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**Women's Needs and Aspirations in Leila Aboulila's *The Translator***

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*A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for master's Degree in  
Literature*

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## **Dedication**

To my dear father, who has passed away, I dedicate this special dedication in my thesis. You had strong faith in my abilities and endless support, and I will carry your memory and wisdom with me throughout my life.

To my family, who supported me on my journey, without your continuous encouragement, I would not have reached this important stage in my life.

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## Abstract

The research tackles the portrayal of women's needs and aspirations in Leila Aboulela's *The Translator*. This literary work is considered ideal for the study because it depicts the journey women take to achieve what they want in life. The research aims to explore the depiction of the female characters while they strive to secure their needs and achieve their aspirations. In other words, the research seeks to investigate the way Muslim female characters endeavor to live and obtain their rights promised to them. The research used analytical and interpretation approaches to study the novel thoroughly. It examines the aspects of space, Aspirations, needs, and convictions. The research is divided into three chapters two conceptual parts that discuss the concepts related to the study and an analytical chapter about the novel. The research explores the protagonist's aspiration to change her situation, but her goal of becoming a strong, assertive woman is not achieved. However, her needs are eventually met when she remarries a non-Muslim man who converts to Islam. The research emphasizes the efforts of Islamic feminism to challenge stereotypes about Muslim women, highlighting the rights provided by Islamic teachings that are often overlooked by society and traditions.

**Key words:** Aspirations. equality. Feminism. Leila Aboulela. Needs, Sudan literature. The Translator. Islam.

## المخلص

يتناول البحث تصوّر احتياجات وتطلعات المرأة في رواية "المتريجة" لليلى أبو ليلى. تُعتبر هذه العمل الأدبي مثالية للدراسة لأنها تصور الرحلة التي تقوم بها المرأة لتحقيق ما ترغب به في الحياة. يهدف البحث إلى استكشاف تصوّر الشخصيات النسائية أثناء سعيهن لتأمين احتياجاتهن وتحقيق تطلعاتهن. وبعبارة أخرى، يسعى البحث إلى التحقيق في الطريقة التي تسعى بها الشخصيات النسائية المسلمات للعيش والحصول على حقوقهن الموعودة لهن. استخدم البحث المنهج التحليلي والتفسيري لدراسة الرواية بشكل شامل. يفتحص البحث جوانب الفضااء والطموحات والاحتياجات والمعتقدات. ينقسم البحث إلى ثلاثة فصول وقسمين مفاهيميين يناقشان المفاهيم المتعلقة بالدراسة وفصل تحليلي حول الرواية. يستكشف البحث طموح البطلة في تغيير وضعها، لكنها لا تحقق هدفها في أن تصبح امرأة قوية وحازمة. ومع ذلك، يتم تلبية احتياجاتها في النهاية عندما تتزوج رجلاً غير مسلم يعتنق الإسلام. يؤكد البحث جهود النسوية الإسلامية في تحدي الصور النمطية حول المرأة المسلمة، مسلطاً الضوء على الحقوق التي توفرها التعاليم الإسلامية والتي غالباً ما تُغفل عنها في المجتمع والتقاليد.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** تطلعات؛ المساواة، النسوية، أدوار الجنسين، ليلى أبو العلا، الاحتياجات، أدب السودان. المترجم،

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# **General Introduction**

## **1. Background of the study**

In Africa, females were seen as insignificant beings. African society considered women weak as they were subjugated to inequities in African society. After post colonialism, women became more aware of their individuality. However, feminist movements received backlash in the 1960s in Africa. It was received negatively, as they thought it would affect traditional, socio-cultural, and religious values. The movement was seen as women's attempts to try to be like men. Consequently, feminism was regarded as insignificant in African society (Nutsukpo 88).

Women in Islamic nations were perceived as oblivious, backward, and blind. Westerners viewed them in such a way that they thought that the Quran controlled them in their demeanors and attires as well. Consequently, westerners forced women to cope with their own beliefs about freedom. Islamic feminism is a methodology that produces and constructs views about women in Islam as it incorporates gender as a category of thought. It strives to shed light on Islam as a global phenomenon that rose from ongoing radical changes in the Middle East (Hasoon al-A'bed 41). Islamic feminism is a notion that seeks to break down labels about gender roles and apply religious discourse.

## **2. Research problem**

Females in patriarchal societies are oppressed and marginalized. Social constraints were the result of cultural traditions and ways of thinking. Women have needs and wishes that they seek to achieve in life. Yet, not all of them are met due to male dominance and oppression. Leila Aboulela's novel "The Translator" depicts the journey of Sammar, a Muslim translator, through her breaks and sorrows to achieve what she desires and needs. The research seeks to explore the aspects in which Leila Aboulela depicts the needs and aspirations of her protagonist, Sammar.

### **3. Research questions**

Through the conceptualization of the research problem, the study strives to answer the following questions:

- How did Aboulela portray the needs and aspirations of her character in *The Translator*?

The main question will be answered through the following sub questions:

- How many female character are in this novel?
- How did Aboulela portray her female protagonist?

### **4. Research aims**

The research seeks to follow the character's development through the novel. Moreover, the study aims to display Sammar's journey for looking for space. Sammar, the female protagonist, wished to change the course of her life after her husband's death. This research seeks to portray Sammar's efforts and ways to overcome her grief. Furthermore, this research examines the complexity of women's needs and aspirations and the relationship between the two.

### **5. Research methodology**

The proposed research uses a combination of research approaches to realize the intended aims of the study. The research uses the diachronic research approach to provide a comprehensive background on African literature and Sudan literature in particular. Moreover, to provide a framework about feminism as a concept and theory used in an Islamic context. A descriptive approach will be used to describe the character's development and state. Analytical and interpretative approaches will be used interchangeably to analyze the novel's extracts and interpret aspects of the study.

## **6. Structure of the dissertation**

The first chapter discusses African literature, focusing on its origins and significant influence on the literary culture. In addition, we will explore the characteristics and facets of post-colonial African literature by tracing its historical context and analyzing its significant themes and voices. We intend to provide a description of African and Sudanese literature in this section. In addition, the chapter examines the broader context of post-colonial discourse and highlights Leila Aboulela's remarkable contributions. The second chapter examines feminism as a concept, and theory, and its waves. Moreover, feminism in an African context and in Sudanese literary works. Chapter three discusses the analysis of the translator and the depiction of space, needs, aspiration, and conviction of novel characters.

# **Chapter One: Theoretical Framework**

## **Chapter One: Cultural Background**

### **1.1. Introduction**

African literature represents literary works that were in oral tradition. African literary works transformed from oral tradition into written productions. African literature has features of post-colonial discourse because it reflects post-colonial writers' experiences with colonialism. Sudanese literature is a relatively newly established form of writing. Arabic and Egyptian literature affected Sudanese literary works due to historical and cultural exchanges. The chapter at hand seeks to delve into the realm of African literature, exploring its origins and profound influence on the literary world. Furthermore, we will embark on a journey through characteristics and aspects of post-colonial African literature, tracing its historical context and examining its significant themes and voices.

At the heart of our exploration lies the acclaimed author, Leila Aboulela, her insightful and captivating works have garnered international recognition. Aboulela's literary contributions offer a unique lens through which we can examine the complexities of African identity, cultural heritage, and the lingering echoes of colonialism. Her writings skillfully intertwine personal narratives with broader social and political landscapes, shedding light on the nuances of post-colonial African experiences. Through this chapter, we aim to provide an overview of African and Sudanese literature. Moreover, the chapter examines the broader context of post-colonial discourse and highlights the notable contributions of Leila Aboulela.

## 1.2. African Literature

African literature encompasses poetry, plays, and narratives published in English, French, and other languages by Africans. They use the term "Euro-African" to refer to African literary works written in other languages. As a vast continent, Africa is home to more than fifty thousand nations with a multitude of languages and ethnicities. The oral artistic tradition is one of the ancient African literary works that were subjugated to marginalization and neglect outside of the African continent. Oral literature existed prior to the colonization of Europe and the emergence of European languages. Bards, scribes, philosophers, and writers who spoke Kiswahili and Amharic constituted the oral literature (Julien 295).

The definition of African literature is a subject of debate due to the issue of language that constitutes African literature. Two renowned African figures led the argument over the dilemma language in African literary works. Chinua Achebe believes that metropolitan languages are crucial to deliver African works on international scale. He maintains that the sole aim is to serve as means for unity and create new English that refer to African experience. Whereas, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o sees that reclaiming language and culture are essential elements in decolonizing the African mind. For Ngugi writing in European languages is an acceptance of imperialist and neocolonial European expression (Mehellou 03).

African literary works emerged in the form of oral tradition as a way of creative expression. African literature gained wide range spread during the colonial period. Simon Gikandi said: "it is also true that Literatures in ancient African languages such as Arabic and Geez emerged outside the tutelage of colonialism. However, it was during the high colonial period in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that written literature spread across the continent and became an important ingredient of its cultural geography" (Gikandi 12).

Gikandi's perspective of African literary works and the history of African literature is linked inextricably to colonial contacts and the consequences of such experiences. Literature evolved independently of colonial nations' governance structures. However, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, written literature developed and became an important component of African culture.

African literature refers to the wide array of literary materials created by African writers, whether in African or European languages, and is commonly used to designate literature from Africa's sub-Saharan region. 'Postcolonial literature' is a term sometimes used to refer to African literature, which can incorrectly imply that 'precolonial' literature did not exist. Contrary to popular belief, African communities are actually rich with oral literature, including folktales, poems, and performances (Mehellou 03).

According to Simon Gikandi, the existence of oral traditions in other African languages designates the thriving literary tradition in precolonial Africa. Furthermore, he asserts that colonial experience shaped African literary works as he says:

... what is now considered to be the heart of literary scholarship on the continent could not have acquired its current identity or function if the traumatic encounter between Africa and Europe had not taken place. Not only were the founders of modern African literature colonial subjects, but colonialism was also to be the most important and enduring theme in their works. From the eighteenth century onwards, the colonial situation shaped what it meant to be an African writer, shaped the language of African writing, and overdetermined the culture of letters in Africa. (379)

African literature is considered post-colonial because African authors often reflect their colonial legacy through their writings. They utilize colonialism as a recurring theme, reshaping African discourse and culture in the process.



Colonialism has had a profound effect on African literature, and its influence is apparent in various aspects of literary works produced by African authors. The colonial period, which extended from the late 19th century to the middle of the 20th century, had a substantial impact on the themes, styles, and perspectives of African literature. First, colonialism influenced Africa's cultural and linguistic evolution. The imposition of European languages as official languages, such as English, French, and Portuguese, had an enduring effect on African literature. Due to their exposure to these languages, many African authors chose to write in the languages of the colonial powers. African authors can view this linguistic influence as both an opportunity and a challenge (Kehinde 94-96).

On the one hand, this enabled them to reach a larger audience and engage in intellectual discussions. In addition, it created tension between adopting the imposed languages and maintaining ties to indigenous languages and cultural traditions (Abbane and Toulbia<sup>3</sup>). Second, colonialism introduced new ideologies, values, and social structures that influenced the themes of African literature. African writers of the 19th century frequently focused on the conflicts and tensions resulting from the collision of African traditions and Western culture. They investigated topics such as cultural identity, the loss of traditional values, the disruption of social hierarchies, and the pursuit of freedom and autonomy. Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, among others, portrayed the complexities of colonialism, its psychological effects on individuals and communities, and the resistance against oppressive systems. In addition, African literature attained its zenith in the middle of the 20th century, a period known as the African literary renaissance or African literary awakening. African writers, many of whom were actively engaged in anti-colonial struggles and postcolonial nation-building efforts, increased their literary output during this period (Irele and Gikandi 380-382).

As African societies sought to reclaim their identities and assert their agency, the works produced during this period reflected their political, social, and cultural aspirations. "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Achebe, "The Wretched of the Earth" by Frantz Fanon, and "God's Bits of Wood" by Ousmane Sembène are notable works from this time. African authors have effectively utilized postcolonial themes in their writings to examine the complexities and aftermath of colonialism. Postcolonial literature frequently examines the legacies of colonial rule, the lingering effects of imperialism, and the difficulties newly independent African nations confront. Writers have examined issues such as neocolonialism, cultural hybridity, struggle for independence, the search for African identity, and the reconstruction of African societies. They have scrutinized power dynamics critically, questioned Western narratives, and given marginalized communities a voice (Gbenoba & Okoroegbe 23)

In conclusion, colonialism shaped the themes, languages, and perspectives of African literature. The encounter with colonial powers and subsequent struggles for independence spawned an abundance of literature that examines the complexities of African identities, challenges oppressive systems, and seeks to reclaim African agency. African authors continue to explore postcolonial themes, providing fresh perspectives on the legacies and ongoing struggles resulting from the colonial era (Adigun11).

### **1.3. Soudan Literature**

According to research by Eiman El-Nour "the development of contemporary literature in Sudan", Sudanese literature was in the form of oral stories and narrative poems that were recently transmitted through generations. These oral tales focused on the portrayal of characters as men of great daring and valor. Furthermore, other stories depicted Sudanese society in towns and villages. Sudanese referred to these tales as Ahaji and older members of the community narrated such fictions. The transition of literature from oral to written took

place in the present century. This transition happened through the press, which took some popular oral stories and printed them in some of the country's first newspapers (150-151).

There is an intrinsic respect for the spoken word in Sudan. This appreciation engendered a consciousness of the intimate connections between languages, literature, and social reality. Consequently, the awareness of how language influences the self in interaction with others is close to the surface of all Sudanese language. The result was a more holistic conception of literature among Sudanese authors than among their western counterparts. The majority of literary works by Sudanese authors reflect, with various degrees of authenticity, the prevalent social and political climate of the period as well as the oral and written cultural ideas of each author (Berkley 109).

Sudanese novel is relatively new in comparison to other countries. International and Arabic literatures affected Sudanese literature specifically Egyptian literature. Egyptian trends influenced Sudan through human, cultural, social, and civilization ties. One of the first theatrical Sudanese novel started with the appearance of "Tagog" (1948) By Osman M. Hashim. Numerous regional components, such as folklore, social communities, and different contexts (village, town, and rural), combined with Egyptian, Arabic, and international influences, contributed to the emergence of the Sudanese novel (Fadlalla Ali 5923).

#### **1.4. Leila Aboulayla as an Author**

Leila Aboulela was born in 1964 from a Sudanese father and Egyptian mother. She is an acclaimed writer from Sudan. She grew up in Khartoum (Sudan), both Sudan and Egypt went through British colonialism with different experiences (Chambers 86). Her works in English language portray subjects about identity, migration, and Islamic spirituality. Her writings have garnered critical approval and widespread attention. Aboulela's work studies significant political concerns. It sheds light on the challenges Muslims face in Europe and tells the stories of flawed, complex characters. These characters struggle to make decisions

using Muslim logic. Her personal faith and her mid-twenties relocation from Sudan to Scotland have a noteworthy influence on her work (Author: Leila Aboulela).

She published in anthologies and broadcast on the radio a considerable number of her short stories. In 2000, her short story "The Museum" won the Caine Prize for African Writing. In 2001, she issued a collection of short stories entitled "Colored Lights," later on Elsewhere, Home, which garnered the 2018 Fiction Book of the Year award from the Saltire Society. She is also the author of five novels: *The Translator* (1999), *Minaret* (2005), *Lyrics Alley* (2010), *The Kindness of Enemies* (2015), and *Bird Summons* (2019) (Cabot).

### **1.5. Conclusion**

African literature is heavily influenced by colonial experience. Colonial power imposed its powers over the African continent. Writers tried to reflect their writings and experiences; consequently, African literature was seen as post-colonial literature. Sudan is one of the countries that experienced colonialism and was affected by it. Literary works from Sudan are relatively new and have roots with Sudanese oral tradition. The chapter presented a historical and cultural background about literature and post-colonial African literature. Moreover, we examined Sudan literature origin and we found that it is affected by Arabic literature specifically that of Egypt. Moreover, we introduced the author Leila Aboulela as Sudanese author and her major works.

## **Chapter Two: Postcolonial Feminism and Literature**

## **2.1. Introduction**

Throughout history, women struggled to gain the same rights men had enjoyed for centuries. They wished to be equal to those who had rights in all fields. However, women were not granted the same rights because they were believed to be sensitive, weak, and ignorant. Women were oppressed under notions that were constructed by patriarchy. They were forced to be molded into what the patriarchy believed them to be. Women wanted political, economic, and social equality. Men dominated all fields of life and represented women as weak and fragile. They were assigned roles and forced to assume them. This chapter will tackle feminism in Africa and Islamic feminism, highlighting the main principles of each. The chapter will provide an overview of feminism as a concept, a theory, and its waves and characteristics. Moreover, the chapter explores the notion of feminism in African and African literature. to reach feminist literary works in Sudan and Islamic feminism.

## 2.2. Feminism

Charles Fourier coined the term “feminisme” for the first time in 1837. During the following decades, the idea spread to Britain and the US. Men coined the term "feminism" to refer to a social movement that sought to eradicate sexism against women and achieve gender equality in all spheres of life, including law and economy. The patriarchy system paved the way for male dominance. This dominance was empowered through creating institutions that reinforced their power and inflicted oppression on women. This system constructed an image on women as being intellectually, socially, and culturally inferior to males. Inequality aims and levels differ across the globe, consequently it helped the variety of the essence that constitutes feminism. Objectives and views on feminism continue to shape societies by their influence, inspiration, and spread across vast populations (Mangan11). Gamble endeavored to provide a definition for Feminism. She asserted that feminism:

is the belief that women, purely and simply because they are women, are treated inequitably within a society which is organized to prioritize male viewpoints and concerns. Within this patriarchal paradigm, women become everything men are not (or do not want to be seen to be): where men are regarded as strong, women are weak; where men are rational, they are emotional; where men are active, they are passive; and so on. (qtd. in Nutsukpo 84)

Feminism as a theory denotes the examination of women’s social roles and lived experiences. This aids in understanding the nature of gender disparity. Feminist research covers several issues such as anti-racism, diversity, democratic decision making, and empowering women rights in all fields (Devajit and Mohajan 52-53). Feminists cultivated

skepticism regarding the theory because of decades of male dominance through ideological power that subordinated women's roles. It can be deduced that feminism as a theory signifies distinct concepts, frameworks, and forms in women's writings. This theory covers both the portrayal of women in male writings and the depiction of females in women's literature (Seldon 520-521).

### **2.2.1. Waves of Feminism**

Feminism waves denote a metaphor for a large scale and invisible involvement of women in social movements. This involvement resulted into dramatic transformations in women's access to social, political, educational, and economic opportunities. U.S historians traced the development of women's movement to the first women's rights conference that took place in Seneca Falls, New York in 1840. Two antislavery activists Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized it (Aikau et al. 01-02). Feminism movement is divided into three waves.

#### **2.2.1.1. First Wave of Feminism**

The nineteenth and the twentieth century represent the period for the first wave of feminism. This wave's primary focus was feminist legal inclusion. Early activist for voting rights were called "Suffragists". First wave feminists battled for what were described as married women's rights to their children, property, divorce, political office, the right to forego sex with their husbands, safety, and fair treatment in education and the work place (Aikau et al. 02). This era is distinguished by its emphasis on the power and influence that white women already possess. It was made up of educated white women from the middle class. In order to keep women active in these campaigns, the abolitionist movement and working unions bolstered the first wave of feminism (Krolkke and Srenson 03).



### **2.2.1.2. Second waves of feminism**

Miss America pageant was held in Atlantic City, United States of America, from 1968 to 1969. The pageant sparked a feminist uprising because they saw it as an exploitation of women's attractiveness and a presentation of women as objects for society. Furthermore, the movement saw pageant events as cattle parades. As a result, it increased the demand for the abolition of pageants, which resulted in women protests against subjugation in patriarchal society. The second wave of feminism involves women in policies against men's sexist approaches to women's private life. Furthermore, this wave included both white and non-white women from the West, as well as women from developing countries. (Mohajan 04).

### **2.2.1.3. Third Wave of Feminism**

Rebecca Walker formed the expression «third wave of feminism» during the 1990's. This generation viewed women as competent, assertive members of society. It brought up diversity and body positivity issues (Mohajan 05). The third wave of feminism focused mainly on political and social inequalities. This wave used the internet and social media to connect with feminists all over the world (Aikau et al.06). The wave began with the ascent of the new postcolonial and neoliberal global order. It provided a dynamic analysis that demonstrates a global appreciation for ideologies such as cultural feminism, black feminism, and postmodern feminism. Third wave feminism stressed on the notion of "universal womanhood," which emphasizes the transition from communal goals to individual liberties (Mohajan 05).

## **2.3. Feminism in Africa and African literature**

Women in African society were viewed as submissive and feeble primarily due to the patriarchal nature of the culture and society. African women established formidable organizations to advocate for women's rights. Groups such as Umuada of Igbos of Nigeria

and the Queen mother's group of women in Ghana possessed great power and addressed issues pertaining to the livelihoods and well-being of women. Feminism emerged in Africa in the late 1960s. Moreover, it was rooted in the accomplishments of these indigenous women's groups. African feminism is an ideology that promotes the individuality and assertion of women. In order to combat sexism, prejudice, and disparities in African society, feminists assembled on those premises (Nutsukpo 87-88).

According to Nutsukpo Margaret Fafa in her article " *Feminism and African women's writing*" feminism in African literature represent an avenue that exposes male domination in all aspects and women's subordination. It denotes a mean that voices genders issues that negatively affects women's lives. Therefore, it calls for fighting against those challenges and women's passivity. Thus, it empowers women to reach their potentials and value their capabilities and freedoms (90).

### **2.3.1. Feminism in Sudan**

Feminism extended from America to Europe thanks to the civil rights movement. Third world countries and old European colonies created their own versions of feminism, which were referred to as "post-colonial" and "third world" feminisms. Some activists believed that the women's movement should stress female feelings of injustice that have to do with homophobia, colonization, and racism. In the literary works of feminism, the first pioneering ideologies are liberalism, Marxism, and socialism. There were traces of these beliefs in Sudan, though not all of them. In Sudan, feminist movements were distinguished into National liberation Feminism, post-colonial feminism, globalization, and post globalization feminism. Female literatures is limited to her world as a woman, with the exception of Selma Salama's work, in which she discussed arrests and political struggles. The emphasis on women's worlds for female writers is more challenging and appealing for them. Therefore, the focus of feminist writing is femininity as an ideology that opposes ideologies that devalue

women. During the forties and fifties, national consciousness witnessed social risings, with women contributing through their private communities. Fatima Abd al-Rahman, Amaal Abbas, Amna Younis, Bakhita Amin Medani, and Salma Ahmed al-Basheer all contributed to the social knowledge of Sudanese women (Fadlalla Ali 3069).

According to Elsadig Hussein Fadlalla Ali in his journal, "Literary Feminism in Sudan" Balal Mawia believes that the narrative writing scene from the mid-fifties to the mid-seventies had similar features and characteristics of the Sudanese story writing. The main characters in the female writings were the oppressed, weak, and destructed female characters, who wrote about their suffering in their terrible reality in a special way (3070).

#### **2.4. Islamic feminism**

May Raad Hasoon AL- A'bed, in her thesis "Deconstructing Western Feminism: Modern Eastern Women from an Arab Feminist Perspective," provided a conceptual definition of Islamic feminism. Islamic feminism came about in accordance with the Islamic rebirth in Arabic countries in the 1990s. It revolutionized the role of women in Islam. This notion aimed to reform social structures so that personal privileges as the defining elements for social authority rather than gender. Islamic feminism adopted its aspects from other fields. It sought to break labels about Islam perceptions; therefore, it adopted power relation theories such as post colonialism, socio-cultural, psychology, and western feminism (Hasoon AL-A'bed 42-43).

Norah Hassan Alqahtani, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), University of Kent, In her thesis "Muslim Feminisms and Fictions in a Postcolonial Frame: Case Studies of Nawal El Saadawi and Leila Aboulela". She notes that, Islamic feminism appeared as a reaction to the secular regimes in the Middle East. Secular feminism failed to provide democratic and economic rights for women. Thus, Islamic feminism as a movement presented progressive

versions that guaranteed active participation for women. Islamic feminism denotes females who are invested in reaching a balance between women's human rights claims and the principles and boundaries of their faith. In addition, Islamic feminism proceeded from gender conservative Islamic reading by reemploying religious discourse. This meant that Islamic feminism departed from the gender-conservative reading of Islamism and developed its own agenda (91–92).

#### **2.4. Conclusion**

The civil rights movement aided in the expansion of feminism and its aspects. Feminism was adopted in Sudan, however, only certain aspects of it Africans did not receive the notion of feminism well and worked to challenge it. African society saw feminism as a rebellion against the assigned role of women in society. They conjured it as females trying to be men and taking their roles. Feminism developed into many forms in history. Islamic feminism is a movement that seeks to elevate women's status and role in society with references to religious discourse. Islamic feminism shifted from gender conservative reading to establishing its own agenda.

## **Chapter Three: Women's Need's VS Women's Aspirations**

### **3.1. Introduction**

Leila Aboulela's *The Translator* presents a work that changes all norms in social, political, and religious aspects. The work presents a distinctive portrayal of Muslim women in the West who do not welcome western cultures. The translator follows the journey of a woman looking for a space tied to her religious identity. Moreover, a protagonist that brought together the love of God with the love of a man in a somehow balanced way. The chapter at hand seeks to identify Sammar's development using Islamic feminist notions. The chapter strives to present the representation of looking for space, women's aspirations, needs, and newly formed convictions.

### **3.2. Looking for Space**

Leila Aboulela in her work *The Translator* portrayed a female protagonist called "Sammar" as a widow who lost her husband "Tarig" in a car accident. The sudden death of her husband resulted in the main character alienating herself at home and in her host country (Goody et al. 75). After the incident, Sammar returned with her husband's dead body. Sammar mourned the death of Tarig, her husband, and detached herself emotionally from her family and society. Months later, Sammar's relationship with her aunt Tarig's mother fell apart. Consequently, Sammar moved back to Aberdeen, Scotland, leaving her son and her family behind. The loss of her partner made Sammar's life bleak and depressing.

Moreover, she stayed in Aberdeen for four years; Sammar isolated herself socially and limited her interactions with people. Evidently, she only communicated with the people she worked with and her landlord occasionally. The protagonist forced herself into an emotional exile out of grief. The main character emptied her residence of items and donated everything

that might remind her of her deceased husband. She attempted to erase her life and memories with Tarig. Sammar kept only the necessities that she needed for a single individual, and she threw away everything else. She only had, "One plate, one / spoon, a tin opener, two saucepans, a kettle, a mug. She didn't care, didn't mind. Four years ill in a hospital she had made for herself. Ill, diseased with passivity, time in which she sat doing nothing. The whirlpool of grief sucking time. Hours flitting away like minutes" (Aboulela 16).

Since the loss of her husband, Sammar has neglected herself completely, from food to her lifestyle. It is as though her life has stopped with the death of Tarig. Her home became lifeless with no personal touch; evidently, she referred to the place as "a hospital room" Sammar locked herself in her own bubble and became isolated from both worlds to which she was attached. In Aberdeen, she only communicated with her family in Khartoum through letters for years. Thus, she emotionally exiled herself and lived a monotonous life without any pleasure or meaning. Sammar abandoned her son because she could not even take care of herself. Therefore, she left her son because her state would not grant her the ability to care for a child. She could not take care of herself at the time, let alone her child, for he "would not let her be, would not let her sink like she wanted to sink, bend double with pain. He demanded her totally" (Aboulela 8).

Her life in Aberdeen was uncomfortable; she could not adjust to life in Scotland after four long years. The inability to adjust and the mourning of her husband were major factors that contributed to her alienation and despair. For instance, Sammar feared going outside on rainy and foggy days. She perceived this type of weather as hostile. She preferred staying at home in such gloomy weather and considered the people who ventured outside during such days to be super humans. In Sammar's worldview, Aberdeen represents her emotional state.

Thus, losing her husband and being in exile made her view the world as such and stalled her aptitude to assimilate and adjust (Alqahtani 218).

As the time passed, Sammar realized that she was wasting her life she was not truly living.

Since Tarig died she had not bought anything new. She had not noticed time moving past. .. There she saw the mouldy bread, cheese with fur and green, salad that had grown dark and heavy, past its sell-by date. Things did not have a smell in this part of the world. If she had been back home, she would not have been able to be neglectful for so long... (Aboulela 67)

The female protagonist did not realize the impact her husband's death had on her life. The life she sought to have and the dreams she had were washed away with her grief. She led an atrocious life that lacked motivation and interest. Sammar had difficulty performing her daily tasks and activities, as she barely managed to do anything outside her job. After years in the same lifeless situation, she realized that she had not been living. Sammar decided that it is fruitless to lead such a life and that change is necessary. She tried overcoming her grief, but it no longer had control over her. She cleaned everything and bought the necessary tools and equipment.

Regardless of her attempts to improve her life and move on, she still felt homesick. More often than not, she thought of her life in Khartoum and compared it to Aberdeen, only to come to the realization that she did not belong there. After she fell in love with a non-Muslim man, who had refused to convert to Islam so they could get married, she left Aberdeen for a job commitment in Egypt and then headed home.



Heartbroken over what happened in Aberdeen, the protagonist endeavored to forget all her heartache and assume her role widow, for she simply "wanted to pick up life here again" (136) and she did. After she stubbornly resigned from her job in Aberdeen, she found a job as teacher for illiterate elderly, and she took care of her child and her cousin's. During the first weeks of her return to Khartoum, Sammar was content about being away from the colorless Aberdeen, "She could have the colours that she had missed in Aberdeen; yellow and brown, and everything else vivid. flat land and a peaceful emptiness, space, no grey, no wind, no lines of granite" (144). Indeed, the protagonist was happy with her life soon after she returned. She even believed that, "Her homesickness was cured" (144).

Nonetheless, as time passed, Sammar began to realize how different life in Khartoum was in comparison to Aberdeen. In fact, life in her home town was a struggle. To illustrate, the electricity was cut off multiple times a day, leaving people raging and unsatisfied, especially during the summer when it was extremely hot. Also, there was no water in Khartoum, which made their lives harder, "No water. In this land where the Nile flooded, no water. No water to have a shower with, flush the toilets with, cook, drink" (161).

Sammar who loved her country dearly was not satisfied with her life there. In fact she missed her life in Aberdeen.

Sammar found herself nostalgic for her old job, the work itself, moulding Arabic into English, trying to be transparent like a pane of glass not obscuring the meaning of any word. She missed the cramped room with the hum of the computer. She missed Diane, the smell of her cheese and onion crisps, her innocence when she said, 'Rae's class was really good today. One bloke asked this question about . . . (164)

Even though Sammar missed her life and what she did in Aberdeen, she was adamant that her life was in Khartoum and that it was where she belonged. She had nothing to go back to after she lost the man she wished to be her husband. Aboulela portrayed the struggle of her protagonist as an attempt to assume a life. That is to say, when Sammar was in Aberdeen, she often thought of her life and past in Khartoum, but when she came back to her home, she endeavored to live a happy life. However, her attempt failed. In other words, the protagonist struggled to find a space in which she belonged.

### **3.3. Voicing Women's Aspiration**

Sammar went through heartaches with the loss of her husband, a feeling of exile, and an inability to adapt in Aberdeen. Consequently, this made her feel weak and fragile. In Aberdeen, she did not dare go outside on rainy days while children went to school. In this sense, Scotland's weather alienated her further, and she did not try to combat those feelings. The protagonist, chained by her grief and exile, could not help but envy her neighbor Leslie.

Lesley was always busy, she went out in every kind of weather to play Bingo.

In the months when Sammar had hauled her pain up and down the stairs, she would admire Lesley, so many years older than herself and more full of life.

Living alone and filling up with her own self the empty space of a flat, a garden, a niche in life. (36)

For four years, Sammar struggled with her life, and she envied Lesly for her courage to face the world. This indicates that Sammar aspired to lead a life like Lesley's. She was younger than her neighbor was, yet she could not get herself together and take care of her life like she once did. Her grief and self-confinement made her withdraw from life. Nonetheless, she wished to assume her life and be more like her neighbor.

The translator of Leila Aboulela does not depict women as subjects of oppression by patriarchal society. According to May Hasson, female characters are independent women who

are intelligent enough to follow their own paths. Hasson asserts her view by providing the example of Sammar's mother-in-law. Sammar's mother-in-law refused to allow the protagonist to get married again. Hasson proclaims that the mother-in-law did not wish to permit her niece to remarry to protect her. Her aunt sees that it is no longer necessary for widows to marry for protection, especially if they are economically independent. In this sense, Mahasen is trying to save Sammar from an old rule that constructed a patriarchal society (41, 51).

Even though the protagonist is economically independent and free from the social constraints of patriarchal ideals, her mother-in-law oppresses and dominates her. To demonstrate, upon marriage, Sammar became part of her husband's family. Ultimately, she provided herself as a gift to her aunt, who molded her as she wished because Sammar was,

An obedient niece, letting Mahasen decide how you should dress, how you should fix your hair. You were happy with that, content, waiting for the day you would take her only son away from her.' Take care of Tarig,' she whispered in your ear when you said goodbye. And you brought him back to her shrouded in the belly of an airplane. (7)

Islam is one of the religions that gave the institution of marriage high status and appreciation. For Islam, marriage is a sacred bond between husband and wife that needs to be respected and celebrated. Marriage not only joins two individuals but also their families as well. Consequently, the woman finds herself obliged to take care of her husband's family. Out of politeness, she pursues their approval to keep the relationship with her husband peaceful. According to Mahnoor Mufti, Islamic teachings negate objectifying and exploiting women by the in laws. This indicates that a wife is not obliged to care for her in laws. She is not obligated to cook and clean simply to maintain a healthy relationship with her husband and his family (95).

When Sammar returned to Khartoum, she assumed her role as the widow of the family. Aboulela depicted the meeting of Sammar and her husband's family as awkward until Sammar and the others cried over the memory of Tarig, "Only after they had cried together did the awkwardness of their meeting begin to break... Only then was it as if reared that she was who she was, Amir's mother, Tarig's widow coming home" (139). Sammar took care of the children and the house as a dutiful widow should. She also secured a job. Sammar endeavored to gain her aunt's acceptance.

However, Mahasen was not pleased with the protagonist's decision to stay in Khartoum for good. She asked the main character to return to Aberdeen and send her things, which Sammar could not afford with her salary to buy everything her aunt asked for. She demanded that Sammar return to Aberdeen and send her things even though Sammar's salary is not enough to secure all the items her aunt asks for, "You should go back to England, work there and send us things" (169). Sammar sought her aunt's approval and love, but she only received disapproval and scorn.

She could feel her aunt watching her. If she turned away now from Dalia's hair and looked up at her aunt, she would meet her eyes, see the expression on them. Something like disappointment or disapproval, a kind of contempt. Many times when she met her aunt's eyes she found that contempt when once, years ago, there was approval and love. (142)

Mahasen used to love and adore her niece. Yet, after Tarig's tragic death, her aunt became a constant source of displeasure and irritation for Sammar. Her mother-in-law constantly throws insults at her daughter-in-law regardless of Sammar's efforts to secure her acceptance. Mahasen perceived her daughter-in-law as useless and hopeless. She also assumed that Sammar was a liar after telling her that she resigned. Mahasen deemed her a liar and said that she was fired from her job due to her incompetency.

Sammar was aware that her relationship with her aunt became full of tensions. However, she did not imagine that her aunt would harbor resentment towards her over the death of Tarig, "You killed my son,' Mahasen had actually spoken those words out loud. Now on her face there was a kind of triumph as if she had finally, from deep inside, pulled out what she had always wanted to say" (170). According to Mufti Accusing, the wife of the death of her husband is common in Islamic societies. In other words, wives, in similar situations, are often denoted as unblessed and cursed even though they had no hand with their husband's demises. They are forced to resume their lives in grief (95).

To illustrate, when Sammar sent word to her aunt that she was coming back for a visit, Mahasen asked that the protagonist not wear colorful clothes. "Of course it doesn't matter where you are, no one is seeing you there but when you come, it would be better not to wear so much colour, you know how people get ideas" (87). Not only that, when the protagonist is in Khartoum excited about being in her friend's wedding, her mother-in-law insinuates that she should not go, "From the day they buried the deceased, I have no appetite for such things. Hanan goes, reluctantly, but it's her duty to go. It's expected of her" (142). Mahasen affirms that she no longer finds pleasure in these things and that her daughter feels the same. Consequently, Sammar should be the same. Aboulela alludes to the fact that as mothers mourn the deaths of their loved ones; their families are often forced to do the same.

However, in Islam, "four months and ten days, was the sharia's mourning period for a widow, the time that was for her alone, time that must pass before she could get married again, beautify herself again" (69). This demonstrates that exceeding the grief periods over loved ones is not what Islam dictates; it is rather a tradition enforced by culture. Muslim women have the right to live and marry after the death of their significant others. Nevertheless, occasionally, society dictates that widows do not assume their lives as before.

The protagonist aspired to speak up, defend herself against her aunt, and reclaim her rights. She wished to say that she was not guilty of the death of her husband. She also desired to speak about her share of the house. Nonetheless, she was unable to do so, and she resumed the role of obedient daughter-in-law.

### **3.4. Recognizing Needs**

Aboulela presented her protagonist, Sammar, as a religious woman. Her faith rescued her from the grief she struggled with for a year. It is a fact that she lost interest in life. However, her belief as Islamic female gave her sanity admits the whirlpool of grief and pain, "Days in which the only thing she could rouse herself to do was pray the five prayers. They were the only 'challenge, the last touch with normality, without them she would have fallen, lost awareness of the shift of day into night" (16).

Sammar is highly mystical. Her occupation as a translator at the university in Scotland allowed her access to many Islamic materials that she had no knowledge of. Consequently, she educated herself further. That is to say, Sammar had considerable knowledge about Islam. She knew about women's rights in religion. Thus, she acknowledged her needs according to her spirituality. To explain, she was aware of her rights as a Muslim woman. Thus, she needed to practice those rights freely. For instance, marriage was essential to Sammar. In fact, she wished to remarry months after the death of her husband. However, her mother-in-law refused vehemently,

An educated girl like you, you know English . . . you can support- yourself and your son, you don't need marriage. What do you need itfor? He started to talk to me about this and I silenced him. I shamed him, the old fool... He can take the words, his religiousness 'he feels and build a duty a mosque towards but keep away from us. In the past, widows needed protection, life is different now. (13)

Mahasen refused to grant Sammar the approval to marry again, disregarding the reason behind that rejection. She was unable to understand Sammar's wishes to marry an old man who has children her age. The aunt declined the match and ordered the protagonist to focus on her life and her son, "I need a focus in my life," and her aunt's reply was, "Your son is your focus. But she had left him behind, come here and her focus became the hospital room..." (28). Mahasen made the protagonist relinquish the rights that Islam secured for her. The mother-in-law suppressed the voice of her niece when she articulated her need. Mahasen ignored and overlooked what the Allah permitted his creation.

The fact that Sammar's life revolved around her husband made living normally without him difficult for her. After he passed, she strived to marry and resume a normal life but could not. She believed that she needed to assume the role of a married woman because, for her, life was easy and familiar. She alleged that being married and having a husband would give her something to concentrate on. Consequently, she was surprised that her co-worker, Diane, did not wish to marry.

I definitely don't want to have children. I am *never* going to get married. Diane repeated that last sentence often, something that she felt strongly about. Had Sammar been back home and Diane one of her old friends, she would have replied, 'Are you mad! You want to live celibate all your life!' and they both would have started laughing. Here she just said quietly to Diane, 'Maybe you'll change your mind and get married one day. (72)

The protagonist, whose life centered on marriage and family, could not fathom what evoked such intense feelings from a woman younger than her. In the Islamic world, marriage is almost a necessity. Culture and society do not control marriage yet, they often frown upon unmarried women. Fate is in the hands of Allah. Nonetheless, in many Muslim societies, unmarried women are judged as damaged goods if they stay unmarried. Hence, the

protagonist's inability to understand Diane's opposition to marrying when she wished to marry.

Sammar's need to find a husband did not vanish. In fact, she fell in love with a non-Muslim man called Rae. She wished that he would convert since he was an expert on the Middle East and have great knowledge about Islam. Sammar felt emotionally connected to him because of his knowledge and positive opinions of Islam. She desired that he would change his belief so that she could have him for a husband, "She wanted to say, because unless you become a Muslim we will not be able to get married, we will not be together and I will be miserable and alone" (89). The protagonist assumed that marriage would be the cure for sadness and isolation. Therefore, her need to remarry was an attempt from her to secure a sense of normality.

Sammar's need to remarry made her irrational and hopeful. For instance, when Rae confessed his feelings for her, she became ecstatic and imagined the life she would have as his wife. She would no longer be alone, for she would take care of their children, "Mhairi would like Amir, and girls her age liked younger children. She would be kind to Mhairi, she would do everything for her, clean her room, sort her school clothes. She would treat her like a princess" (118). Sammar's impatience for building a future with him made her ask him to convert. She was aware that her request could affect his career. She even suggested that he say the Shahada just so that she would have the title of a married woman. When he refused to do so, declaring that he would hate himself for embracing Islam without certainty, her hope was shattered, and she cut ties with him and left the country.

In many Islamic societies, women have reputations to uphold. This means that, women have to follow certain rules that were constructed by society in order to protect their reputation. Aboulela paints the importance of reputation for the Islamic world, "A woman's reputation is as fragile as a match stick... a woman's honor... Reputation was the idol people



set up, what determined the giving, the holding back. A girl's honour...your father... your brother will beat you up..." (57).

Nahla, the protagonist's friend, informs her that her marriage is a love match instead of an arranged marriage. Nahla had not told her family about that because she was aware they would refuse the marriage or do something worse. If Nahla's family had discovered that their daughter agreed to marry a man before he approached them, she would have faced severe consequences. If that were to happen, Nahla's status and society's perpetuation would damage her reputation and image. Islam granted women the right to choose their husbands. Nonetheless, culture and tradition dictate and deem this act as rebellion against the norms, and it is often punished. In other words, some Islamic teachings are overlooked if they contradict what norms and tradition command (Mufti 99).

### **3.5. New Convictions**

Aboulela work *The Translator* depicts the protagonist's struggles to have a sense of normalcy in her life. Sammar, fully knowing that the person she fell in love with is non-Muslim, still pursued him in an attempt to make him convert to Islam. Her friend, Yasmin, represented the voice of reason in this work. She often asked Sammar if she secretly fancied Rae and wished he would convert. She tried to discourage the protagonist so that she would stay away. However, Sammar was already emotionally connected with Rae and began to look up their conversations and time together.

The protagonist was convinced that she needed a man in her life. Therefore, she disregarded her friend's advice and became closer to Rae. The character's intentions were not entirely selfless. It is true that she loved him and wanted to have a life with him. However, asking him to convert is purely selfish since she wanted him to do so to be with her. When the life Sammar imagined dissolved, she went back to Khartoum so that she would resume her life away from Rae. As time passed, the protagonist realized her selfishness. She realized that

her need for a husband urged her to endeavor to persuade him.

She had never, not once, prayed that he would become a Muslim for his own sake, for his own good. It had always been for herself, her need to get married again, not be alone. If she could rise above that, if she would clean her intentions. He had been kind to her and she had given him nothing in return. She would do it now from far away without him ever knowing. It would be her secret. If it took ten months or ten years or twenty or more.

The protagonist's unwavering convictions were shown when she decided to pray for his salvation. She knew that if her intentions were pure, Allah would guide him to the correct path. The protagonist was determined and hopeful in her prayers, "What kept her going day after day: he would become a Muslim before he died. It was not too much to want, not too much to pray for. They would meet in Paradise and nothing would go wrong there, nothing at all" (184). Sammar believed that Allah would never leave Rae without guidance. She prayed that he would find his path, even if that oath had the potential to take him away from her. However, Allah rewarded her for maintaining her strength when she had to choose between her religion and the man she loved.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

The chapter presented an analysis of Leila Aboulela's "The Translator." The author based her novel on Sammar's journey to establish space and stability in her life. In a Muslim society, women's needs and aspirations are not well welcomed due to cultural traditions. Sammar aspired to become a stronger woman, as she felt weak from her mother-in-law treatment and insults. She envied Lesley's strength in facing the world and aspired to have her courage. She hoped to get her life on track and overcome her grief. Islam did not forbid women from entering a second marriage after their husbands' deaths. Sammar needed to have a husband and a man to marry in her life. Her mother-in-law denied the principles and rights dictated by Islamic religion when she banned her from remarrying again. Islamic teachings are often.

## **General Conclusion**

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This dissertation has examined the novel "The Translator" by Leila Aboulela in order to examine the needs and aspirations of women as depicted in the story. Through the lens of Islamic feminism, which proposes a theoretical framework for understanding female representations and the struggle for women's rights within the context of religious discourse. This research provided invaluable insights into the intricate dynamics of gender and faith. Through analyzing the experiences and obstacles faced by the novel's female protagonist, we have acquired a deeper understanding of the complexity of women's lives in Islamic-influenced societies. The character's pursuit of personal fulfilment, negotiation of cultural expectations, and exploration of religious identity cast light on the various aspirations and desires of women in such contexts.

The findings of this study emphasize the significance of recognizing women's agency and tenacity in their pursuit of self-actualization and the satisfaction of their needs. We have witnessed through Aboulela's narrative how women navigate the complexities of gender norms and religious beliefs, frequently challenging and reinterpreting traditional patriarchal structures. In addition, this research has contributed to the larger field of Islamic feminism by demonstrating the potential of literature as a potent medium for investigating women's experiences and promoting gender equality within religious frameworks. By engaging with Aboulela's novel, we have seen how narratives can challenge societal assumptions and provide a forum for discussion on women's rights and empowerment.

It is evident that "The Translator" has provided a nuanced depiction of women's needs and aspirations, surpassing simplistic narratives and providing a more comprehensive comprehension of women's diverse lived experiences. This dissertation has contributed to the discourse on women's rights, Islamic feminism, and literature's capacity for social transformation by investigating the interaction between gender, religion, and personal agency. As this study comes to a close, it is essential to recognise that the investigation of women's needs and aspirations is an ongoing process that requires ongoing research and dialogue. By acknowledging the complexity of women's experiences and the significance of religious discourse, we can create more inclusive and equitable societies that respect and support the aspirations of all individuals, regardless of gender or religious affiliation.

This dissertation has provided an insightful analysis of "The Translator" by Leila Aboulela, shedding light on women's desires and requirements within the context of Islamic feminism. This study has contributed to the comprehension of gender dynamics and the pursuit of women's rights within religious contexts by emphasizing the agency and resilience of women. Our hope is that this research will stimulate additional inquiry and dialogue in the field of women's studies, thereby promoting greater gender equality and social justice for all.

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# **Appendices**

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Leila Aboulela

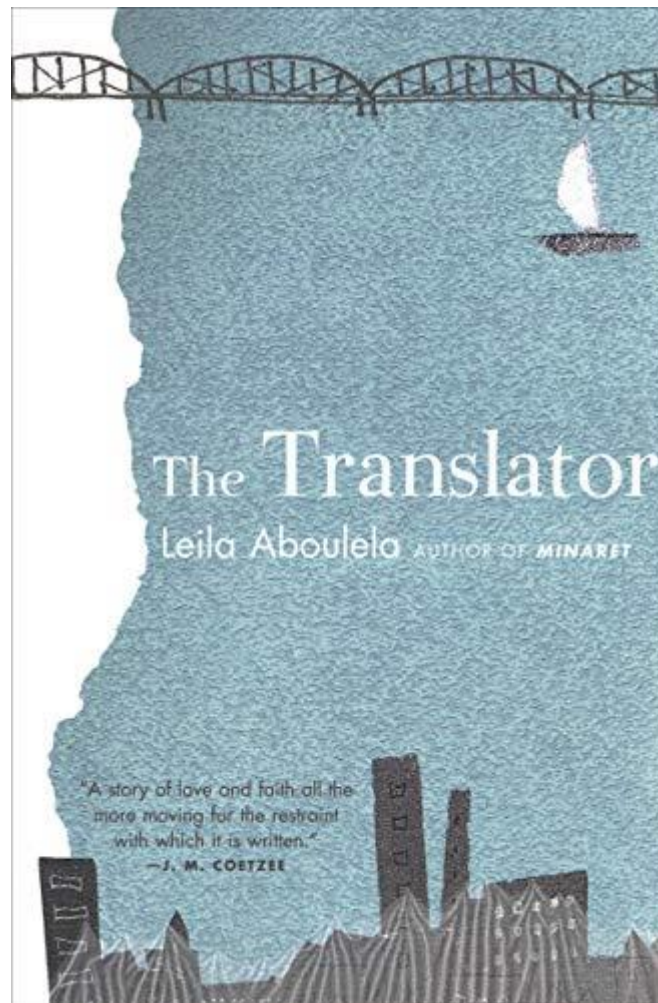
**Figure 1.** Demonstrates a picture of the Sudanese writer Leila Aboulela



**Figure 1.** Aboulela, Leila. "Leila Aboulela." *Grove Atlantic: An Independent Literary Publisher Since 1917*, [groveatlantic.com/author/leila-aboulela/](https://groveatlantic.com/author/leila-aboulela/).

## Appendix B: The Translator

**Figure 2.** Presents an image of Leila Aboulela's *The Translator*



**Figure2.** Aboulela , Leila. "The Translator - Kindle Edition by Aboulela, Leila. Literature ..."  
*Amazon*, 1 Dec. 2007, [www.amazon.com/Translator-Leila-Aboulela-ebook/dp/B008V461JQ](http://www.amazon.com/Translator-Leila-Aboulela-ebook/dp/B008V461JQ).

# **Glossary**

**Suffragists.** The term traces back to the 1914 meeting of fourteen African women who met to discuss the extension of voting rights to women. The meeting resulted in establishing an Equal suffrage study club that had an objective to promote suffrage movement among colored women and conduct educational campaigns. Later on, the club led by Blanche William Stubbs started series of lectures that cover issues of national and international state. These lectures addressed “Worldwide Woman Movement and What it means To the Negro” (Boylan 106).

**Universal womanhood.** In a patriarchal society, women are viewed as inferior. During the 19th century, women were subject to social and economic discrimination. Their only options in life were marriage and domestic dependence in general. The main character of *A True Woman* was portrayed as fragile and prone to collapsing and becoming unwell. Physical activity was discouraged because of the sensitivity of female nerves. This was due to women's rib cages and organs being distorted by the restrictive garments of the time (Cruea 189).

**Neocolonialism.** Kwame Nkrumah coined the term "neocolonialism". Ghana's first post-independence president, and has since been debated by Jean-Paul Sartre and Noam Chomsky, among others. Neocolonialism is the use of capitalism, globalization, and cultural forces in field of direct military and political control over a country (typically former European colonies in Africa or Asia). Such control can be economic, cultural, or linguistic. By promoting their own culture, language, or media in the colony, corporations rooted in that culture can make greater advances in opening the markets in those countries. Thus, neocolonialism would be a consequence of commercial interests with deleterious cultural effects (Javed01).



**Civil Rights Movement.** The American civil rights 1960's is a movement that dates back to the beginning of slavery. This movement came as reaction to the atrocities African Americans suffered from in the south of America. It was a clash between the practical benefits of slavery and human rights. Television played a vital role in bolstering the commitment of both blacks and whites and accelerating the movement. This movement changed many aspects in American history among them women stance in American society (Clark239).