

Hebrew-Arabic Translational Communities and the Recuperation of Arab-Jewish Literary Memory

Michal Raizen

Ohio Wesleyan University

ABSTRACT: Due to the taboo on normalization of relations with Israel, Hebrew-to-Arabic literary translations once circulated predominantly in the digital realm. Print editions were confined to expatriate and boutique publishing houses and catered to a small and specialized readership. In 2016, Nael Eltoukhy's Arabic translation of Almog Behar's 2010 novel *Tchahla ve-Hezkel* (Rachel and Ezekiel) was released by the independent Cairo publishing house Al-Kotob Khan to unprecedented visibility in the Arabic book fair circuit. Eltoukhy's translation work, alongside that of his contemporary Mohammed Abud, signals a departure from the largely contentious frames of reference that have long dictated the tenor of Hebrew-to-Arabic translation practices. My study proposes a model of recuperative translation through which Arab-Jewish literary memory is made visible to an Arab readership. I identify translation as the site of a dynamic cultural encounter through which the Arab-Jew—as fiction, historical memory, political potential, author, friend, and colleague—is occupying an increasingly prominent position among Arab literary communities in digital and physical space. My article closes with reflections on the European metropole, specifically Berlin, as the potential site of a creative crossroads where a new Arabic literary tradition with Arab-Jewish participation is emerging.

IN A 2017 ARTICLE TITLED “We Can’t Understand Ourselves without the Arabic,” Israeli author Almog Behar speaks to the role of translation as a means of rethinking Arab-Jewish identity in the twenty-first century.¹ Behar’s short story “Ana min al-Yahud” (I am one of

¹ Almog Behar, “We Can’t Understand Ourselves without the Arabic: Dreams in Cambridge (2009),” *Journal of Levantine Studies* 7 (Summer 2017): 131–52. I use the term “Arab-Jew” in reference to Jewish communities that inhabited the Middle East and North Africa until their mass exodus in the 1940s and 1950s. The term of identification was used by a small group of Jewish intellectuals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, mostly in Baghdad and Cairo. In the 1970s, it was repurposed in Israel as a political statement

the Jews) won the *Haaretz* short-story competition in 2005 and shortly thereafter was translated into Arabic by the Egyptian translator Mohammed Abud and published in the literary journal *Al-hilāl*.² In a heartfelt testament to Abud's skill as a translator, Behar likens the translator to a conduit between an Arab-Jewish literary past and a projected return of the Arabic language to the creative toolkit of the Arab-Jewish author:

Through the translation of this story into Arabic in Cairo, in 2006, I felt my desire to be an Arab writer was fulfilled. Today we need moderators, translators, even if we again study Arabic, to write in Arabic. In this sense I felt that the translation into Arabic was not just translation, but in a deep sense it was returning the text to its origin, to the place from which the story was written, through the sister language, Arabic, that existed in me from the days of childhood, even if silent, and speaks me, speaks us. Mohammed Abud, the Egyptian translator I am so grateful for, took me to another place, and suddenly my Jerusalem that remembers Baghdad and Palestine prior to 1948, my Hebrew that remembers Arabic, received a presence in Arabic, in Cairo.³

Behar's evocative description of a textual homecoming marks translation as a site of profound cultural negotiation wherein the Arab-Jew can (once again) "be an Arab writer." In drawing an arc between Abud's 2006 translation and a pre-1948 cultural and linguistic landscape, Behar situates contemporary Hebrew-to-Arabic translation vis-à-vis the historical exodus of Arab-Jews in the mid-twentieth century and their rupture with the Arabic language. "We Can't Understand Ourselves without the Arabic" draws to a close with a thought-provoking comment: "Today, in the beginning of the twenty-first century, the only place left for the Arab-Jew to live or relive a full life is the literary imagination. We have finally become fiction."⁴ By rendering such fiction visible to an Arab readership, translators are enacting a process of historical remembrance and reconstitution and proposing a new set of questions about their craft and source material. How do translators read Arab-Jewish writing after the erasure of the Arab-Jewish author from literary histories and canons? Can they reconstitute an Arab-Jewish creative presence through meaningful intellectual and artistic exchange, dialogue, and friendship? What does this endeavor reveal to them about their own histories and present circumstances?

In response to this set of questions and to the core questions proposed by the editors of "Translational Transactions," my article outlines a mode of recuperative translation to which I refer as "translating the Arab-Jew." Building on the concept of translation as a "fluid cultural currency," I consider how contemporary Hebrew-to-Arabic translation functions as a means of rethinking the place of Arab-Jews within Arab literary communities in digital and physical space.⁵

alongside a wave of post-Zionist critique that sought to dismantle the idea that Jew and Arab are conflictual identities. Self-identifying Arab-Jewish authors in Israel often allude to a cultural identity that was excised in the crosscurrents of Zionism and Arab nationalism. For a detailed assessment of the term's historical and contemporary usage in relation to the current state of the debate, see Lital Levy's "The Arab Jew Debates: Media, Culture, Politics, History," *Journal of Levantine Studies* 7 (Summer 2017): 79–103.

² Abud, an instructor of Hebrew language at Ain Shams University in Cairo, first encountered "Ana min al-Yahūd" during his dissertation research on the *Haaretz* short-story competition. The story was published with a translator's introduction under the title "Ana min al-Yahūd: Shazaya al-qahr al-thaqāfi" [I am one of the Jews: Splinters of cultural subjugation], *Al-hilāl* (June 2006): 115–23.

³ Behar, "We Can't Understand Ourselves without the Arabic," 150.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ "Translational Transactions," the special issue of *Dibur* in which this article appears, presents the following questions: Does translation to and from Arabic and/or Hebrew represent a "fluid cultural currency" that moves

When combined with his striking use of pronouns—the Arabic that “even if silent . . . speaks *me*, speaks *us*”—Behar’s formulation of “not just translation, but in a deep sense [return]” invites a new optic with which to view an emerging body of Hebrew-to-Arabic translation initiatives.⁶ My concept of recuperation moves beyond the field of “translation proper” and encompasses a field of “not just translation,” to borrow Behar’s term, that includes a broader terrain of Arabic translational transactions involving authors, translators, publishers, international book fairs, and award foundations. Contemporary Arab authors are increasingly employing the term “Arab-Jew” and using their creative voices to translate the historical Arab-Jewish experience for an Arab readership.⁷ In doing so, they are participating in a burgeoning conversation on the return of Arab-Jewish voices to the realm of Arabic literature. The moment of recuperative translation to which I refer throughout this article started to take shape in the early 2000s and has gained momentum in the wake of the Arab Spring. The translators who honed their craft at this juncture are the driving force behind a dynamic cultural encounter through which Arab-Jewish literary memory—as both historical trace and contemporary practice—impacts broader Arab populaces. I use the term “literary memory” to indicate both the writings of historical Arab-Jewish communities in the Levant and contemporary initiatives to “re-member” or piece back together an Arab-Jewish literary presence in the twenty-first century.

THE REALM OF “NOT JUST TRANSLATION” AND THE “UNBORDERED LANGUAGE WORLD”

I employ the phrase “translation proper” with the caveat that not all translation initiatives involve a clearly demarcated move from one language to another. The situation of Hebrew and Arabic poses a particular challenge to translation models that assume fluid bidirectional movement between languages.⁸ For the purpose of this article, I present Nael Eltoukhy’s 2016 translation of Almog Behar’s 2010 novel *Tchahla ve-Hezkel* (Rachel and Ezekiel) as a Hebrew-to-Arabic transaction that ostensibly falls under the category of “translation proper.”⁹ In my discussion of Eltoukhy’s

independently of hierarchical notions about majority culture influencing minority culture? Can the concept of translation be expanded to encompass modes of literary exchange that function transnationally and in a translanguing framework?

⁶ Ibid. (emphasis mine).

⁷ Examples include *The Tobacco Keeper* (2008) by Ali Badr, *The Handsome Jew* (2009) by Ali al-Muqri, *Diary of a Damascus Jew* (2007) by Ibrahim al-Jubain, *The Last Jews of Alexandria* (2008) by Mutaz Fatiha, *The Last Jew of Tamentit* (2012) by Amin Zaoui, *The Maze of the Last One* (2014) by Mohammad al-Ahmed, and *Exhausted Hearts: The Muslim Jew* (2004) and *Days of Diaspora* (2008) by Kamal Ruhayyim. Marcia Lynx-Qualey, “True Histories: The Renaissance of Arab-Jews in Arabic Novels,” *Guardian*, October 29, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2014/oct/29/renaissance-arab-jews-arabic-novels-ali-bader-mohammad-al-ahmed>. Use of the term “Arab” introduces a host of questions that are beyond the scope of this article. Some of the authors whose works creatively render Arab-Jewish life would identify as Arabophone rather than Arab. In “The Arab Jew Debates,” Lital Levy introduces an important nuance: namely, the different dynamics at play when discussing the designation “Arab” among the Jewish communities of the Maghreb (North Africa) and the Mashriq (Levant). Levy writes: “Disparities between the Maghreb and the Mashriq in terms of ethnic and religious composition, colonial policies, and the different trajectories of nationalism and independence all conspired to produce the ‘Arab Jew’ as a predominately Levantine idea, although in its current Israeli formation, it is used to denote Jews of North African, Levantine, and Yemeni descent without distinction” (94).

⁸ See Lital Levy, *Poetic Trespass: Writing between Hebrew and Arabic in Israel/Palestine* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

⁹ Almog Behar, *Tchahla wa-Hezkel* [Rachel and Ezekiel], trans. Nael Eltoukhy (Cairo: Al-Kotob Khan, 2016); Almog Behar, *Tchahla ve-Hezkel* [Rachel and Ezekiel] (Jerusalem: Keter, 2010). When I refer to Behar’s original

translation, I elucidate how the case of *Tshahla wa-Hezkel* blurs the distinction between “translation proper,” on the one hand, and a framing of the debates surrounding Arab-Jewish identity in terms of recuperative translation, on the other. The methodology outlined by Eltoukhy in his preface suggests a departure from the “know thy enemy” model that has long dominated the field of Hebrew-to-Arabic translation. His heuristic approach challenges the binary between Arab self and Jewish other—a binary that collapses the distinction between Jew and Israeli and makes itself legible only within frames of reference specific to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Eltoukhy, who likens his translation process to a mode of excavation, expresses a distinct interest in an Arab-Jewish past that predates the Arab-Israeli conflict. Though it is premature to deduce a paradigm shift based solely on the example of *Tshahla wa-Hezkel* and “Ana min al-Yahūd,” my article suggests that it is emblematic of a broader shift in attitudes among a generation of authors, translators, and independent publishers whose literary activities took off in the early 2000s.

In looking at the work of Abud and Eltoukhy, two translators who honed their craft in the digital age, I explore how Hebrew-to-Arabic translation has fundamentally changed in terms of tone and process. Both Abud and Eltoukhy were active participants in the January 2011 Egyptian Revolution and took to the streets during the protests that culminated in the ousting of Hosni Mubarak. Their early translation work took shape in the blogosphere, a critical mobilizing space for revolutionary action. From 2009 to 2011, Abud worked as the official in charge of Israeli affairs for the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Masry al-yawm* and made frequent appearances on Egyptian talk shows in this capacity. Now a faculty member in the Hebrew Department at Ain Shams, Abud has gravitated toward research and in 2013 adapted his dissertation into a book on the *Haaretz* short-story competition.¹⁰

Eltoukhy’s status as a published author and his association with the independent publishing house Dar Merit, one of Cairo’s most venerated independent publishers and a critical gathering space during the 2011 revolution, situates him as part of an intellectual and artistic community with broader ties to the Arab literary world.¹¹ His translation work, however, has only recently found a home on the printed page, though he had already been releasing translations digitally for some time. In 2002, he started working for the Arabic-language paper *Akhbār al-adab*. In 2009, when the paper declined to publish his Arabic translations of Hebrew literature, he started a blog called *Hakadha tahadatha Cohen* (Thus spoke Cohen). From 2009 until the 2011 revolution, Eltoukhy posted a new translation every two weeks, drawing his source material (short stories, poetry, and excerpts from plays) from online periodicals such as *Haaretz*, *Yedi’ot aharonot*, and *Ma’ariv*. He was last active on the blog in March 2016 with an entry titled “Shared Eastern-ness:

novel, I use the Hebrew transliteration *Tchahla ve-Hezkel*, and when I refer to Eltoukhy’s translation, I use the Arabic *Tshahla wa-Hezkel*.

¹⁰ Mohammed Abud, *Revolt against Zionism in Contemporary Israeli Literature: A Structural Analysis of Award-Winning Stories in the “Haaretz” Short Story Competition* (Cairo: Egyptian Public Agency of Authors, 2013).

¹¹ Eltoukhy published his 2013 novel *Nisā’ al-Karantina* (Women of Karantina) with Dar Merit, an independent Cairo-based publishing house owned and operated by Mohammed Hashim. With a long-standing commitment to social justice movements, Hashim established Dar Merit in 1998 and created a literary salon and a political laboratory where authors, journalists, activists, philosophers, and artists would gather to exchange thoughts. During the 2011 revolution, the downtown Cairo shop and adjacent apartment served as a refuge and makeshift first-aid center for demonstrators. Eltoukhy’s affiliation with Dar Merit marks him as part of a distinct intellectual circle with a revolutionary pedigree. See Stephan Weidner, “Father of the Revolution,” *Qantara*, December 9, 2011, <https://en.qantara.de/content/pen-award-for-the-egyptian-publisher-mohammed-hashim-a-father-of-the-revolution>.

A Movement That Brings Together Palestinians and Arab-Jews.” Given their rootedness in the medium of the day and their commitment to the goals and momentum of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, Abud and Eltoukhy represent a new face of Hebrew-to-Arabic translation in a world of digital opportunity.

In *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability*, Emily Apter notes that moments of digital crossing feature “decentralized polyphonic voices that are *mondiale* in address [and] give rise to a fluctuating, relational, unbordered language world.”¹² The city, she adds, treats “metropolitan nexuses as metonyms of World.”¹³ In the case of Hebrew-to-Arabic translation in the digital age, “unbordered” can mean moving beyond the hermeneutics of the Arab-Israeli conflict and considering both an Arab-Jewish past that predates the 1948 Arab-Israeli War and the potential for an Arab-Jewish future that writes itself alongside the emergence of a new Arabic literature. “Unbordered” can refer to the circulation of texts and the innovative ways in which authors and translators circumvent the politics and economics of normalization. “Unbordered” can also encompass digital moments of crossing that cannot happen in physical space. In this last example, the very act of translation is part and parcel of emerging cyber communities that sometimes move into the realm of print.¹⁴

BREAKING THE TABOO ON NORMALIZATION

In 2015, Eltoukhy issued a five-part series of op-eds titled “How Hebrew Teaches Us Something about Ourselves: A Personal and Not So Personal Account.” Published in *Mada Masr*, an independent web-based Arabic and English news outlet, these op-eds are striking for both their content and their visibility. At a time when perceived normalization with Israel could tarnish a career, Eltoukhy made the bold move of publicly discussing his work as a translator of Hebrew literature. In his op-eds, Eltoukhy describes his sense of disillusionment following the 2013 military coup that ushered in the current regime of Abdel Fatah el-Sisi. After publishing his novel *Nisā’ al-Karantina* (Women of Karantina), Eltoukhy found himself grasping for hope in the fallout of the Arab Spring and the return of a stifling political status quo.¹⁵ He turned his attention to reading Hebrew novels and threw himself into the world of Behar’s *Tchahla ve-Hezkel*. For Eltoukhy, “translating the Arab-Jew” in 2013 took on a recuperative function not only in the sense of introducing the Arab-Jewish experience to an Arab readership but also as a means of coming to terms with his own experience as an Egyptian who felt alienated from his city and country. He describes the urgency of his translation work as follows: “Hebrew has saved me from the maddening defeat of the revolution. In Hebrew I was able to understand this far away land built by blood and bullets at the hand of the military and its ideology; established by cruel intentions to reshape society, it expelled people and brought others in; constructed a Wall to shield the ‘civilized’ and keep

¹² Emily Apter, *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (London: Verso, 2013), 41.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ In 2014, Israeli scholar and translator Idan Barir started to gather Yazidi poetry that appeared as ephemera on Facebook. The poets were writing after a massacre of their community in Iraq by Islamic State forces. Barir translated the Arabic poems into Hebrew and published them in a bilingual anthology through the Maktoob series, an initiative run by the Forum of Arabic-Hebrew Translators at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute. *Eyn be-va’aluti davar milvad ha-halomot: Antologia shel shira yazidit be-‘ikvot ha-ason, 2014–2016 / La amlik ilā al-aḥlām: Mukhtārāt min al-shi’r al-īzīdī fī a’qāb al-kāritha, 2014–2016* [I own nothing save my dreams: An anthology of Ezidi poetry in the wake of a genocide, 2014–2016] was edited by Almog Behar and published in 2017 under a copyright by the poets and publishers.

¹⁵ Nael Eltoukhy, *Nisā’ al-Karantina* (Cairo: Dar Merit, 2013).

the ‘riff-raff’ out. Israel has helped me understand Egypt after June 30, 2013.”¹⁶ Is he referring to occupied Palestine or to Egypt under military rule? The slippage suggests a new set of questions about Hebrew-to-Arabic translation in the digital age. Eltoukhy is by no means the only voice challenging the status quo, but his heuristic approach signals a shift in the debates surrounding the normalization of relations with Israel.

Though Israel and Egypt have maintained a cold peace since the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli Treaty, the taboo on normalization has largely prevented Egyptian translators from traveling to Israel and has prompted them to boycott institutions affiliated with Israel. In her article “Egyptian Representation of Israeli Culture: Normalizing Propaganda or Propagandizing Normalization?” Deborah Starr examines the content and political backdrop of three special issues of the Egyptian monthly *Ibdā’* (Creativity) released in 1995 under the title “Israeli Culture: The Propaganda of Normalization and the Dimensions of the Confrontation.”¹⁷ Starr identifies normalization as a “negotiated term—a concept endorsed by the various protocols of the Camp David Accords as the result of Israeli demands for cultural exchange.”¹⁸ With the signing of the Camp David Accords in 1978 and ensuing expulsion of the Egyptian Writer’s Union from the Arab Writer’s Union, Egyptian intellectuals found themselves isolated from their peers in the Arab world. The articulation of antinormalization sentiments served as a means of redressing political and artistic ostracism. In an expression of solidarity with the Palestinian cause, Egyptian intellectuals aligned themselves with their contemporaries in the Arab world by renouncing normalization of relations barring a full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories. The three special issues of *Ibdā’* were published shortly after the Oslo Accords (1993–95) and marked a turning point in the normalization debates. Authors and academics in the post-Oslo years increasingly tested the limits of antinormalization pressures.¹⁹ Starr identifies “Israeli Culture: The Propaganda of Normalization and the Dimensions of the Confrontation” as the “first collaborative public attempt in Egypt to examine and discuss Israeli cultural production.”²⁰ Though Egyptian scholars of Hebrew have historically maintained an air of detachment from the political debates surrounding normalization, the highly politicized title and timing of the special issues paints a more complicated picture of academic, political, and artistic entanglement.

With some notable exceptions from Israel-Palestine, Egyptian translators currently dominate the field of Hebrew-to-Arabic translation owing in part to the vibrant Hebrew Studies program at Ain Shams University in Cairo. Both Abud and Eltoukhy graduated from Ain Shams with the equivalent of a bachelor’s degree in Hebrew language and literature, Judaism, and Zionist

¹⁶ Nael Eltoukhy, “How Hebrew Teaches Us Something about Ourselves, Part 1,” trans. Dina Hussein, *Mada Masr*, August 13, 2015, <https://madasar.com/en/2015/08/13/opinion/u/how-hebrew-teaches-us-something-about-ourselves-part-1/>. Since his five-part series, Eltoukhy has published three op-eds related to Israeli political and sociocultural life in *Mada Masr*: “Eye-to-Eye: Palestinian Mizrahi Dialogue” (April 10, 2016), “So What Do I Do if I Do Meet an Israeli Abroad?” (September 14, 2016), and “We Just Feel It: On Jerusalem and the Power of Ideology” (January 31, 2018).

¹⁷ Deborah Starr, “Egyptian Representation of Israeli Culture: Normalizing Propaganda or Propagandizing Normalization?,” in *Review Essays on Israel Studies*, ed. Laura Zittrain and Neil Caplan (Albany: SUNY Press, 2000), 263–82. The issues of *Ibdā’* were devoted respectively to “Poetry and Fine Arts,” “The Novel and the Short Story,” and “Academic Studies and the Humanities, Arab Jews, the Theater and the Cinema” (264).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 265.

¹⁹ Starr (*ibid.*, 267) points to the case of Ali Salim, an Egyptian playwright who chronicled his drive to Israel in a 1994 travelogue titled *Rihla ila Isrā’īl* (Journey to Israel).

²⁰ Starr, “Egyptian Representation of Israeli Culture,” 265.

history. For this reason, my discussion of the modes of sociability, creative choices, and publishing practices characterizing contemporary Hebrew-to-Arabic literary translation centers largely on the Egyptian context and, more specifically, on the literary scene in Cairo.

In a series of articles, Mahmoud Kayyal offers a periodization of Hebrew-to-Arabic literary translation and situates an extensive body of translated works vis-à-vis the political, ideological, and cultural contexts in which they were produced and circulated.²¹ Kayyal suggests that Hebrew-to-Arabic translation has, by and large, functioned as an “antagonistic dialogue,” with literary texts serving as “documents reflecting the culture of the other.”²² Projecting into the future, he maintains that “in a state of violent national conflict, translation activity will produce translations whose purpose is ideological rather than literary.”²³ Kayyal catalogs Hebrew-to-Arabic translations according to critical moments in relations between Israel and the Arab world: the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, the 1978 Camp David Accords, the 1993 and 1995 Oslo Accords, and the First and Second Palestinian Intifadas. The only pre-1948 translation noted by Kayyal is Salim al-Dawudi’s 1899 translation of Avraham Mapu’s 1853 novel *Ahavat Tsiyon* (The love of Zion) under the Arabic title *Maḥabat Šihyūn*.²⁴ The 1967 Arab-Israeli War brought about a significant wave of translations in Egypt, many of which treated the literary text as a window onto the psyche of the Israeli “other.” Kayyal notes that many of these translations were poorly executed from a linguistic and stylistic standpoint. Individuals who worked in this vein generally regarded the act of translation not as a craft but as a mode of research intended to reinforce a particular political view of the Israeli subject.²⁵ Other translators did wish to maintain the literary integrity of the source text but lacked familiarity with Jewish and Israeli culture and thus, knowingly or inadvertently, produced translations peppered with expressions from classical Arabic literature or Qur’anic sources.²⁶

The year 1967 also saw an expansion of Hebrew departments in Egypt and a proliferation of master’s theses and doctoral dissertations.²⁷ Kayyal groups the post-1967 translators into two camps. Nasserist nationalists, Marxists, and Islamists have all rallied around the idea that Israeli literature is fundamentally racist and depicts Arabs in a way that legitimizes pro-Israel sentiment. Their translations tended to be polemical and the act of translation was more of an exposition than a literary endeavor. A case in point is Sayyid Suliman Aliyyan’s translation of Moshe Smilansky’s story “Goel ha-dam” (The avenger of blood). Aliyyan, a graduate of Ain Shams, accused Smilansky of “stressing in [his] story all his covert animosity in an artificial narrative

²¹ Mahmoud Kayyal, “Intercultural Relations between Arabs and Israeli Jews as Reflected in Arabic Translations of Modern Hebrew Literature,” *Target* 16, no. 1 (2004): 53–68; Mahmoud Kayyal, “A Hesitant Dialogue with ‘the Other’: The Interactions of Arab Intellectuals with the Israeli Culture,” *Israel Studies* 11, no. 2 (2006): 54–74; Mahmoud Kayyal, “Salim al-Dawudi and the Beginnings of Translation into Arabic of Modern Hebrew Literature,” *Target* 20, no. 1 (2008): 52–78.

²² Kayyal, “Intercultural Relations,” 53.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 59.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 66.

²⁷ Preeminent Hebrew departments can be found at Ain Shams University, Al-Azhar, and the University of Cairo, but departments and programs have also emerged at the universities of Tanta, Assiut, Helwan, and Mansoura. Kayyal (*ibid.*, 57) notes that over thirty master’s theses and doctoral dissertations on Hebrew literature were submitted at these institutions between the late sixties and late eighties.

form, and thereby revealing his ignorance of many customs of the Arabs and the Muslims.”²⁸ The second group consisted mostly of intellectuals who cared more for the aesthetic value of a translation and rejected the widely held belief that treating Israeli literature as a creative art was a doorway to “cultural invasion.”²⁹ Kayyal’s periodization ends with the start of the Second Intifada, and he closes his assessment with the conclusion that Hebrew-to-Arabic translation would continue as an “antagonistic dialogue.” My work fastens on contemporary Hebrew-to-Arabic translational transactions as a site of contestation, a zone of cultural negotiation where the whole premise of antagonism is being interrogated alongside the intractable binary between Arab and Jew. Though translators such as Abud and Eltoukhy are increasingly transgressive in their challenges to the normalization debates, certain lines are not to be crossed without professional repercussions.

In my 2012 conversation with Mohammed Abud, I learned that the translation of Hebrew literature in Cairo ebbed and flowed with the peaks and lulls of Palestinian uprising.³⁰ The Israeli Academic Center in Cairo, home to the largest library of Hebrew texts in the Middle East outside Israel, was established in 1982 under the auspices of the Israeli Academy of Sciences and Humanities. The center was designed as a space where Egyptian students could access Hebrew-language resources and attend lectures and film screenings. With the outbreak of the First Intifada in 1987, the Israeli Academic Center essentially halted all activities. During the late Sasson Somekh’s run as director (1996–98), the center saw a renewed flurry of activity. When I asked Abud about this activity, he confirmed that Somekh’s tenure corresponded more or less with a period of relative calm between the First and Second Intifadas. Moreover, he pointed to Somekh’s position as an Arab-Jewish intellectual as a determining factor in his success as director. Abud’s evaluation of this brief but significant period of improved relations with the Israeli Academic Center highlights both the affinity with Arab-Jewish authors and intellectuals and the repercussions of indiscreet ties to Israel during times of Palestinian uprising. With the beginning of the Second Intifada, any association with the Israeli Academic Center was deemed suspect, and individuals who ignored the interdiction faced threats and social ostracism.

One peculiar case does not fit the trends outlined by Kayyal, nor does it follow the tendencies of contemporary translators such as Abud and Eltoukhy. Eli Amir’s 2005 novel *Yasmīn* (Jasmine) was translated by the late Hussein Serag, deputy editor of *October* magazine, and published in 2007 under the auspices of the Ibn Laqmān publishing house and the Al-Ahram Foundation. Like Eltoukhy and Abud, Serag demonstrated a fascination with the figure of the Arab-Jew, which he expressed in his introduction: “The newness of this book is that its events revolve around a political backdrop, and within this [setting] Eli Amir prefers to return to the connection with his Arab-Jewish identity, or *ibn ‘arab*, as Nuri, the protagonist of the novel, says.”³¹ Serag hosted Amir at the Israeli Academic Center during Israel’s 2008 invasion of Gaza, and the ensuing scandal prompted a major backlash. Unlike Abud and Eltoukhy, neither of whom have visited Israel, Serag made frequent visits to Israel and cultivated close ties with the Israeli embassy in Cairo. Having tipped the scale too far in the direction of normalization, Serag was met with suspicion among the community of Hebrew-to-Arabic translators.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 63.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 59.

³⁰ Mohammed Abud, interview by Michal Raizen, March 22, 2012, Cairo.

³¹ Eli Amir, *Yasmīn*, trans. Hussein Serag (Cairo: Ibn Laqmān, 2007), 7–8. All transcriptions and translations from the Arabic and the Hebrew are my own unless otherwise noted.

AL-KOTOB KHAN: TOWARD A NEW MODEL OF PUBLICATION AND MARKETING

Eltoukhy's 2016 translation of *Tchahla ve-Hezkel* was released by the Cairo publishing house and bookstore Al-Kotob Khan. Founded by Karam Youssef in 2006, Al-Kotob Khan promotes avant-garde talent, holding literary salons and workshops for up-and-coming authors. Youssef, who studied mass media at Cairo University, left a fifteen-year career in marketing and technology to follow her dream of opening a bookstore with a community-building mission. In my 2018 conversation with Youssef, she stressed the importance of Al-Kotob Khan as a space where people could gather and exchange thoughts.³² The 2011 Egyptian Revolution essentially curtailed the release of new titles, but the press weathered the political upheaval by providing both a physical and an intellectual space for dialogue. With a branch in Wusṭ al-balad, Cairo's bustling city center and site of the revolution, Al-Kotob Khan has emerged as an important and well-respected player in the literary landscape of the city and region.

On average, the publishing house releases twenty-five to thirty titles per year. The year 2019 marked a major milestone for Al-Kotob Khan with the inclusion of Adel Esmat's *Al-waṣāya* (*The commandments*) on the long list for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction. Like all independent publishing houses, however, Al-Kotob Khan struggles to make a profit against the tide of lax copyright regulation, censorship, hurdles in distribution, and apathy among readers. A number of factors distinguish Al-Kotob Khan in an increasingly difficult market. Youssef takes great pride in collaborating with young authors and translators who not only bring visibility to the press through award-winning work but engage broader intellectual communities and reading publics. In a move that has been met with some resistance, Youssef employs professional editors to ensure quality and rigor. In an interview with Marcia Lynx Qualey, Youssef set out her vision for the publishing house and revealed her rootedness in humanist principles. "The bookshop," noted Youssef, "took as its role model the great libraries in human history. . . . We import a variety of books that carry Enlightenment values to the Arabic-language reader, and specifically to the Egyptian reader."³³ The publication and sale of books, while essential for the survival of Al-Kotob Khan, do not drive Youssef's vision. First and foremost, she aims to facilitate cultural dialogue and provide a venue for the expression of wide-ranging perspectives. Youssef's emphasis on the publishing house as a "safe space" extends to both exchange of ideas and stewardship of the printed book, as she conveyed to Lynx Qualey: "It was my wish that there would be a place to take care of books, where a book—that sentient being—can feel safe. . . . Kotob Khan has worked as a safe harbor for cultural groups, and we welcome the wide spectrum of the Egyptian literary scene."³⁴

In 2011, Youssef launched a translation series that quickly marked Al-Kotob Khan as a leading purveyor of translated texts in Egypt and the Arab world. Youssef's commitment to freedom of expression and intellectual exchange cannot be overstated, especially in the context of the 2011 revolution. Though the nascent translation series was shelved during the turbulent months following the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak's regime, the initiative was born of a moment in which the young publishing house was actively involved in consciousness-raising and community

³² Karam Youssef, interview by Michal Raizen, December 22, 2018, Cairo.

³³ Marcia Lynx Qualey, "The Small Cairo Bookshop That Grew to Be a Publishing Powerhouse," *The National*, January 17, 2019, <https://www.thenational.ae/arts-culture/books/the-small-cairo-bookshop-that-grew-to-be-a-publishing-powerhouse-1.814224>.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

building. A number of factors inform Youssef's decision to include a given text in the translation series. After ascertaining what she deems "the excellence" of a text, she establishes a collaborative rapport with translators whose approach strikes her as intellectually sound and forward-thinking. Social media play a pivotal role with regard to the breadth of a translator's social and professional networks and the "buzz" surrounding a particular project. Youssef explained to me that translators, in addition to bringing her samples of their work in progress, often mention the number of followers that they have on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. With her background in product management and technology, Youssef is internet savvy and does not eschew what she describes as the "American corporate model" but rather harnesses its potential in a way that speaks to an Arab readership.

Social media coverage of the Cairo and Abu Dhabi international book fairs is simultaneously intimate, with images of Youssef standing in front of the Kotob Khan booth alongside featured authors, and expansive, with images of the booth in a larger sea of booths. Authors, translators, publishers, and academics recognize themselves as part of an in-group marked by "likes," tagging, and the ubiquitous photograph of the book haul. The interplay between the digital and physical realms, between cyber-sociability and face-to-face interaction, is critical for understanding an emerging model of publication and marketing in the Arab world.

A typical first printing for the translation series at Al-Kotob Khan is one thousand copies. Youssef confirmed that the publishing house has sold approximately five hundred copies of *Tshahla wa-Hezkel* since its release in 2016. Most of the sales happen in Egypt, either at the brick-and-mortar store or at the Cairo International Book Fair, but the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair also accounts for a significant number of sales. Al-Kotob Khan has found creative and telling ways to circumvent the politics and economics of antinormalization sentiment. The public domain model of digital Hebrew-to-Arabic translation has oddly persisted in the realm of print. Though proceeds cover the cost of printing and showcasing, the translation and publication of *Tchahla ve-Hezkel* did not involve monetary exchange with Behar or with an Israeli institution but rather hinged on trust and goodwill between author, translator, and publishing house. When I broached the question of normalization, Youssef emphasized Behar's Iraqi origin as an antidote to the fear and suspicion surrounding his Israeli nationality: "We were lucky to publish him. The text is good. . . . I felt that we had an opportunity to reach out to the reader, to understand what interests the reader. . . . No need to go into the politics of it. [Behar] is an author of Iraqi origin, even if he lives in Palestine/Israel. . . . The text is good, and we put it out there." In a short press release for *Tshahla wa-Hezkel*, Youssef echoed this sentiment, identifying quality as the standard for publishing a text in translation and maintaining that normalization is a cliché.³⁵

Though Al-Kotob Khan has no immediate plans to publish another Hebrew work in translation, pictures on social media of the festival book haul, with *Tshahla wa-Hezkel* lodged among works by new Arab writers, point to a new mode of circulation and reception fueled by curiosity and trust in the translator and in the integrity of the press. *Tshahla wa-Hezkel* shares the bookshelf with Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Charles Simic's *A Fly in the Soup*, Walter Benjamin's *On Hashish*, Andrew Hartman's *A War for America's Soul*, Reiner Stach's *Kafka: The Decisive Years*, and Tariq Ali's *Conversations with Edward Said*. Youssef holds *Tshahla wa-Hezkel*

³⁵ Karam Youssef, "Al-tarjama 'an al-'arabiyya ḥasab al-jawda wa al-taṭbī'a aklāshihāt" [Translation into Hebrew is according to quality and normalization is a cliché], *Al-yawm al-sāb'*, October 1, 2019, <https://www.youm7.com/story/2016/1/23/2552524/صاحبة-دار-نشر-الترجمة-عن-العبرية-حسب-الجودة-والتنطبيع-أكلاشيهات>.

to the same rigorous standard as other books in the translation series. Behar's inclusion in the series marks an unusual moment in Hebrew-to-Arabic translation whereby the Hebrew language is no longer subsumed by Israeli nationality.

TRANSLATION AS RE-MEMBERING AND SELF-DISCOVERY: THE CASE OF TSHAḤLA WA-ḤEZKEL

Textured by Arab-Jewish liturgical poetry, fragments of Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic and Aramaic, *Tchahla ve-Hezekel* follows the trials and tribulations of a working-class Mizrahi couple in Jerusalem of the early 2000s. Behar's protagonist Ḥezkel (the Mizrahi iteration of Ezekiel) is an aspiring poet who seeks solace in the literary world. Eltokhy seems to draw his methodology directly from the novel's affective universe and unique linguistic admixture. Hezekel's coming into being as a poet is narrated through a sequence of interior monologues. He first encounters secular poetry when he attends a reading at the iconic Tmol Shilshom café in Jerusalem and is exposed to the works of Mizrahi poets Erez Biton and Haviva Pedaya. The generative moment, or poiesis so to speak, comes with the realization that language is not his only resource: "And Hezekel started to write bilingual poetry, in Hebrew and in Silence."³⁶ Through his linguistic and stylistic choices, Eltokhy probes and foregrounds the Silence in Hezekel's Hebrew, as he notes in his introduction: "Hezekel knows another life beyond the synagogue, and he tries to reconcile heaven and earth, internal and external, silence and speech. In parallel to the original text, the translation from Hebrew to Arabic is also a vague process of recollecting Arab history. Like the process undertaken by Hezekel, of remembering Baghdad and the Arabic language, the translator goes through the same process but in the opposite direction."³⁷ Is the translator re-membering, both in the sense of recollecting in his own right and in the sense of assembling the silent fragments of Hezekel's Arabic? Does Eltokhy's Arabic carry its own Silence? In translating the Arab-Jew, is the Arab translator enacting a reconstitution of collective memory by illuminating a minority history that has long been obscured by the cloak of taboo?³⁸

The annals of Arabic literary history are referenced in the novel with a flashback to a conversation between Hezekel and his father: "And he remembered his father saying, poetry is the genealogical book of the Arabs, *al-shi'r diwān al-'arab*. And he thought [to himself] that he ought to read [this historical record] if he is to write poetry."³⁹ Though his family left Iraq before he had learned the alphabet, Hezekel imagines that the very presence of his father's library has endowed him with a certain literary predisposition, a means of intuiting Arabic. From a linguistic and visual standpoint, this passage is unique in the sense that Behar first writes in Hebrew, "*ha-shira hi sefer ha-toladot shel ha-'aravim*" (poetry is the genealogical book of the Arabs), then includes a Hebrew transliteration of *al-shi'r diwān al-'arab* (poetry is the register of the Arabs), followed by a folk song in Arabic script with no Hebrew translation. Though Hezekel has no memory of Arabic, he sees the folk song in his mind's eye: "And [Hezekel] remembered and the Arabic letters

³⁶ Behar, *Tchahla ve-Hezekel*, 46.

³⁷ Behar, *Tshahla wa-Ḥezkel*, trans. Eltokhy, 7.

³⁸ The process of recuperative translation appears to coincide with a cultural shift. Since the dispersion of Egypt's Jews in the 1950s, public discourse has largely conflated Jewish and Zionist or Israeli. In recent years, Egypt has seen a spate of films and miniseries on the Jews of Egypt. The Sisi regime is investing money in the preservation of Jewish heritage and disseminating propaganda along those lines. In other words, there is a very public and melancholic conversation about what was lost with the dispersion of Egypt's Jewish minority.

³⁹ Behar, *Tchahla ve-Hezekel*, 243.

filled his mind.”⁴⁰ As he reflects on his father’s mention of *diwān al-‘arab*, Hezkel thinks that he ought to read more Arabic if he is to become a Hebrew poet. In his translation, Eltokhy glosses the passage and writes: “The lyrics of the song in this passage are originally in Hebrew [but] are written in Arabic letters, not in Hebrew letters, as the author does in other passages where he uses Arabic.”⁴¹ To the monolingual reader of Hebrew, the original text presents some challenges. The Arabic reader might experience a sense of disorientation but for different reasons as outlined by Eltokhy in his introduction. Some passages, he notes, require “expository translation” as a means of orienting the Arab reader in a linguistic and cultural stratum of Arab-Jewish experience, both historical and contemporary.⁴² Not only does Eltokhy differentiate between Biblical or Talmudic Hebrew and the secular spoken Hebrew of Jerusalem in the early 2000s, but following Behar’s lead, he marks the speech of Mizraḥi characters to highlight differences in pronunciation. For Biblical Hebrew, Eltokhy relied heavily on an Arabic translation of the Hebrew Bible that came out of Beirut. For Talmudic language or *piyyutim* (liturgical poetry), he relied on his intuition and training as well as the shared trilateral root system between Hebrew and Arabic. Word choices often grew out of a commitment to maintaining the rhythm of the original text and shifting to the appropriate register in accordance with Behar’s choices. In some instances, Eltokhy came up with what I would characterize as Semitic neologisms. For example, he created an Arabicized version of the Hebrew *beit ha-kneset* (synagogue). Instead of using the Arabic word *al-kanīs* (synagogue) or the more generic *ma’bad* (house of worship), he created the compound noun *beit hakinīsit*. The Arabic reader could easily gloss over such instances with only a vague sense that there is something “not fully Arabic” about the translator’s Arabic. Eltokhy talked at length with Behar about how to translate Yerushalayim (Jerusalem), and he settled on Awrshalīm for Jewish religious contexts, Al-Quds for secular daily contexts, and Awrshalim al-Quds for situations that required a double meaning.⁴³ As previously mentioned, Eltokhy took his cue from the poetic universe created by Behar, not only in *Tchahla ve-Hezkel* but already in “Ana min al-Yahūd.” At times dystopic, at times prophetic, the dizzying world of Behar’s protagonist gets refigured in translation. Eltokhy takes one of the central themes of these works—the haunting of the Arab-Jew by the Arabic language and its concomitant history—and turns it to face the Arab reader as the ghost of an Arab-Jewish past.

THE ARAB-JEW AND THE “ARAB EXILE BODY”: THE FUTURE OF HEBREW-ARABIC TRANSLATIONAL COMMUNITIES

In a sense, Eltokhy’s translation of *Tchahla ve-Hezkel* is rewriting the Arab-Jew into Arab history, and Behar’s heartfelt description of a textual homecoming mirrors Eltokhy’s vision of translation as a mode of self-discovery. This bidirectional process is reflected in the parallel between the title of Behar’s 2017 article and Eltokhy’s 2015 op-eds: “We Can’t Understand Ourselves without the Arabic” and “How Hebrew Teaches Us Something about Ourselves,” respectively. In his

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Behar, *Tshahla wa-Hezkel*, trans. Eltokhy, 354.

⁴² Ibid., 9.

⁴³ Eltokhy’s choices demonstrate a nuanced interpretation of the political and ideological valences of each term. Al-Quds is used by the majority of Arabic speakers and suggests an understanding of Jerusalem as a Palestinian city. Awrshalīm is not used in Arabic parlance, but Eltokhy chose the name to denote a Jewish religious context. Awrshalim al-Quds acknowledges the divergent vantage points from which different groups perceive and name the city.

introduction to *Tshahla wa-Hezkel*, Eltokhy describes the translation of Behar's work as a "vague process of recollecting Arab history."⁴⁴ If translation functions as a "fluid cultural currency," to reiterate one of the central considerations of the *Dibur* special issue "Translational Transactions," could the "vague process" to which Eltokhy alludes eventually lead to a concerted effort among authors, translators, and publishing houses to "re-member" or piece back together an Arab-Jewish literary presence in the twenty-first century? Might Behar's formulation of "not just translation, but in a deep sense [return]" find expression in the emergence of Arab translational communities with Arab-Jewish participation?

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring, a nascent literary collective is taking shape with the ever-increasing concentration of Arab diasporas in the European metropole. A number of prominent authors and translators have sought asylum in Europe, and their work increasingly responds to the condition of exile and to the relationship of the exiled writer to his or her host country. Berlin, as a case in point, is home to a burgeoning community of refugees and exiles from Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt. Egyptian sociologist Amro Ali has dubbed this collective the "Arab exile body" and characterized Berlin as an "exile capital with enormous potential to be a meaningful political laboratory."⁴⁵ Ali points to "poiesis and praxis" as mainstays of a new modality of cultural exchange that places the Arab exile body in conversation with other exiled communities. Among these other exiled communities is a group of self-identifying Arab-Jewish authors and artists who left Israel for political reasons and are making a concerted effort to forge creative ties with their Arab peers in the city. Berlin constitutes for Arab-Jewish authors a new horizon of poiesis and praxis, one in which translation is part and parcel of community formation. The Israeli poet Mati Shemoelof is one of the most active proponents of Berlin as a hub for an emergent Middle Eastern literary tradition in exile. He regularly hosts evening soirees that include poetry readings in Hebrew, Arabic, and German and has recently launched a forum called "Jews and Arabs Writing in Berlin" with the explicit goal of reviving a "lost dialogue through literature and art."⁴⁶ Shemoelof identifies strongly with other exiled communities in Berlin and envisions his Arab-Jewish community in the city as an Israeli diaspora. Eltokhy, whose writing residency in Berlin allowed him to cross paths with Shemoelof, identifies with the condition of exile from more than one standpoint. As an Egyptian intellectual, the city represents for him a refuge in a political climate wherein a repressive Egyptian regime regularly targets artists, authors, and journalists. The role of translator, as he states explicitly in his introduction to *Tshahla wa-Hezkel*, has allowed him to step into the Arab-Jewish experience of moving from exile to exile.⁴⁷ In a short piece titled "Speaking Hebrew with My Egyptian Translator over Coffee in Berlin," Shemoelof describes a heart-to-heart with Eltokhy after a decade of separation. Referencing "Ruh Jedida" and Eltokhy's Arabic translation of the open letter, Shemoelof folds his own experience of disillusionment with the 2011 social protests in Israel into Eltokhy's disillusionment with the Arab Spring.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Ibid., 7.

⁴⁵ Amro Ali, "On the Need to Shape the Arab Exile Body in Berlin," *Alsharq*, January 23, 2019, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/on-need-to-shape-arab-exile-body-in-berlin/>.

⁴⁶ Mati Shemoelof, "Creating Our Own Alternative Arab-Jewish History in Berlin," +61J Media: Israel, Australia and the Jewish World, December 11, 2018, <http://plus61j.net.au/plus61j-voices/creating-alternative-arab-jewish-history-berlin/>.

⁴⁷ Behar, *Tshahla wa-Hezkel*, trans. Eltokhy, 5.

⁴⁸ Mati Shemoelof, "Ruh Jedida: A New Spirit for 2011," trans. Chana Morgenstern, April 11, 2011, <https://arabjews.wordpress.com/2011/04/11/2011-רוח-גדידיה-רוח-חדשה-2011/>; Mati Shemoelof, "Speaking Hebrew

Though the relationship of the Arab-Jew to the Arab exile body is inchoate, the European metropole is emerging as a “[metonym] of World,” to reiterate Emily Apter’s formulation. Cairo is a vibrant center for translation as praxis and home to a critical concentration of publishing houses and literary salons. Cairo is also a cultural signifier, a nexus of memory, and a horizon of creative possibility along which authors and translators pause to consider their craft and community. To recapitulate Behar’s sentiments in “We Can’t Understand Ourselves without the Arabic,” Cairo is the locus of desire around which the process of translation has fulfilled his dream of “[being] an Arab writer.” Arab-Jewish authors write to and through Cairo, but geopolitical realities prevent them from fully participating in the intellectual dynamism of the city and its reading publics. Egyptian translators such as Abud and Eltoukhy write to and through Jerusalem, but antinormalization pressures have prevented them from meeting face-to-face with their Arab-Jewish and Palestinian peers. The European metropole has indeed become a metonym for a world inhabited by exiles, and the unbordered language world of the city is expansive and ever changing to accommodate new moments of creative crossing.

In a eulogy titled “The Last Iraqi Jew” for the late Arab-Jewish author Shimon Ballas, Lebanese author Elias Khoury offers a melancholic reflection on a literary event held in Beirut in 1998.⁴⁹ Ballas was invited, but because of his Israeli citizenship, he was prohibited from entering Lebanon. Without the current-day technologies that would have allowed Ballas to join the conversation in real time, the group read his contribution and lamented his absence, which was marked visually by the presence of an empty chair. In a powerful acknowledgment of Ballas’s seminal role in the emergence of Hebrew-Arabic translational communities, Khoury writes, “He opened the doors of our culture to welcome its Arab-Jewish children.” Though it is premature to identify translation as the site of a broad cultural shift involving the return of Arab-Jewish voices to the realm of Arabic literature, current Hebrew-to-Arabic translation practices are shifting the grounds of the conversation from absence to presence. Innovative approaches to marketing and publication, digital opportunity, and emerging possibilities for collaboration in exile capitals across Europe are lending visibility to the recuperation of Arab-Jewish literary memory as a generative moment. A

with My Egyptian Translator over Coffee in Berlin,” +61J Media: Israel, Australia and the Jewish World, April 5, 2019, <https://plus61j.net.au/plus61j-voices/speaking-hebrew-egyptian-translator-coffee-berlin/>. Shemoelof writes in “Speaking Hebrew”: “We come from the same place that had so many conflicts and corrupt governments. Once we were part of a movement called the Arab Spring, even though they seemed disconnected from each other. We had hope, we believed in change. Now we meet in Berlin with no secrets or controls on us because both movements are dead.”

⁴⁹ Elias Khoury, “Al-Yahūdi al-‘irāqi al-akhīr” [The last Iraqi Jew], *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, October 7, 2019, https://www.alquds.co.uk/اليهودي-العراقي-الأخير/?fbclid=IwAR22HXnQASQ5KKNZWnfHv_1bjA6MPaUWUn1JAhl8Am6LZzxhNNhKpFRCnV20Y. Ballas passed away on September 29, 2019.