

Translating Literary Texts

English translation:

Part three from *The Autobiography of Taha Hussein*: translated by Dj. Aissa

He was the seventh of the thirteen children of his father and the fifth out of eleven siblings. He used to feel that he enjoys a special place among such a huge number of youths and children; a place distinct from his brothers and sisters. Did that make him happy/ content? Did it hurt him? The fact is that he was not quite sure about it, for it remains so vague/obscure that he is not able to make a clear judgment about it. He felt mercy and tenderness from his mother, and from his father he found gentleness and indulgence. But from his brothers, he used to feel averted in their conversations and dealings with him. Beside his feelings of mercy and tenderness from his mother, he found some negligence from her sometimes and even harshness in some others. He also found from his father some negligence side by side with that gentleness and indulgence. He even felt avoidance from him as well. Being averted by his brothers and sisters was also hurting for him because he used to find in it some kind of sympathy accompanied by contempt. However; shortly after, he discovered the reason of all this. He felt that other people are bestowed over him, and that his brothers and sisters could do what he could not, and can handle things he is unable to. He also felt that his mother allowed his brothers and sisters to do things which are forbidden for him. This stirred a feeling of resentment in him which is turned; not long after, into a bitter sadness and grief, because he heard his brothers describing what he does not know. He; thus, recognized that they can see what he cannot.

English passage:

Once, when Roger was a young boy, his father took him to an open day at Nellis AFB, out in the California desert. Sunlight glared brilliantly from the polished silver plate flanks of the big bombers, sitting in their concrete-lined dispersal bays behind barriers and blinking radiation monitors. The brightly coloured streamers flying from their pitot tubes lent them a strange, almost festive appearance. But they were sleeping nightmares: once awakened, nobody – except the flight crew – could come within a mile of the nuclear-powered bombers and live.

AFB = Air Force Base

Pitot tube = a pressure instrument used to measure fluid flow velocity

<http://www.infinityplus.co.uk/stories/colderwar.htm> (accessed 19 April 2011)

Arabic Translation:

ذات مرة حينما كان روجر جدثا/ ولدا يافعا/ في أيام شبابه الأولى أخذه والده لحضور يوم مفتوح في قاعدة القوات الجوية بمنطقة "نيليس" هناك في صحراء كاليفورنيا. كانت أشعة الشمس تتراقص على نحو بديع/ تتلألأ على/فوق سطوح أجنحة قاذفات القنابل الملمعة بالفضة، تلك القاذفات/ التي تجثم كل منها في خلجان متفرقة مصممة بخرسانة هناك خلف الحواجز وأجهزة الرصد الإشعاعي الواضحة. إن تلك الأشرطة ذات الألوان الزاهية التي ترفرف على أنابيب بيتوت تضفي عليها/ على هيئتها طابعا غريبا حتى ليكاد مظهرها يعلن عن انطلاق مهرجان. لكنها تظل كوابيس خادمة/نائمة متى ما تمت إثارتها فلن تجد أحدا/ ما إن تنهض فلا أحد سوى ~~التي يمكنها الاقتراب حتى لمسافة ميل من القنابل النووية ويظل حيا/ على قيد الحياة.~~