is incontrovertible that, any advanced and sophisticated Arabic reader, would never resist the temptation to read Manfaluti's socio-political essays, and translated works for clarity, elegance and unique style, especially his work on Paul and Virginia.

Manfaluti's Ode on Paul and Virginia: Translation

- 1 يا بني القفر سلام عاطر **** من بني الدنيا عليكم وثناء
1. O children of the deserted land!
a fragrant greeting and compliment to you,
from the children of the world.
- 2 وسقى العارض من أكواخكم *** معهد الصدق ومهد الأنقياء
2. May the place of truth
and the cradle of the godly in your huts,
be watered by the rainy cloud.
- 3 كنتم خير بني الدنيا ومن **** سعدوا فيها وماتوا سعداء
3. You are the best of the children of the world,
those who are happy therein, and happily die.
- 4 عشت من فقركم في غبطة *** ومن القلة في عيش رخاء
4. Though, you lived in bliss and comfort,
with your poverty and paucity.
- 5 Among you, there was no quarrel, no wrangle, لا خداع لانفاق لا رياء
5. Among you, there was no quarrel, no wrangle,
no deception, no hypocrisy, and no eye service.
- 6 خلق برو قلب طاهر **** مثل كأس الحرمعنى وصفاء
6. A godly manner, and a clean heart,
like the glass of the free-born
with its limpid content.
- 7 ووفاء ثبت الحب به * وثبات الحب في الناس الوفاء
7. And loyalty (is) upon which your love firmly stands,
what strengthens love among people is loyalty.
- 8 أصبحت قصتكم معتبرا *** في البرايا وعزاء اليأساء
8. Your story has become a lesson for mankind,
and solace for the miserable.
- 9 يجتلي الناظر فيها حكمة *** لم يسطرها يراع الحكماء
9. The keen observer will see wisdom in it,

which could not be written down by the pen of wise men.

10. Wise moves, which you did not read about **القضاء** **صحف** **غير أن طالعتم** **كثما ***** **حكم لم تقرؤوا في كتبها**
from any books,

other than what you have read from the leaves of destiny

11. And the book of the Universe has pages **يقرأ الحكمة فيها العقلاء** **11 وكتاب الكون فيه صحف *****
which the intelligent always read.

12. Surely, the life of man in his solitude **خير عيش كافل خير الهناء** **12 إن عيش المرء في وحدته *****
is a better life that guarantees blissful peace.

13. Man is therefore, evil, perpetual sorrow, **وشقاء ليس يحكيه شقاء** **13 فالورى شروهم دائم *****
and incomparable trouble.

14. The poor always envies the r **وغني يستنل الفقراء** **14 وفقير لغني حاسد ******
and the rich humiliates the poor.

15. The powerful treats the weak unjustly **وضعيف من قوي في عناء** **15 وقوي لضعيف ظالم *****
and the weak groans in pains under the powerful.

16. You can keep away from them, **ونجاء منهم أي نجاء** **16 في فناء الأرض منأي عنهم *****
to the vast space of God,
where there is tremendous safety.

17. Verily, living with them is humiliating, **وحياء الذلة والموت سواء** **17 إن عيش المرء فهم ذلة *****
and living in humiliation is the same with death.

18. Virginia would have obeyed Paul, **وأنألته مناه في البقاء** **18 ليت (فرجيني) أطاعت (بولسا) *****
by making his wish,
that she should stay realizable!

19. And felt pity for the flowing tears, **من عيون ما درت كيف البكاء** **19 ورثت للأدمع اللاتي جرت ****
from the eyes, that had never known how to cry.

20. It was not her opinion to depart him **ساعة لكنه رأي القضاء** **20 لم يكن من رأيها فرقته *****
even for an hour,
but, that was the opinion of her destiny.

21. She departed him, not knowing that, **أن يوم الملتقى يوم اللقاء** **21 فارقته لم تكن عالمة *****
the day of reunion,
is the day of rendezvous (resurrection).

22. What was the concern of Virginia **كان في القفر عن الدنيا غناء؟** **22 ما (لفرجيني) و (باريس) أما ****
about Paris?

was not there in the deserted land self-sufficiency?

23. This money is a glass **قطرة الصهباء فيه بدماء** **23 إن هذا المال كأس مزجت *****

- in which a drop of wine,
is mixed with a lot of blood.
24. Man would not have a sip of it 24 لا ينال المرء منه جرعة *** لم يكن في طها داء عياء
without having contacted with a hidden,
incurable disease.
25. She was offered great and dazzling glory, 25 عرضوا المجد عليها باهرا *** يدهس الألباب حسنا ورواء
that amazes hearts.
26. She was shown, 26 وأروها زخرف الدنيا وما *** راق فيها من نعيم وثرء
all the vanities of this world,
and its appealing comfort and wealth.
27. But, she turned down the offer, 27 فأبته وأبى الحب لها **** نقض ما أبرمه عهد الإخاء
and love did not allow her,
to breach the covenant of brotherhood.
28. And felt nostalgic about the deserted land, 28 ودعاها الشوق للقفر وما *** ضم من خير إليه وهناء
the good things and blissful peace therein.
29. Her love started flying, 29 فغدت أهواؤها طائرة *** بجناح الشوق يزجها الرجاء
winged by her burning desire,
and driven by her hope
30. Man is always full of hope, 30 يأمل الإنسان ما يأمله *** وقضاء الله في الكون وراء
But, death follows him in this world.
- ***
31. What sort of atmosphere is this? 31 ما لهذا الجو أمسى قاتما *** ينذر الناس بويل وبلاء
that has suddenly become dark,
warning people against impending
woe and scourge?
32. What sort of sea is this? 32 ما لهذا البحر أضى مائجا *** كبناء شامخ فوق بناء
that has suddenly become surging,
like a huge building over another?
33. And the ship over its tides, 33 وكأن الفلك في أمواجه *** رشة تحملها كف الهواء
is like a feather being handled by winds.
34. It was when Virginia spread out her hands, 34 و (لفرجيني) يد مبسوطة *** بدعاء حين لا يجدي دعاء
praying, when prayer was of no use.
35. What a pity! Seeing the beautiful body 35 لهفي والماء يطفو فوقه *** هيكل الحسن وتمثال الضياء
and image of light float on the water.

36. She was a tender flower in the garden, تملأ الدنيا جمالا وبهاء
filling the world with her beauty and splendor.
37. Whoever sees her, would never believe, مثل خلق الناس من طين وماء
that she was created, like any other human being,
from clay and water.
38. She thought the sea was sky, and fell into it, ظننت البحر سماء فهوت *** لتباري فيه أملك السماء
to compete in it, with the angels of heaven.
39. Such is life, and this is how every living will end, هكذا الدنيا وهذا منتهى ** كل حي ما لي من بقاء,
for no one will live forever.^{xi}

Comments

The Ode has thirty-nine lines ending with *hamzah*. It is in metre *Ramal* which is a poetic metre. This is the name of the metre in Arabic prosody based on the foot *failatun* in which the first syllable may be either long or short. The metre has six units known as *tafail*, three in first verse called *sadr* and three in the second called "*ajuz*":
Fa'ilatun Fa'ilatun Failatun

فاعلاتن فاعلاتن فاعلاتن^{xii}

فاعلاتن فاعلاتن فاعلاتن

The Poet Manfaluti, as the master of prose and Verse in Arabic language summarizes the story of Paul and Virginia in the ode, which he divided into four segments, following the historic sequence in storytelling, and giving a vivid description of the scenery where the whole episode takes place.

Paul and Virginia the children of the deserted land which is left and abandoned without any development or serious cultivation, in order to evoke deep feeling and compassion towards these wonderful people who deserve to be greeted and appreciated by all and sundry, for doing the wright things in their own natural way, without any formal education, or any interference from the outside world and those intellectual graces were unfolding daily in their features, their attitudes, and their movements.^{xiii}

The ode has some literary tropes that have to be pointed out such as; *salamun 'atir* ascribing fragrance to greeting in order to establish how pleasant it is, the contrasts in living comfortable with poverty at hand, simile in comparing the people's clean hearts with the glass of a free-born, attributing a book to the universe, or knowledge to the eyes of Virginia's lover Poul, who tried to persuade her not to embark on a journey to France. Paul said to her:

"You are going away from us, they tell me, in three days.

You do not fear then to encounter the danger of the sea, at the sight of which you are so much terrified?" "I must perform my duty", answered Virginia, "by obeying my parent". "You leave us" resumed Paul, "For a distant relation, whom you have never seen". "Alas!" cried Virginia, I would have remained here my whole life, but

my mother would not have it so. My confessor, too, told me it was the will of God that I should go, and that life was a scene of trials! - And oh! This is indeed a severe one.^{xiv}

In this ode, money generally likened to a drop of wine mixed with a lot of blood, literary imagery in Virginia's love flying, winged by desire and driven by hope, personification of the atmosphere issuing warning, the ship in the surging tides like a feather being toyed with by strong winds, and describing Virginia as a tender flower.

Manfaluti's works have great influence on their readers of all ages. In Nigeria, one of Manfaluti's admirers, it is in fact, the principal writer of this paper imitates his ode on Paul and Virginia in following verses:

A story that elevates,
the position of noble-ones,
and promotes the love of loyalty among people.
Ordeal of good people does not weaken them,
like the face of gold dust being cleared up by fire.
They grew up in good soil,
and lived happily in suffering.
The big tree of faith in their hearts,
could not be troubled by hurricane and trial.
Verily, there is in Paul and Virginia for us,
Symbols of devotion, purity and modesty.
A love story, that we, tirelessly read,
and it shall remain forever.
It was successfully built by Bernardin,
And was intelligently painted by Manfaluti.^{xv}

Conclusion:

Manfaluti will remain one of the best writers and poets, ever produced by Egypt, for a long time to come. His captivating and unique style was, and is still, the subject of discussion in the literary circles across the Arab world and beyond. His carefully chosen topics concerning the less privileged in Egypt and elsewhere, qualifies him to be the people's advocate and voice of the voiceless. All these achievements, we guess, might have made him to smell the fragrance of immortality before his departure from this world.

The major aspect of this paper, is that of translation, where the complete poem of Manfaluti on Paul and Virginia is rendered into English. The summary of the story is that, Paul and Virginia are two young lovers who have grown up together from babyhood. Their widowed mothers live near each other in rude cottages, on an island in the Indies, on which there are few inhabitants. Here the children are reared, knowing no play-fellows but each other. When Virginia is sixteen years of age, her mother receive a letter from a wealthy aunt in Paris, who offers to make Virginia her heir and give her a good education, providing Virginia will, in the future, make her aunt's home her own. Virginia's mother, having lost her own fortune through marrying against the will of her family, feels that she must not let her daughter suffer the poverty that she has been compelled to endure. She accordingly insists upon Virginia's acceptance of her wealthy relative's offer. Virginia thereupon sets sail for France, leaving Paul brokenhearted at her departure. Virginia tries to be a dutiful niece to her aunt, who is very old and sickly, although she longs to return to her humble home and Paul, whom she dearly loves. When, however, the aunt insists that she marry a rich nobleman, Virginia refuses; her aunt disowns the girl and sends her back to the island home. Virginia's ship arrives at the Indies during a hurricane, and although only a cable's length from shore, it sinks before help can reach it, and Virginia is drowned. Paul witnesses her death from the shore, and almost loses his own life in a vain attempt to save her.¹⁶

However, the study does not deny the fact that no matter what efforts one puts into the art of translation from Arabic literary works to another language, yet, fascination, power and splendor of Arabic would not be fully conveyed.

Based on finding of this study it was recommended that the lesson in the original work- love, loyalty & sacrifice- should be imbibed by all and sundry; be at grass-root level and of course at larger community as well so we can have a better understanding of global village. Reading Arabic literary texts should also be encouraged, because, it will give readers of Arabic the ample opportunity to dive deeply into the depth of the language, in order to bring to the shores treasures of the language. However, that is not to suggest in any way, that translation should be discouraged, and its role in the global peace and understanding should be de-emphasized.

¹ Al- Fakhuri, Hanna (2005), *Tarikh al- Adab, al- Arabi*, Dar al- Jil, Beirut- Lebanon, Vol. 2 p.70

² Hourain, Albert (1987) *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798- 1939*, Cambridge University Press pp 70-71

³ www.britannica.com/E 15/03/2014

⁴ global.britannica.com 16/03/2014

⁵ en.m.wikipedia.org/wik 16/03/2014

⁶ Al-Manfaluti, Mustafa Lutfi, (2003), *Al- Fadi'lah, Al- Majmu'at Al- Kamilah, Mu'asasat Al- M'arif*, Second Edition, Beirut- Lebanon, p 602

⁷ en.m.wikipedia.org/wik 16/03/2014

⁸ <http://archive.org/det> 16/03/2014

⁹ www.gutenberg.org 16/03/2014

¹¹ Al- Mafaluti, op-cit 805-806

¹³ www.gutenberg.org 16/03/2014

¹⁴ Ibid.

16 www.imdb.com/title/tt0409139/plotsummary.01/02/2016