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***ISLAMIC FAITH AND CULTURE SHOCK IN  
LEILA ABOUELA'S NOVEL "THE TRANSLATOR"***

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for a Master Degree in Anglo-Saxon Literature & civilisation**

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## **Dedication**

*First of all, I would like to thank my precious husband Chetioui Mohammed, the source of tenderness, help and supports. I also dedicate the fruit of my efforts to my sweet heart Alae, Barae and Wassane. without forgetting to mention my dear sister in law Latifa for her help and collaboration.*

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*First and foremost, praise be to Allah who grants us the wonderful faculty of reasoning. Praise be to our Creator who incites us to acquire knowledge. Praise be to Allah who granted us patience and will to achieve this work.*

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*I would especially show my faithful recognitions to the jury members for their precious time reading and analyzing my work .*

## **Abstract**

*The aim of this work is to explore how cultural shock and Islamic faith are depicted in Aboulela's fiction "The Translator". Leila Aboulela, has written a collection of short stories, Coloured Lights (2001), and two novels, The Translator (1999) and Minaret (2005), which engage with the subtleties of Muslim African immigrant experience in Britain. 'The Translator' depicts the state of an immigrant widow in her host country Scotland, confronting a culture shock state of anxiety and mixed emotions, alone leaving her son with his grandmother Mahasen in Khartoum, where she lives a long period of sorrow, watching her time, pain and alienation getting wide and wide.*

*This study investigates also how Islamic faith can strongly govern the life of Muslims and organize their relationships with others especially a woman. The protagonist also confront a big deal of confusion and perplexity. How can she achieve her happiness with her love Rae who is not a Muslim with the obligation to preserve her Islamic identity? Can a Muslim women be influential?*

*Despite all the obstacles and difficulties which may face her, she can fulfill all what she aims through her adherence to the principles of her religion and faith. Through the novel. In this novel Islam is seen as a resource of power and salvation in the life of the female protagonist Sammar.*

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## General Introduction

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### General Introduction

Migration of people of Islamic background to the West has recently increased. The majority of Muslim immigrants in Europe came as a result of European governments recruitment. Recently, immigration has been restricted to family reunions and the search for political asylum or educational opportunity. The position of Muslims in the West has considerably grown and prompted an important interest by national and international researchers. Islam as a religion is seen from a stereotype western view as primitive, irrational, oppression, and violence. Such image needed a significant protest to be corrected.

The aim of this work is to explore how Islam and Cultural Shock are depicted in Leila Aboulel's work "The Translator". A Sudanese writer, Leila Aboulela, has written a collection of short stories, *Coloured Lights* (2001), and two novels, *The Translator* (1999) and *Minaret* (2005), which engage with the subtleties of Muslim African immigrant experience in Britain. This work depicts the state of an immigrant widow in her host country Scotland confronting a culture shock of anxiety and mixed emotions, alone leaving her son with his grandmother Mahasen in Khartoum, where she lives a long period of sorrow, watching her time, pain and alienation getting wide and wide.

This study I investigate also how Islam can strongly govern the life of Muslims and organize their relationships with others especially a woman. Through the novel, the writer portrays a Muslim's behaviors, instinct and tendency to the religion although she lives in a Western society far away from her homeland. In other words, to have faith in a Western world.

These issues raised many questions: How can the writer change her protagonist's emotional state of culture shock? or What is the solution provided by the author to put an end to the tension and anxiety of migrants? Is Islam a source of empowerment or weakness? Can a Muslim woman be influential?

## **General Introduction**

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Despite all the obstacles and difficulties which may face her, she can fulfill all what she aims through her adherence to the principles of her religion and faith. Through the novel, Islam is seen as a resource of power and salvation in the life of the protagonist Sammar.

This work is divided into three chapters, In the first chapter, I conceive the Islamic Faith where I deal with the Islamic faith in general, and I explore Islamic faith as a means of salvation for people. In the second chapter, I treat the concept of Culture Shock where I explore it in general, and I emphasise culture shock in the context of immigration. In the third chapter, I explain how Islam faith and culture shock are portrayed in the novel.



## **I.1 Introduction**

Unlike other beings, man has the tendency to think that anything in this life is much organized that must have an organizer. Islam simply applies the same natural logic to the universe and the environment around us which has so many amazing and well organized inter-related systems that witness of the existence of a powerful creator.

It is in this direction that Muslims believe in an unseen Ultimate Creator, source of all the physical and spiritual power that exist in the universe. We know about our creator through the powerful evidence of how organized is the universe. The Prophet Mohammed came to draw our attention to God through Islam ,so that we may make the choice to believe by responding to an inner instinct that all these systems that are well organized must have an organizer and that this universe is the creation of the ultimate organizer: God the one, the eternal, the creator, the fastest who calculates, the light, the originator, to list only a view of the names and attributes of the one God as outlined in the Koran (Qur'an).

## **I.2 Definition of the concept**

### **I.2 .1 *What is Islam?***

The Arabic word ‘Islam’ means ‘submission’, and is derived from a word meaning ‘peace’. As such, the religion of Islam teaches that in order to achieve true peace of mind and surety of heart, one must submit to God and live according to His Divinely revealed Law. Islam is the true ‘natural religion’, and it is the same eternal message revealed through the ages to all of God’s prophets and messengers. The main message of all the prophets has always been that there is only One True God and He alone is to be worshipped. These prophets start with Adam and include Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and Jesus, peace be upon them all. God says in the Holy Quran:

*“We did not send before you (O Muhammad) any messenger but We revealed to him: ‘none has the right to be worshipped except I, therefore worship Me.’”(Quran 21:25)<sup>1</sup>*

Islam is the name of the religion, or more properly the ‘way of life’, which God (Allah) has revealed and which was practiced by all of the Prophets and Messengers of God that He sent to mankind. The root Arabic word from which Islam is derived implies peace, safety, salutation, protection, submission, acceptance, surrender, and salvation.

Islam specifically means being in the state of submission to God, worshipping Him Alone, and reverently accepting and obeying His Law. Through this submission, the peace, security, and wholesome well-being implied in its literal meaning is achieved.

(P.Seda,p07)<sup>2</sup>

## **I.2 .2 Who are Muslims?**

The Arabic word “Muslim” literally means “someone who is in a state of Islam (submission to the will and law of God)”. One becomes a Muslim simply by saying with understanding and conviction the declaration of faith, *Laa illaaha ill Allah Muhammad-Rasoolullah*. This saying means ‘There is no god but God (Allah) and Muhammad is the Messenger (Prophet) of God’

The five pillars of Islam provide the framework for the Muslim way of life. These are, the declaration of faith, five daily prayers, giving charity, fasting during the month of Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Makkah once in a lifetime.

The message of Islam is universal, and anyone who accepts this message becomes a Muslim. Islam is not a religion for just Arabs, but statistics reveal that over 80% of the world’s Muslims are not Arabs! Muslims come from many different races, ethnic groups, cultures and nationalities. Being a Muslim entails complete acceptance and active

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<sup>1</sup> The Quran, Surat 21 The Prophets (Al Anbya), Verse 25, page 324

<sup>2</sup> Pete, Seda. Islam is .....,2002.p07.

obedience to the revealed teachings and laws of God. **A Muslim is a person who freely accepts basing his beliefs, values and faith on the will of Almighty God. According to Muslim belief, Allah “neither begets, nor was He begotten” (P.Seda,p10)<sup>1</sup>**

God is Absolutely Unique and Eternal. Allah is in control of everything and is perfectly capable of bestowing His infinite Mercy and Forgiveness to whomever He chooses. That is why Allah is also called the All-Powerful and Most-Merciful. Allah has created the Universe for man, and as such wants the best for all human beings.

### **I.2 .3 Family in Islam**

The family, which is the basic unit of civilization, is now disintegrating. Islam’s family system brings the rights of the husband, wife, children, and relatives into a fine equilibrium. It nourishes unselfish behaviour, generosity, and love in the framework of a well-organized family system. The peace and security offered by a stable family unit is greatly valued, and it is seen as essential for the spiritual growth of its members. A harmonious social order is created by the existence of extended families and by treasuring children.

#### **➤ Parents’ treatments in Islam:**

It is clear that after Allah parents are the persons who give us innumerable favors. They provide protection, food and clothing to the newly born. The mother sacrifices her comforts and sleep to provide comfort to her children. The father works hard to provide for their physical, educational and psychological (and spiritual) needs. It is a matter of common courtesy that if a person does you some favor you feel obliged to him. Verbally you say ‘thank you’ to him. You try to repay and compensate him for his gifts and favors. You feel a sense of gratitude towards him. So it is with Allah and with parents. Allah’s favors cannot be counted or repaid except by thanking Him and obeying His orders. After

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<sup>1</sup> Pete, Seda. Islam is ....,2002.p10.

Allah our parents deserve our thanks and obedience for the favors they had done us. That's why Quran lays stress on feeling grateful to parents, and doing good to them. "And your Lord has ordained that you shall worship none save Him and shall do your parents a good turn." What does a 'good turn' mean? It includes obeying them, speaking softly, avoiding harsh words or harsh tone, giving them company when they are lonely, caring for their physical and psychological needs (especially in their old age), and praying to Allah that He may bless them and have mercy on them. (S.Zulfiqar,p155)<sup>1</sup>

As between parents the mother has more rights than the father. The reason is apparent. Mother has borne the child's burden during pregnancy, has undergone birth pains in delivering the baby, has sacrificed her own comforts to provide comfort to her children, has looked after them and felt worried for their well-being. That is why mother deserves our good treatment more than the father. A Tradition of the Prophet (PBUH) tells us that a Companion asked the Prophet, "Who deserves my good treatment most?" "Your mother", said the Prophet. "Who next?" "Your mother". "Who next?" "Your mother". "Who after that?" "Your father". (Al-Bukhari, Hadith 431)<sup>2</sup>

This means that the mother deserves three times more good treatment from her children than the father deserves. Another Tradition wants us to extend kind treatment to close relations on the mother's side also (even to her friends). A famous Hadith (Tradition) says, "Paradise lies under the feet of the mother". This means doing good to our mother lead us to Paradise.

➤ **Children treatment in Islam :**

We have mentioned the Rights of Parents (discussed above) are the Duties of children. Now let us see what are the Rights of Children (and Duties of Parents) in Islam. Children have the right to be fed, clothed and protected till they grow up to adult hood.

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<sup>1</sup> Sadia,Zulfiqar.Islam and the West A Love Story,2015.p155.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Bukhari, Hadith 431

Protection means protection against physical as well as moral and intellectual harm. Parents are duty bound to see that the child's personality develops in all fields. So if the parents have to resort to strictness for the sake of disciplining the children and protecting them from intellectually, morally and religiously undesirable behaviour, children should not resent their strictness.

In Islam education is not limited to bookish knowledge but includes moral and religious training also. It means healthy all-round growth of child's personality. Parents must not only provide for children's education in schools and colleges but should also take personal interest in their studies, helping them if they can. This gives children a feeling of 'working with the parents' and encourages them in studies. Parents should sacrifice their own comfort and social activities and must spare some time to take interest in children's studies, especially when they are young. Leaving children to the mercy of teachers or tutors is not a wise policy. And of course, parents should not forget or neglect imparting religious/moral training to children. A little sacrifice on part of parents will save children from moral disasters. Effective moral training comes not from sermons, advice and precepts but from parents' personal examples of good behaviour. It is a famous Tradition of the Prophet (PBUH) that acquisition of knowledge is a must for every Muslim boy and girl. Another Hadith says, "*The best of you is one who gives a good education (intellectual and moral) to his children*" (Narrated in Saheeh Al-Bukhari, No442)<sup>1</sup>. Another Hadith lays stress on education of daughters. The Prophet (PBUH) once said, "*He who provides good upbringing to 3 daughters shall go to Paradise*". A man asked, "*what if one has only two daughters*". "*He also shall go to Paradise*". Another man asked, "*and what if one has only one daughter?*" "*He too*", replied the Prophet (PBUH). (Narrated in Saheeh Al-Bukhari, No 519)<sup>2</sup>

#### **I.2.4 Neighborhood in Islam :**

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<sup>1</sup> Hadith: Saheeh Al-Bukhari, No. 442

<sup>2</sup> Hadith: Saheeh Al-Bukhari, No. 519

It is reported that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Whoever believes in God and the Last Day (the Day of Judgment) should do good to his neighbour" (Narrated Saheeh Al-Bukhari, No. 51)<sup>1</sup>. The neighbor has a special status in Islam. Islam encourages Muslims to treat their neighbors in a gentle way that reflects the true spirit of Islam as exemplified in its tolerant aspect of our religion . It makes no difference whether the neighbors are Muslim or non-Muslim. Ayesha, the Mother of the Believers, stated that she once asked Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), "*O Messenger of Allah! I have two neighbors. To whom shall I send my gifts?*" Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "*To the one whose gate is nearer to you.*" (Al-Bukhari, Hadith,49) .<sup>2</sup>

It is clear from the above Prophetic Hadith that Muslims are encouraged to not only treat our neighbors kindly, but also to exchange gifts with them. The Hadith does not indicate whether the one with whom we exchange gifts is a Muslim or not.

### **I.2.5 Woman in Islam :**

Islam raised the level of women, they are equal to men, with rights and responsibilities that take into account the nature of humankind. Unfortunately across the globe, Muslim women are victims of cultural deviation that have no place in Islam. Individuals and groups claim to be Muslims, but fail to practice the true principles of Islam. Whenever the media reveals unconscionable stories about honor killings, forced marriage, the punishment of rape victims, women being confined to their homes or women being denied education they are revealing a tale of men and women who are ignorant about the status of women in Islam.

***“O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will, and you should not treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the bridal money you have given them. And live with them honourably. If you dislike them, it***

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<sup>1</sup> Hadith: Saheeh Al-Bukhari, No. 6019

<sup>2</sup> Hadith: Saheeh Al-Bukhari, No. 6022

*may be that you dislike a thing and God brings a great deal of good through it.” (Quran 4:19)<sup>1</sup>*

Islam demands that women be treated with respect, honor, and justice. It condemns oppression of any kind. In Islam women, like men, are commanded to believe in God and to worship Him. Women are equal to men in terms of reward in the Hereafter.

*“And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a true believer in the Oneness of God, such will enter paradise; and not the least injustice, even to the size of a speck on the back of a date stone, will be done to them.” (Quran 4:124)<sup>2</sup>*

Women in Islam have the right to own property, to control their own money to buy and sell, and to give gifts and charity. It is not permissible for anyone to take a woman’s wealth without her consent. Islam gave women formal rights of inheritance. Women in Islam have the right to an education; seeking and acquiring knowledge is an obligation on all Muslims, male or female.

Muslim women have the right to accept or refuse marriage proposals as they see fit, and married women are completely free from the obligation of supporting and maintaining the family. Working married women are free to contribute to the household expenses, or not, as they see fit. Women have the right to seek divorce if it becomes necessary.

*Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, said, “A matron should not be given in marriage except after consulting her; and a virgin should not be given in marriage except after her permission.” The people asked, “O God’s messenger! How can we know her permission?” He said, “Her silence (indicates her permission).” (Sahih al-Bukhari, N° 5136)<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> The Quran, Surat 4 Women (Al nissa), Verse 19, page 80.

<sup>2</sup> The Quran, Surat 4 Women (Al nissa), Verse 124, page 98.

<sup>3</sup> Hadith ,Sahih al-Bukhari N° 5136.

***A women was given by her father gave her in marriage when she was a matron and she disliked that marriage. So she went to God’s Messenger and he declared that marriage invalid. (Sahih al-Bukhari,N° 5143)<sup>1</sup>***

Islam declares that women are worthy human beings deserving of respect, and the right to be free from oppression. Women have the right to a decent life, without facing aggression or abuse of any kind. They have the right to pursue a life that is pleasing to them within Islamic boundaries. Nobody has the right to force women to be less than they want to be. The true teachings of Islam, declare that women should be held in a position of high regard.

The religion of Islam demands that women be treated with respect, honour, and justice. It condemns oppression of any kind. In Islam women, like men, are commanded to believe in God and to worship Him. Women are equal to men in terms of reward in the Hereafter.

***“And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a true believer in the Oneness of God, such will enter paradise; and not the least injustice, even to the size of a speck on the back of a date stone, will be done to them.” (Quran 4:124)<sup>2</sup>***

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<sup>2</sup> The Quran, Surat 4 Women (Al nissa), Verse 124, page 98



*should not be given in marriage except after her permission.” The people asked, “O God’s messenger! How can we know her permission?” He said, “Her silence (indicates her permission).” (Al-Bukhari, Hadith,302) <sup>1</sup>*

*“A women was given by her father gave her in marriage when she was a matron and she disliked that marriage. So she went to God’s Messenger and he declared that marriage invalid.” (Al-Bukhari, Hadith,309) <sup>2</sup>*

### **I.2.6 Hijab in Islam :**

The word hijab refers to the western word “veil” since this is most commonly recognized and used by Muslim women and specifically refer to the head covering. The type of veil that covers the face is called niqab as is it commonly known among Muslim women. Hijab is an integral part of everyday appearance and life of most Muslim women all over the world.

When Quran talks about covering for women, it tells them to be modest and seems as if it is asking them to use their existing clothing to cover their chests: *“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts, etc.) and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent. And not to reveal their adornment except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husband's sons, their brothers or their brother's sons, or their sister's sons, or their (Muslim) women (i.e. their sisters in Islam), or the (female) slaves whom their right hands possess, or small children And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And all of you beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful.”. (Quran 24: 31) <sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Hadith ,Sahih al-Bukhari N° 5143

<sup>2</sup> Hadith ,Sahih al-Bukhari N° 5143

<sup>3</sup> The Quran, Surat 24 l-nūr (The Light) ,Verse 31,p

Today, Muslim women do not view the hijab as a restriction but more as a symbol of empowerment. They attend colleges and universities, work in various professions, have families and friends and enjoy life while wearing hijab. Their hijab can be a regular headscarf covering their hair, neck and chest area or something more traditional like an abaya (long, loose robe) or even niqab (face covering). But they don't let their form of hijab come in the way of a successful and meaningful life. In other words, unlike the common stereotype that they are forced into covering themselves, many Muslim women these days choose to wear the hijab because of their own will . Some of them even face resistance from their families for the right to wear it.

### **I.3 Islamic faith as a means of salvation for people living alone**

Migrants in their new societies feel a terrible state of loneliness and a quarantined . it seems like every person in this world is in his own prison. You take the subway to work and everyone reads his / her own book , or rests his head against the seat, not meeting anyone else's eyes. Each person is surrounded by an awful isolation. Or you walk down a crowded downtown street, with thousands of people intent on their own lives and disengaged from all people around them. Every one of them is the center of his own universe, none of them can truly know the inner thoughts and feelings of another. This awareness can be isolating and depressing. Here, comes the role of faith in Allah. Muslims who are armed by real principles and submit their affairs to Allah can easily change their lives .

Muslims must believe that Allah knows the innermost hopes and fears of each of us. He is with us, watching us, protecting us and guiding us at all times. He loves us and wants good for us. So in a very real sense, none of us is alone. Allah is the unifying factor, the Master of all, the One who created a universe that functions in harmony.

Abu Huraira narrated, "The Prophet said,

***“If Allah loves a person, He calls Gabriel saying, ‘Allah loves so and-so; O Gabriel! Love him.’ Gabriel would love him and make an announcement amongst the***

*inhabitants of the Heaven. ‘Allah loves so-and-so, therefore you should love him also,’ and so all the inhabitants of the Heaven would love him, and then he is granted the pleasure of the people on the earth.”* (Al-Bukhari, Hadith 431)<sup>1</sup>

There is our great deen of Islam. At any given moment, at this very second, there are Muslims in the world standing in the same line in prayer, all facing the same location on the earth. Islam has brought us together in a unique and unprecedented global brotherhood and sisterhood. Though we may be strangers to each other in a physical sense, spiritually we are connected. We care about each other, we feel each other’s joys and fears.

We are living within our own limited bodies. When you think, no one hears you. When you eat, no one else tastes it. When your head hurts, no one else feels the pain. When you are terrified, no one else feels the beating of your heart. But Allah is with you, Allah hears. Allah is always ready to comfort you, respond to your prayers, and bless you with His grace. And the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) struggled so hard for you. Yes of course, he fought for you! You are a part of his Ummah. His mission was for you as much as anyone else. On the Day of Judgment he will intercede for his Ummah; he will claim us, and struggle for us just as he did in his earthly life.

Muslims must believe that his faith is tested. So, Don’t give up. Keep hope in your heart. Remember that in the darkest moments and in the deep depths. Allah is still there. Let faith carry you at those times, and let Allah guide you, and you will come through to a better place. It’s a promise from Allah.

***“And whoever is conscious of Allah, He will make for him a way out (from every difficulty). And He will provide for him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him. Verily, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Indeed Allah has sent a measure for all things.”*** (Quran: 65/2-3)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hadith, Sahih al-Bukhari N° 4266

<sup>2</sup> The Quran, Surat 65 Divorce (Al Talaq), Verses 2 and 3, page 558.

Hence, when the loneliness of life feels heavy on your back, remember that the isolation of human existence is an illusion. You are not alone. You are surrounded by guidance, blessings, and caring. You are loved, even when you do not see it. You are not alone.

## **I.4 Conclusion**

This chapter shed a light on how Islam is a religion that systematically directs a person's entire life. It regulates an individual's daily activities and relationships with others in a way that builds a more homogenous society. This creates harmony between people, which influences their sense of value as an individual who has rights but also obligations to others that must be fulfilled. As a result, people feel equal to each other with clear individual roles, duties, and obligations to the community. While individual freedom is respected and honored, it cannot be at the expense of the community. Every person in the community is important . Muslims believe that they will receive praise for their work from God, not other people. The value of a person is based on how are their actions and Practices , not by the material they own or their job status.

## II.1 Introduction

Without maybe realizing it, we grow up with many attitudes and cultural manners that we do not usually question since they just seem so natural to us in our society. It is only when we interact with people who are different from us in their world views, values, attitudes or social behavior. Here we may realize that there is no thing rigid or stable . A realization that may be very anxious since we consider everything as granted , but suddenly it is not. Whether the migration is voluntary or forced, it has its own characteristics which may exceed all calculations. Leaving the mother country is itself a great psychological shock, especially if the cultural, social and economic differences between the mother country and the host country are large. for example, an immigrant from an Arab country to a European one. Once the immigrant reaches the new society, he feels that everything has changed for him, culture, customs, traditions, standards and lifestyle ; colors , nature, time, seasons, heat, sounds, smells, foods, language and even people's movements. This gap between both worlds creates a kind of shock for the migrants. This shock is called culture shock.

## II.2 What is Culture Shock ?

Oberg first introduced the term culture shock in the mid1950, he defined it as the *“anxiety that results from losing all of our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse”* .(Y. Yue , Quynh. Le.2012)<sup>1</sup>

Culture shock is also defined by Weaver as having *“three basic causal explanations: the loss of familiar cues, the breakdown of interpersonal communications, and an identity crisis”*. (C.Ward,S.Bochner, A.Furnham.2005,p151)<sup>2</sup>.

According to Oberg & Weaver, culture shock helps to finding an explanation of the emotional disturbance , adjustment problems, and difficulties that immigrants may face in the new society in all the details of their personal lives. In the new society, where a person cannot maintain or practice their interrelations with friends, family

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<sup>1</sup> Yun Yue , Quynh Le. From “Cultural Shock” to “ABC Framework”: Development of Intercultural Contact Theory.2012

<sup>2</sup> Colleen, Ward.Stephen, Bochner.Adrian Furnham.The Psychology of Culture Shock,2005.p151.

members, and the broader community, as well as language , cultural, and religious values which are different from the values and practices of the host society. Culture shock is defined by combridge dictionary; as

*“a feeling of confusion felt by someone visiting a country or place that they do not know”*<sup>1</sup>. In Meriam dictionary it is considered as ; *“ a sense of confusion and uncertainty sometimes with eelings of anxiety that may affect people exposed to an alien culture or environment without adequate preparation ”*<sup>2</sup>

Kalvero Oberg postulated that culture shock reflects the level of anxiety, apprehension, and distress faced when an individual’s native culture or the culture that individual was raised in is replaced by a new cultural surrounding, with its own distinct cultural and linguistic signs and symbols.(C.Ward,S.Bochner, A.Furnham.2005.155)<sup>3</sup>.

In general ,‘Culture Shock’ could best be described as a mix of emotions resulting from the sudden change that occurs when a person leaves everything that is familiar behind and moves to a different place. In the new place, a lot may be strange at first, ranging from people, language, food or climate, humor or every day behavior. As a migrant spending a period in the host country as a new citizen, he will not only have to deal with new people for him , but he will also encounter a foreign culture while at the same time being far away from his friends and family. It is therefore only normal that people may react to this sudden change with confusion and anxiety or even frustration in some cases. However , What is good is that ‘Culture Shock’ is only one phase in an on-going assimilation and learning process which eventually allows you to feel comfortable in more than one culture.

The initial reaction of the migrant to this strange surroundings is entirely natural and is a signal that he consciously or subconsciously realizes the differences around him .Hence,‘Culture Shock’ is a normal and logical reaction when someone encounters differences in another cultural environment. It may show very differently in each individual, as everyone reacts in a different manner to any given situation.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/culture-shock>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture%20shock>

<sup>3</sup> Colleen, Ward.Stephen, Bochner.Adrian Furnham.The Psychology of Culture Shock,2005.p155.

(Josué, M. González.2008,p207)3. Josué introduced the four different emotional levels regarding to culture shock , the honeymoon phase, the crisis phase, the recovery phase, and the adjustment phase.

### **II.3. Culture Shock Phases**

#### **II.3.1 Honeymoon Phase**

The honeymoon phase coincides with the arrival in a new country and the first period of contact with the new culture, this phase is usually brief, it may last few days or weeks. During the honeymoon phase, the traveler is fascinated with the sights, sounds, and tastes of the new culture. Things are seen as new, different, and interesting and the whole experience is lived as an exhilarating event, often accompanied by a sense of unreality. In this phase similarities between cultures stand out, differences are minimized and romanticized and negative events are ignored. (R.Irwin. 2009)<sup>1</sup>

#### **II.3.2 Crisis Phase**

In the crisis phase the sojourner's negative perception of the host culture and its differences is enhanced. The crisis arises as a result of puzzling encounters and interactions. The traveler begins to experience real and seemingly unresolvable problems. Difficulty in managing communication and common daily activities such as shopping or transportation, contribute to feelings of frustration, hostility, stress, and anxiety. Consequently, the individual tends to alienate and withdraw from the host culture. This phase varies in duration, the length of this period is determined by one's ability and motivation to start integrating into the host culture. (R.Irwin. 2009)<sup>2</sup>

#### **II.3.3 Recovery Phase**

During the recovery phase, the visitor learns how to function in the new culture and be independent. Confidence is slowly restored and competency increases as a result of new learned social behaviors. In this way the individual starts to acquire and

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<sup>1</sup> Rachel, Irwin. Analyzing the Cultural Shock, 2009 .

<sup>2</sup> Rachel, Irwin. Analyzing the Cultural Shock, 2009 .

assimilate culturally relevant and appropriate ways to interact and communicate. He or she develops appropriate problem solving skills and conflict resolution mechanisms. As a result of increased confidence and familiarity with the host environment, cultural perception of the foreign culture also starts to change. (R.Irwin.2009)<sup>1</sup>

### **II.3.4 Adjustment Phase**

During this phase the individual starts to adapt to the new culture, embrace its differences and accept what it has to offer. This phase is marked by low anxiety and the increased ability of the traveler to interact successfully with members of the host culture and build social relationships. This phase also brings a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment, and personal growth for having overcome culture shock.

Researches show that children have better adaptability to environment than adults do and among the latter, women are more sensitive and vulnerable; however, this depends on the partner and husband of the woman and his cooperation and helps. The degrees of his familiarity with the environment or on the contrary, his being preoccupied with his own business, all play a great role in this adaptation. In any event, any person who experiences cultural shock, in return to his previous and main culture faces a challenge named return shock. (S.Bochner,2003)<sup>2</sup>

In this respect, those who suffer from symptoms of cultural shock – as explained before – postponed learning new languages more than others and prefer to either stay alone or return home. In any event, there are individuals who experience a new crisis and become troubled. This might lead them to growing habits such as alcoholism, drugs or suffering from problems in job and marriage. It is better if such people return to their country for treatment and recovery.

Cultural shock is neither good nor bad in its own sense. It is neither a must nor an unnecessary thing. It is a mere fact that people face and in some unfamiliar and

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<sup>1</sup> Rachel, Irwin. Analyzing the Cultural Shock, 2009 .

<sup>2</sup> Stephen, Bochner. Culture Shock,2003.



unpredictable condition should deal with. In such conditions, the best solution is to underestimate their problems and difficulties and magnify the opportunities and changes they might have in the new environment and work on them. In this connection, governments and associations could reduce the unfavourable effects of cultural shock so people who migrate to other countries for work could have more efficiency and output and handle their problems easier. Usually, those who are able to work in international environment have some personality indexes, such as flexibility, compatibility, social maturity, innovation and creativity.

#### **II.4. Immigration and culture shock**

In his first days in the new society, the migrant lives a state of impression of the Western society this is called the honeymoon. The general nature of this stage is the love of discovering new knowledge and hopes for success, and achieve aspirations and dreams. It is the stage of curiosity and joy of new things. But this phase is quickly over, in months or weeks, and perhaps for a few days. He collides with official paperwork and procedures, which are often long, complex, somewhat bureaucratic, and even more complicated. The sense of difficulty begins after the immigrant understands the importance of the language barrier, the difficulties of communication and self-expression, and understanding all that surrounds him. Language is the most important obstacle to the immigrant and often leads to many misunderstandings. Realistic, or distorted, to the host community. This generates a sense of shock, which psychologists called the culture shock. This shock often leads the migrant to nostalgia and to the past, which is one of the most dangerous factors affecting migrants and their integration into host societies.

The phenomenon of nostalgia for the homeland which is the memory of the beautiful past (how happy we were at home), is closely related to the phenomenon of migration, which is natural and does not constitute a disease or a psychological problem. But it can be a kind of relaxation processes that restore the individual activity. Nostalgia has to do with the activity of the memory and its work, and the ability of the individual to identify through the reference of the past, which researcher Judith Stern called "memory screen", linked to memories recovered through stimuli A

sense that is very simple, but with a temporal dimension, some foods and aromas bring us back to a time associated with specific memories, which are printed in a positive or ideal character, and this is one of the means of defending the ideal ego in front of feelings of loss . (S.Bochner,2003)<sup>1</sup>

Nostalgia helps to Maintain the relationship with the mother country. But the danger arises when nostalgia becomes a form of regression, an unconscious reaction to frustration and a painful reality, an expression of the need for warmth and safety, and a reaction to existential loss; in this case the past can turn into a prison, And nostalgia becomes an excessive activity of memory to evoke subjects and times that cannot be retrieved, and associated with an emotional dimension full of pain, the pain of losing what is precious and what is expensive. Hence, the dream of returning to the homeland begins, and begins with the praise of the smell of the country's soil, and the things of the mother country. This dream begins but does not end. The shock of the cultural uprooting experienced by the immigrant is always accompanied by a sense of loss, loss of home, friends and family, memories of loss of security, independence and social status. And this creates a sense of failure and self-conviction, and inability to act and thinking central thinking, and permanent displacement and a sense of defeat and frustration and grief and control the general entity and the entity, and enter in a situation very similar to the situation of mourning is not finished, often lived by the migrant Subconsciously.

It is true that migration carries the dream of salvation, but it remains an exile; the immigrant is strange in the place where it is resolved. It is a conditional existence, conditional admission that denies oneself. Every immigrant poses to himself almost every day: Why am I here, and what am I doing here?

The differences between the culture of the mother country and the culture of the host society have a profound impact on feelings of belonging, not only to the host country, but also to the mother country, and so the nostalgia for the roots and the dream of return becomes a haven in which the migrant hides. Loss, anxiety and lack of belonging, but once realized the opportunity to achieve this dream, and return to feel that everything changed in his homeland, and in his personality, and thus becomes a

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen, Bochner. Culture Shock,2003.

third entity, is "between the two," neither at home nor in the exile. We can say that the immigrant is the person who has lost the compass of belonging and is strange everywhere. Migration is a continuous process, starting at a certain moment, but it is never ending.

### **II.5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, most emigrant moving to a new country feels a culture shock , but symptoms may vary, and not all people experience all the different levels.

You may not like the way some people in your host country dress or behave in public, but you do not regard their clothes and behavior as just because they are different from yours. So Newcomers with a strong support group may feel at home immediately in the new culture, while others may take months to feel comfortable. Staying in touch with friends and family, keeping a positive attitude, and, above all, learning the language as soon as possible are ways to overcome the difficulties and frustrations of adapting to life in a new land.

With time passing the migrant will slowly learn to come to terms with his new situation and environment, and with more time spent in the host country he will probably even start to like and enjoy the immersion in a different life. This doesn't mean that he will stop being who is he , and adopt an entirely new identity, or he have to become like people in his host country or accept everything new he encounter. Most importantly, he will, after all develop the ability to tolerate differences while finding his own way to integrate in his new society, without losing his own identity.

### III.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how cultural shock and Islamic faith themes are depicted in Aboulela's work 'The Translator'. Through the novel, she depicts the state of immigrants in their host country, confronting a culture shock of anxiety and mixed emotions. It analyses also how Islamic faith is depicted in the novel through the protagonist actions and behaviours, in which Islam can strongly govern the life of Muslims and organize their relationships with others.

### III. 2 Biography

Leila Aboulela was born in 1964 in Cairo and grew up in Khartoum. She studied for a degree in Economics at Khartoum University, then moved to England to obtain a masters degree in Statistics at the London School of Economics. She worked as a part-time Research Assistant while starting to write.

She has had several short stories published in anthologies and broadcast on radio, and one of her short stories, 'The Museum', won the Caine Prize for African Writing in 2000. Her collection of short stories, *Coloured Lights*, was published in 2001.

She is also the author of four novels: *The Translator* (1999); *Minaret* (2005); *Lyrics Alley* (2010), and *The Kindness of Enemies* (2015).

Aboulela won the prestigious Caine Prize for African writing in 2000 for her short story *The Museum* and her first novel, *The Translator* was long listed for the Orange Prize and the IMPAC Dublin Award and short listed for the Saltire Prize.

BBC Radio 4 broadcast a 5-part adaptation of *The Translator* in 2002, and a dramatization of 'The Museum'. She has also had several radio plays broadcast,

including *The Mystic Life* (2003) and *The Lion of Chechnya* (2005). Leila Aboulela lives between Abu Dhabi and Aberdeen. (C. Chamber,)<sup>1</sup>

### III. 3 The Novel plot Summary

The first part of the novel, Sammar the protagonist was born in Scotland while her parents (Sudanese nationals) were studying there and holds a British passport. She, her brother, and their parents returned to Khartoum when she was seven. It is there where she met her cousin Tarig the son of her aunt Mahasen and marries him. Sammar returns to Scotland once more with Tarig, who is studying medicine, and they have a son called Amir. Tarig dies in a car accident and Mahasen blames Sammar for his death because she believes Sammar pressured him to buy the car in the first place. When Sammar returns to Khartoum to bury Tarig, she was dismissed from her homeland because she refused to marry Ahmad Ali Yasseen and become his third wife. She returns to the north seeking for a better living conditions.

Sammar returns to Aberdeen alone leaving her son with his grandmother Mahasen, where she lives a long period of sorrow, watching her time, pain and alienation getting wide and wide. until she works as a translator in a university in Aberdeen and in the Middle east studies center where she met Rae an orientalist, Middle-East historian and lecturer in Third World politics at a university in Aberdeen. And most importantly a person with a positive views of Islam and fond of the east. Rae, spent time in Morocco and Egypt in his younger years.

Sammar the Muslim woman who prays, fasts and wears hijab falls in love with Rae who is going to be fond of her after his Asthma crisis in the same hospital where Tareq died. Sammar was sure of Rae's positive view of Islam and Muslims, but when he demand her for marriage, her single condition was for him to be converted to Islam. But he completely refused. As a result, she left him and moves back to Khartoum.

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<sup>1</sup> Claire, Chambers, Contemporary Writers Interviews with Contemporary Writers. 2011,p105.

In the second part in Khartoum, She thought life will be wonderful, but alienation Strangle her again , she was considered as a piece of furniture, no air, no events, no pity, Sammar was just waiting for a message which will not be sent from Rae . the surprise was that Rae came to Khartoum and Embraced Islam and utter ' the shahadah' and become a Muslim.

### III. 4 Islamic Faith in " the Translator"

Aboulela said in an interview, in Sudan Daily Vision, an independent newspaper in 2007, that she sets out "to show the psychology, the state of mind and the emotions of a person who has faith", and to evoke for Western readers the "intimacy" of faith. She is aware of concerns expressed in Europe and the U.K about Muslim immigration; she also perceives her writing as different from more conservative narratives that feature Islamic characters.

In 2005 she said in an interview with Claire Chambers ; "My characters do not behave necessarily as a good Muslim should. **"They are not ideals or role models. They are as I see them to be, ordinary Muslims trying to practice their faith in difficult circumstances."** (C. Chambers,p110)<sup>1</sup>

Aboulela tried to portray behaviors and the instinct of Muslims and their tendency to their religion although they live in a western society.

Islam, of course, is a component of that healing, giving Rae a purpose, a centre, "balance", and "dignity" (Aboulela,p108)<sup>2</sup>. To Aboulela, this is a central part of the message, so that the author would very likely object, much as Sammar objects, to the notion that she is Rae's salvation. Rather, she is the vehicle through

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<sup>1</sup> Claire, Chambers, Contemporary Writers Interviews with Contemporary Writers. 2011,p110.

<sup>2</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p108

which Rae loses his objectivity – which for him, as established, is a form of social and economic power, through his role in the academic world – and embraces Islam. In Sammar's own words, "*Allah is the one who heals*" (Aboulela, The Translator,102)<sup>1</sup>, and Islam itself is presented as a cure for the lonely and disconnected people.

At the same time, it can easily be conceived as a source of empowerment. Her adherence to Islam is both the cause and the means of Sammar's cultural resistance to Rae, and ultimately his conversion .

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The novel, contains rich perspectives on Islam which are an essential part of it. Sammar's views of Islam are well presented, to enlighten the western reader's view of Islam . Sammar says to Rae that Islam will make him stronger, opposing the idea that it is a religion of oppressed people.

Aboulela in her interview with Claire Chambers, explains that she wants to show "*the state of mind and feelings of a Muslim who has faith. My characters do not necessarily behave as a 'good Muslim' should. They are ... ordinary Muslims trying to practise their faith in difficult circumstance and in a society which is unsympathetic to religion*". (C. Chambers,p109)<sup>2</sup>

This quotation points to firstly avoid presenting an exemplary Muslim characters, who would perfectly fit into Islamist representations of the faithful, Aboulela clearly translates Islamist discourse into women's narratives that open up a space of daily translations and negotiations of self and identity. In this way she affirms religion, but not in an oppressive form, rather stressing its positive function in the lives of ordinary women. Secondly, she makes clear that her fiction engages directly with an environment that is unsympathetic to religion.

Aboulela depicts the nostalgic recollection of the past in Africa and the repeated confession that Islam is transnational and universal. The novel demonstrates over and

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<sup>1</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p102.

<sup>2</sup> Claire, Chambers, Contemporary Writers Interviews with Contemporary Writers. 2011,p109

over again that prayer, faith rituals, association with the community of believers and studying the Qur'an and the Hadiths are possible in wherever geographical location her characters find themselves.

Sammar prays and fasts, ponders on how to wear the veil, talks to Rae about the significance of Islamic doctrines. Islam is seen as a positive force in Sammar's life. When she goes to pray in the small university mosque one afternoon, "*the certainty of the words brought unexpected tears, something deeper than happiness, all the splinters inside her coming together*" (Aboulela, *The Translator*, p74).<sup>1</sup>

It is prayer that helps her to bear the pain of her husband Tarig's death, four years before the reader meets her 'without them she would have fallen, lost awareness of the shift of the day into night' (Aboulela, *Translator*, p 16)<sup>2</sup> and it is thanks to her faith that she is able to survive her depression:

*"She had been protected [by it] from all the extremes: pills, breakdown, suicide attempts. A barrier was put between her and things like that"* (Aboulela, *Translator* p118)<sup>3</sup>.

Ramadan is portrayed as a release; "*This good feeling was because of Ramadan . . . A whole month free like that*" (Aboulela, *Translator*, p 180)<sup>4</sup>

The utterance of religious expressions is also a source of comfort. For example, when speaking to a fellow Muslim in Scotland, she said ; "*she had enjoyed talking in Arabic, words like insha'Allah, fitting naturally in everything that was said, part of the sentences, the vision'. To say 'I'm leaving on Friday' without adding 'insha'Allah' sounded incomplete to her*" (Aboulela, *Translator*, p106)<sup>5</sup>

Islam is also presented as a perfect balance; "*She thought of how Allah's sharia was kinder and more balanced than the rules people set up for themselves*" (Aboulela, *Translator*, p69)<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p74.

<sup>2</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p16

<sup>3</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p118

<sup>4</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p180

<sup>5</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p106

<sup>6</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p69.



Sammar blames herself when she allows notions of luck which get into her mind:

*"No . . . My fate is etched out by Allah almighty . . . To think otherwise was to slip down, to feel the world narrowing, dreary and tight"* (Aboulela, Translator,p73)<sup>1</sup>.

Such details confirm the value-system that governs the evolution of the love story. They do not move the plot forward in any way; they are simply there to support the Islamic theme. The plot of *The Translator* centers on a love story between Sammar and Rae. Sammar is employed as a translator in Rae's university department and a relationship develops between them based, on Rae's understanding of, and respect for, Muslim culture and tradition. Sammar offers Rae something that Western society is lacking *"You make me feel safe', he says more than once"* (Aboulela, Translator,p50, 64)<sup>2</sup>. Sammar, on the other hand, is attracted to Rae because he is different. He understands and empathises with her culture and religion, in contrast to other colleagues, like Diane, who is disappointed to discover that Sammar has not been the victim of some injustice at the hands of the immigration authorities, and Jennifer, the head of department, who during the Gulf War feels the need to inform Sammar that *"I have no objection to the way you dress"* (Aboulela, Translator,p97)<sup>3</sup>. However, Rae and Sammar's love story does not develop along the lines of the Western romance, it is not considered successful love story in terms of love's triumph, but in terms of its evolution within an Islamic framework. Sammar will not marry Rae until he has converted to Islam. The necessity of Rae's conversion is not challenged but presented as natural. Within the novel, love of God is over any love in life. Rae need only to say the shahada for the marriage to take place and this is all that Sammar requires of him. ( T.Steiner,2009,p42)<sup>4</sup>

It is significant that Rae's conversion occurs very soon . Within a few days of Sammar's change of heart and the redirection of her prayers, Rae embraced Islam. The order of

<sup>1</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p73

<sup>2</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p64

<sup>3</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p97

<sup>4</sup> Tina, Steiner. Translated Texts Language and Migration in Contemporary African Literature. 2009,p 42

events implies that his conversion is somehow linked to the power of Sammar's new prayer, an idea which gains the zeal when Rae himself describes the event as miraculous:

*" . . . it didn't have anything to do with how much I've read or how many facts I've learned about Islam. Knowledge is necessary, that's true. But faith, it comes direct from Allah." (Aboulela, Translator,p198)<sup>1</sup>*

In the same interview with - Leila Aboulela .She said "she (Sammar) is not only translating Arabic into English, she's also translating Islam for Rae. She is the agent for his change. She shows him that Islam is relevant to him too and points out that he needs it. She makes Islam attractive by presenting herself as the prize or reward for his conversion. Her insistence that if Rae loves her he will love Islam has a strong impact on him. (Claire, Chambers, 2009,p106)<sup>2</sup>. She also delared, one of the misconceptions is the idea that sharia is a law enforced by the government or by an authority. In fact, for a Muslim, sharia is something personal as well, something you would follow yourself. It doesn't need anyone else to implement it. It also covers personal affairs; I mean, there's a blurring between personal and public affairs. So I wanted to show that from the point of view of Sammar, a devout and practicing Muslim, following the sharia for the period of mourning – which is four months and ten days, a very specific period laid down by the sharia – she would see it as a very positive thing. It's not something that society's forcing on her; it's something that she herself believes in. This point is very important in all of my writing: Islam isn't just part of the culture in my fiction, it's not a social norm or something like that, it's to do with the individual and their faith and their own belief and what they want to do. I think that this has been central to my writing, and maybe this is what makes my writing different from that of other writers, who see the sharia solely as part of society and part of culture, rather than belonging to the individual herself. It's

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<sup>1</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p73

<sup>2</sup> Claire, Chambers, Contemporary Writers Interviews with Contemporary Writers. 2011,p106.

highlighted in my work, because my characters are largely based in Britain, which is not a Muslim country, and yet they as individuals want to practice Islam.(C. Chambers,p108) <sup>1</sup>

### III. 2 Culture shock in “the Translator”

Sammar, the Sudanese widow is alone with the memories of her dead husband Tarig and her estranged son who’s living with his grandmother in Sudan, she suffer of an exile in her host country. She lives a grey existence, longing for the colours of her country, for warm temperatures and starry nights. *The Translator* is set in two contrasting cities, Aberdeen and Khartoum, both reflecting the states of mind of Sammar the protagonist : the cold of the Scottish city makes her feel hibernated inside; the hot weather in Khartoum makes Sammar feel alive, giving some of warmth in her heart full of sorrow in the Aberdeen. This what we call Culture Shock which is defined by Oberg as the “*anxiety that results from losing all of our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse*”<sup>2</sup>.

#### III.2.1 Crisis Phase in the novel

Aboulela's protagonist suffer from the most important symptoms of cultural shock. In which the work is full of sensual culture shock moment. At first, Sammar experiences physical loneliness in Scotland very negatively. She is far from her family, she has lost her husband in a car accident , and is feeling that she is different, that she somehow does not belong to this society . In *The Translator* Culture Shock comes out when we look at Sammar's reactions to her environment, British society is totally different of her African homeland:

*She said that colours made her sad. Yellow as she knew it and green as she knew ,the weather, the culture, modernity, the language, the silence of the muezzin, then*

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<sup>1</sup> Claire, Chambers. *Contemporary Writers Interviews with Contemporary Writers*. 2011,p108

<sup>2</sup> Stephen, Bochner. *Culture Shock Due to Contact with Unfamiliar Cultures*,2003.

*found that the colours of mud, sky and leaves were different too.* (Aboulela ,The translator:44)<sup>1</sup>

In this quotation the writer introduces the differences between Sammar's cultural and geographical homeland and the modern time and secular living. differences of everyday life, like the weather and the colours, These differences are registered in the text as absences: the lack of time, the lack of understanding and communication, the lack of the call for prayer, the lack of a community of faith. Just as Sammar misses vibrant colours, she finds that Scotland does not have many smells. Her senses are not stimulated, and this lack reinforces her sense of isolation. When she translates the Al-Nidaa manuscript, she notices a stain that looks like beans mashed with oil. Immediately she falls into her memories where she imagines the smell of "**beans cooked in the way she had known long ago, with cumin and olive oil**" (Aboulela ,the Translator : 06)<sup>2</sup>.

Sammar sees a light, a shadow and thinks she is in her home country, but she's still in Aberdeen and suddenly feels lost in a sort of hallucination, a vision that is covering the reality she lives in:

*"Outside Sammar stepped into a hallucination in which the world had swung around. Home had come here. Its dimly lit streets, its sky and the feel of home had come here and balanced just for her. She saw the sky cloudless with too many stars, imagined the night warm, warmer than indoors. She smelled dust and heard barking of stray dogs among street's rubble and pot-holes. A bicycle bell tinkled, frogs croaked, the muezzin coughed into the microphone and began the azan for the Isha prayer. But this was Scotland and the reality left her dulled, unsure of herself. This had happened before but not for so long, not so deeply. Sometimes the shadows in a dark room would remind her of the power cuts at home or she would mistake the gurgle of the central-heating pipes for a distant azan. But she had never stepped into a vision before, home*

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<sup>1</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p44.

<sup>2</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p06

*had never come here before. It took time to take in the perfect neatness of the buildings and the gleaming road. It took time for the heating in Yasmin's car to clear the mist of their breath on the window panes.*" (Aboulela, *Translator*, p20,21)<sup>1</sup>

In Aboulela's work, the loneliness and the anxiety she is living in is resisted by recalling the past and cultural tradition, which are full of sensual memories of her youth spent in the Sudan. Sammar's emotional state of grief, loneliness, faith, love and belonging are shaped out between the people and places that she live with and in. Aberdeen where she works with Rae and Yasmin, Khartoum and her family there. Sammar has the ability to fall into a vision of Khartoum in a state of daydream. She could draw an image of colour and warmth from her homeland in the midst of Aberdeen to feel most at home.

Sammar's nostalgic state in Aboulela fiction "The Translator" is considered as an important symptom of culture shock that idealizes memories of the past, in order to criticize the host country. Here the writer presents clearly the crisis phase in which the migrant's negative perception of the host culture and its differences is enhanced. The crisis arises as a result of puzzling encounters and interactions. Consequently, the individual tends to alienate and withdraw from the host culture.

### **III.2.2 Recovery Phase in the novel**

At the same time, Aboulela is aware of the negatives of the crisis phase state that disallows migrants from coexisting in the new country. Her transnational vision of Islam, which is not bound to a particular place or time and which accommodates movement and change helps her to find her way to coexist in this new society. Aboulela calls the migrant's religious inheritance and its usefulness in resisting the anxieties around migrants. This is called the recovery phase, where migrants learn how to function in the new culture and be independent. Confidence is slowly restored and competency increases as a result of new learned social behaviors. As a result of increased confidence and familiarity with the host environment, cultural perception of the foreign culture also starts to change.

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<sup>1</sup> Leila, Aboulela. *The Translator*, 1999, p21.

### III.2.3 Adjustment Phase in the novel

From her vision of transnationality and universality of Islam. Aboulela could change her protagonist's emotional state not by offering a geographical sense of belonging to a particular location, but by changing this longing for home into a spiritual sense. This is how Aboulela's work provides the solution and put an end to the tension and anxiety of migrants, and take the migrant to a more tolerant position free of fear and grieve. After she started working as a translator and met Rae, Sammar's new life is centred around faith and union with Rae rather than the absence of home in its geographical sense, muting feelings of nostalgia:

*"I thought you were homesick," he finally said, "and this anti-terrorist project would be a chance for you to go on to Khartoum, see your son. Maybe I made a mistake in suggesting it ..."* *"It wasn't a mistake. I was homesick for the place, how everything looked. But I don't know what kind of sickness it would be, to be away from you."*

(Aboulela, the translator,p126)<sup>1</sup>

The closer Sammar gets to departure to Khartoum the more she questions her nostalgia for home: *"She thought of going home, seeing home again, its colours again and in spite of years of yearning, all she had now was reluctance and some fear"* (Aboulela,The Translator,p98)<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p126

<sup>2</sup> Leila ,Aboulela.The Translator, 1999,p 98.

### **III.4 Conclusion**

In "The Translator" Sammar is not only translating Arabic into English, she's also translating Islam for non-Muslims. She shows them that Islam is relevant to everyone. That it will make the Muslim stronger, opposing the idea that it is a religion of oppressed people. Aboulela asserts also that the foreign culture becomes understandable when Sammar recognises herself in it, or rather she recognizes her own cultural norms that are min it through a particular strategy. In this case Islam functions as such a strategy, which provides her with a place she can feel as it belong to it within the foreign culture. It is this the recovery phase that provides the matrix for her understanding of the Scottish culture.

## General Conclusion

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### General Conclusion

Leila Aboulela the Sudanese woman writer is one of the fighter women who believes that writing is an appropriate way to explain and translate emotions and sensations related to issues concerning migrants , and give a correct image that benefit Islam and Muslims in west countries. In these novel Aboulela was very creative in portraying behaviors and the instinct in Muslims and their tendency to their religion although they live in a Western society where there is a mixture of religion.

From Abouela's writing, Islam isn't just part of the culture or a social norm in the society , Islam is a liberation of mankind from ignorance, injustice and tyranny. It is a way of living. Islamic religion is for all times and places , It is concerned with social life in all its details as well as with the economic, political, scientific, practical and all the affairs of the age. Islam offers a complete model and a clear methodology for the ideal social life free from problems and unrest, so that it regulates the relationship within the same family. It presents the need for the existence of love, affection and tranquility between the spouses, and how to solve these problems through advice and guidance. I think that this is important to her writing, and maybe this is what makes Aboulela's writing different from that of other writers, who see the Islam as part of society and part of culture, rather than belonging to the individual himself.

Leila Aboulela, from a foreign country, turns to writing to describe the state of mind of the Muslim migrants in a foreign country . She wrote her novel to express the emotional disturbance , adjustment problems, and difficulties that may face the migrant the details of their personal lives. In the new society, where a person cannot maintain or practice their interrelations with friends, family members, and the broader community, as well as language , cultural, and religious values which are different from the values and practices of the host society. Abouela argued that this state of culture shock can have less



## **General Conclusion**

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impact in a Muslim's life who is armed with his faith . She argue also through her Muslim female characters the possibility of practicing faith in difficult ircumstances and in a society which is unsympathetic to religion. Her character depict images of faith in a Muslim society and by interacting with a different culture.

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