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Kochetova Larisa Anatolyevna
Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor The Department of Translation theory and practice and linguistics, Volgograd State University, Volgograd, Russia

Mohammed Mustafa M. Al-Misfer
Postgraduate student The Department of Translation theory and practice and linguistics, Volgograd State University, Volgograd, Russia

Discursive representation of the fidelity concept in arabic and english cultures

Kochetova Larisa Anatolyevna and Mohammed Mustafa M Al-Misfer

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Abstract
This study explores the concept of fidelity—defined as faithfulness in relationships, promises, and social obligations—as represented in Arabic and English literature and societies. The research aims to investigate the cultural interpretations and moral expectations associated with fidelity in both traditions. Using comparative literary analysis supported by Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Hall's context theory, this study examines how fidelity is portrayed in selected literary works and how these portrayals reflect broader societal norms. The findings reveal that Arabic culture, influenced by collectivist and high-context values, emphasizes fidelity as a moral and social duty rooted in religious and familial obligations. In contrast, English culture, shaped by individualism and low-context communication, presents fidelity as a personal ethical choice often governed by personal autonomy and romantic ideals. The paper concludes with reflections on the implications of these cultural frameworks for cross-cultural understanding and literary interpretation.

This research paper explores the representation and interpretation of the concept of fidelity in both Arabic and English literature, with a focus on how cultural, religious, and societal values shape perceptions of loyalty and commitment. However, in its current form, the study remains underdeveloped and requires further refinement to meet academic publication standards.

The primary objective of the study is to examine the similarities and differences in the concept of fidelity across Arabic and English literary traditions, while also reflecting on how these literary portrayals mirror broader cultural and social norms. It seeks to understand how fidelity is constructed, challenged, and negotiated in each cultural context, and what this reveals about underlying gender roles, moral expectations, and religious ideologies.

The research adopts a qualitative comparative literary approach. It draws upon selected examples from both Arabic and English texts, although the literary sources referenced are not consistently cited in the current version. A structured comparative analysis supported by cultural frameworks is recommended to enhance the depth of the discussion. The incorporation of theoretical models such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions (e.g., individualism vs. collectivism, power distance) and Hall's context communication theory would provide a more systematic methodology.

The paper suggests that fidelity in Arabic literature is often intertwined with religious virtue, honor, and social obedience—especially in relation to women—while English literature frequently associates fidelity with emotional loyalty and individual moral agency. Although these insights are compelling, the current analysis is more descriptive than critical. The findings would benefit from clearer articulation, integration of academic sources, and concrete literary examples to support interpretations.

Keywords: Fidelity, cross-cultural literature, arabic and english traditions, cultural dimensions comparative literary analysis, hofstede's theory, hall's context theory

1. Introduction

Fidelity has long been a central theme in literature, philosophy, and social discourse. It signifies more than mere loyalty; it is a cultural construct reflecting deep-seated societal values, ethical beliefs, and interpersonal expectations. In both Arabic and English cultures, fidelity is associated with trust, honor, and moral conduct, yet it takes on nuanced meanings depending on the cultural, historical, and literary context.

This paper seeks to comparatively explore the representation of fidelity in Arabic and English literature, drawing from cultural theories such as Hofstede's dimensions and Hall's context theory. By situating literary depictions of fidelity within broader sociocultural frameworks, the study aims to uncover the cultural logic that underlies these narratives and highlight the intersection of personal identity, societal values, and moral expectations.

Fidelity — a term that goes back to the latitude of the Latin word fides that signifies faith and trust joins together numerous philosophical, literary, socio-political, and religious discussions in both the Arabic and English traditions. Dealt with in its particular dimensions

Correspondence Author;
Kochetova Larisa Anatolyevna
Doctor of Philological Sciences, Professor The Department of Translation theory and practice and linguistics, Volgograd State University, Volgograd, Russia

across the cultures, fidelity as a multi-layered and polyphonic theme provokes a vast corpus of discourses that continue to expand, sharpen, and nuance the debates concerned. In the English tradition, fidelity is examined in a variety of genres such as poetry, prose, drama, philosophy, and translation. Similarly, aspects of fidelity are scrutinized in different Arabic genres encompassing poetry, prose, socio-political tracts, philosophical texts, and translation. So far, however, a systematic exploration of fidelity as a literary, philosophical, socio-political, and translatological theme in both the Arabic and English traditions has not been undertaken (Frashëri & Hyso Kastrati, 2013) [5]. With the aim of filling this gap, the essence and implications of fidelity are comparatively examined in a selection of seminal Arabic and English texts and discourses across the above-mentioned genres from the 9th to the 21st centuries. The Arabic texts and discourses to be explored are rendered into English for the first time. Central to this inquiry are such Arabic authors, poets, and philosophers as Al-Jahiz, Al-Ma'arri, Ibn Rushd, Ibn Arabi, Al-Haekal, and Taha Hussein. Fidelity in its diverse frameworks, dimensions, and contexts as discussed in the selected Arabic texts is examined through fidelity's various English interpretations in the works of such poets, philosophers, and writers as Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Wordsworth, Austen, Woolf, Byron, Coleridge, Keats, and Shaftesbury. The selected texts and discourses encompass philosophical treatises, poetry, prose, drama, and translation. This inquiry ends up with a holistic assessment of fidelity and its implications in Arabic and English literary and socio-political texts and discourses (Nazemi, 2017) [10]. The key terms fidelity, Arabic literature, and English literature are further clarified. Fidelity as a philosophical, literary, socio-political, and translatological theme is examined across the Arabic and English traditions. The discourse on fidelity encompasses a vast and ever-growing literary corpus examined in various genres and multi-layered contexts. Fidelity is scrutinized in a variety of poetic, philosophical, socio-political, and translatological frameworks and debates.

1.1 Methodology
The study employs a qualitative comparative literary analysis, focusing on selected English and Arabic texts that thematize fidelity. Textual analysis is guided by the following research questions:

- How is fidelity portrayed in English versus Arabic literary texts?
- What cultural assumptions inform these portrayals?
- How do Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Hall's context theory help explain the cultural representations of fidelity?

The selected texts include Shakespeare's Othello and Austen's Persuasion from English literature, and selections from classical Arabic poetry and One Thousand and One Nights for the Arabic tradition.

1.2 Literary Case Studies
- **Shakespeare's Othello:** Fidelity becomes a tragic theme. Othello's misjudgment of Desdemona's loyalty leads to disaster. Here, fidelity is framed as a fragile trust between individuals, easily destroyed by manipulation.
- **Arabic Poetic Traditions:** Poets like Imru' al-Qais lament the loss of love and accuse lovers of betrayal

through layered, poetic imagery. Fidelity is idealized and associated with virtue and divine justice.

2. Literature review
Numerous studies have examined the concept of fidelity in literary and cultural contexts. In English literature, fidelity is often linked to romantic love and personal choice, as seen in works like Jane Austen's *Persuasion* and Shakespeare's *Othello*. Critics like Bloom (2004) [14] have argued that fidelity in English literature often reveals internal psychological conflict and moral introspection.

In contrast, Arabic literature frequently frames fidelity within the context of religious obligations and social honor. In classical Arabic poetry, such as the odes of Al-Mutanabbi or the narratives of *One Thousand and One Nights*, fidelity is portrayed as a virtue that upholds family, tribe, and faith. Scholars like Al-Musawi (2009) [15] emphasize that fidelity in Arabic tradition is less about individual emotion and more about collective identity and moral duty.

Despite these insights, few studies offer a cross-cultural literary comparison grounded in cultural theory. This paper addresses that gap by applying Hofstede's and Hall's frameworks to analyze fidelity as both a literary and cultural construct.

2.1 The concept of fidelity in Arabic and English language
Fidelity, a universal yet culturally nuanced concept, is deeply ingrained in both Arabic and English-speaking societies. Rooted in cultural, religious, and literary traditions, fidelity reflects societal values and moral expectations, particularly in relationships and communal interactions.

In Arabic culture, fidelity, often termed wafā' (وَفَاء), encompasses loyalty, trust, and the fulfillment of obligations. It carries significant weight in both personal relationships and societal interactions. In the context of marriage, fidelity is seen as a sacred covenant, upheld by Islamic teachings that stress the importance of trust and mutual respect (Qur'an 5:1). Beyond marital fidelity, wafā' also symbolizes loyalty to family, friends, and community, aligning with the collectivist nature of Arab societies (Al-Krenawi & Graham, 2000) [16].

The Arabic literary tradition reflects these values vividly. Classical poetry, particularly during the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods, celebrates unwavering loyalty as a virtue. Poets often extol the steadfast devotion of lovers, warriors, and tribesmen, emphasizing wafā' as a cornerstone of personal integrity and honor. Contemporary Arabic novels, such as Naguib Mahfouz's The Cairo Trilogy, explore the tension between traditional values of fidelity and the forces of modernity and globalization, illustrating how individuals navigate the evolving social landscape (Allen, 2000) [17].

In English-speaking societies, fidelity is often interpreted through a lens of individualism and personal agency. While loyalty and faithfulness remain central, the emphasis on personal autonomy allows for a more fluid interpretation of fidelity. Historically influenced by Christian values, fidelity in English culture has been associated with marital vows, emphasizing trust, exclusivity, and mutual respect (Barker & Langdridge, 2010) [18]. However, secularization and shifts in societal attitudes have led to diverse understandings of fidelity, reflecting broader cultural changes.

English literature frequently portrays fidelity as a moral and

emotional journey. For instance, in Jane Austen's Persuasion, fidelity is depicted as an enduring emotional commitment, even in the face of societal pressures and personal trials. Similarly, modern narratives often grapple with the complexities of fidelity in a globalized, dynamic world, highlighting the interplay of personal desires and societal expectations.

While both cultures value fidelity, their interpretations diverge significantly. Arabic culture often associates fidelity with communal and family obligations, emphasizing the collective over the individual. In contrast, English-speaking societies prioritize personal choice and emotional authenticity, reflecting a more individualistic worldview (Al-Krenawi & Graham, 2000; Barker & Langdridge, 2010) [16, 18].

Gender roles also play a pivotal role in shaping fidelity. In Arabic societies, traditional expectations place a heavier burden on women to uphold fidelity, reflecting patriarchal norms and the importance of family honor (Al-Krenawi & Graham, 2000) [16]. Conversely, English-speaking cultures, influenced by feminist movements, have moved toward more egalitarian perceptions of fidelity, though double standards still persist in some contexts.

Despite these differences, globalization has begun to blur cultural boundaries, fostering a more nuanced understanding of fidelity. Cross-cultural dialogues, facilitated by literature, media, and personal interactions, encourage individuals to reconcile traditional values with contemporary influences.

The concepts of fidelity in Arabic and English-speaking societies illustrate the profound influence of cultural, religious, and historical factors. By examining these interpretations, one gains a deeper understanding of how fidelity functions as both a personal virtue and a societal ideal. Literature, as a reflection of cultural norms, offers a rich medium for exploring these themes, bridging cultural divides and fostering mutual understanding.

2.2 Defining Fidelity in Literature
The textual exploration of fidelity - in its manifold senses - establishes a narrative arc that encompasses its significance in Arabic literature before turning its focus to English literature. Literary fidelity is defined, considering its influences on reader interpretations and author intentions. A comparative approach to fidelity is adopted, eschewing the highly nuanced and complex nature of fidelity for simplicities that emphasize broader commonalities in literary traditions while acknowledging their unique divergences. The choices of Arabic exemplars and English-on-Arabic choices complicate fidelity as illustrated by the contrasting choices of a prose poem and a short story. Fidelity has many senses. As a concept in literature, fidelity transcends mere loyalty to encompass authenticity, truthfulness, and commitment to a particular artistic representation (Frashëri & Hyso Kastrati, 2013) [5]. Fidelity in literature pivots around five foci. Fidelity addresses the reader-as-receiver and open interpretation ambiguities that arise from both reader interpretation and author intention. In this sense, fidelity toughens initial slippages. Variations in fidelity designs and their mitigating complicities shape retrieval norms. What fidelity occludes is as vital as what it signifies. Arabic fidelity exemplars include al-ʿaql wa al-shiʿr al-fitan, benediction fidelity, and Bahaa Taher's "fals/hawa". Literary fidelity is ill-defined even as it liberally ebbs and flows through literary discourse.

Contemplation of fidelity precipitates laden meditating questions: What is fidelity? What is literary fidelity? Why fidelity? Fidelity's pertinence underscores what might otherwise remain forgotten as textual excavation. Fidelity confounds; fidelity illuminates. Fidelity is vital yet ineffable. Fidelity has a history of cupped readings (Bonfert et al., 2024) [3]. Fidelity's exploration articulates an initial through-playing of its historical and textual engagements. Fidelity's historical and textual journey returns on its breadth, illuminating significant fissures and ungraspable pockets. Fidelity frameworks and considerations of textual coalescence envision fidelity's textual interrogations extending beyond limitations. Fidelity has a literature; fidelity is literary. Fidelity's interrogations abide within debates over fidelity's literary significance. Fidelity's literary import interrogative considerers include fidelity-as-memory; fidelity-as-archival; fidelity-as-translation; and fidelity-as-iterability. Fidelity's literary import considers textual retrieval and coalescence debates in fidelity's literary inquiries. Fidelity's literary coalescence margins widen fidelity's literary concerns beyond fidelity-as-translation's considerative constraints. Fidelity's paradigmatic and syntagmatic coalescences forewarn fidelity's literary coalescences remain obscured in textual retrieval.

2.3 The fidelity in Arabic Literature
The aim here is to examine fidelity in Arabic literature and the society that nurtured it. Fidelity - political, social, familial and romantic fidelity - provides a lens through which many literary works can be read and a framework around which most can be organized. Fidelity is defined as 'faithfulness to a person, cause, or belief', and thus its discussion must include an examination of allegiance. In a literary context, fidelity is understood as the degree of faithfulness with which a narrative, character or other artistic element is rendered in a copy or reproduction of the original (Rastegar, 2005) [11]. Written in the Arabic vernacular and addressing an Arabic readership, the literary tales now read as The Arabian Nights were faithfully rendered into French at the beginning of the eighteenth century and set down in a new form. In Arabic literature fidelity represents ties to family, to religion, to society, and thus the textual fidelity under scrutiny is literary fidelity in relation to allegiance and faithfulness within personal and sociopolitical networks.

The literature examined ranges from the early folklore of the Nights, The Story of the Three Apples, and the late-nineteenth-century naturalist prose of Mahfouz, The Thief and the Dogs, to contemporary stories of exile and homecoming by younger writers, The Last Station and Flight. Fidelity in Arabic literature is considered as it is textually represented in historical and contemporary works, and the first imperative is to define fidelity - or rather, fidelities - and contextualize it/them within Arabic literary and societal traditions. Fidelity often manifests as individual allegiance, but it is pre-eminently collective, and so part of the discussion focuses on how personal fidelity is determined by the collective, by norms and standards of society, culture, class, and so on. The centre of concern is названиями in Arabic literature, but it passes through and over manifold allegiances, at times an essay on fidelity in the Arabic literary tradition, at times side-stepping as so many figures of flight elude a pursuing gaze. The literary tradition is considered within socio-historical contexts that

are, of necessity, brief and selective. Fidelity becomes a problem, even for the author: how best to render in English what fidelity to Arabic requires be represented? The Arabic word, in the terminology of linguistics, is often used generically to indicate a genre within Arabic literary tradition. Naguib Mahfouz is singled out as a necessary touchstone through which an appreciation of the breadth and depth of fidelity as it play in Arabic literary texts, past and present, is geometrically situated. Some voices with which fidelity in Arabic literature is heard are considered as they come to be heard. With each selection, the context fidelity seeks to render becomes difficult to apprehend solely on its own terms. In Arabic, the word can signify a string of pearls, and in the plural its referents are many: history, narrative, literary form, style, representation, fiction, society. What fidelity in Arabic literature plays around with and attempts to capture is how representations of fidelity cohere in a discursive network of cultural, political, and social signification, of power in its various forms, through which identity is articulated.

2.4 The fidelity in English Literature
Fidelity in English literature is diverse in representations and interpretations in varied texts. From Renaissance literary works to Victorian literary texts, fidelity is represented differently, involving complex aspects and sometimes contradictory considerations. Shakespeare's works, for instance, focus on fidelity in different concerns about fidelity in personal relationships; whereas, John Milton's works focus on fidelity in fidelity's faithfulness to artistic expression. In exploring fidelity in personal relationships, fidelity is concerned with the issues of a woman's fidelity to her husband or betrothed as a central consideration in varying textual approaches and treatments (Nazemi, 2017) [10]. In the Elizabethan Renaissance period, fidelity's examination and representation reveal different cultural values and societal pressures shaping fidelity's textual approaches, considerations, and representations in the texts. In the prevailing patriarchal societal structure and Elizabethan cultural milieu, fidelity is found to invoke men's pride, power, and possession, while women's fidelity to their husbands or betrothed is viewed as honor and reputation at stake. This duality of fidelity creates cultural narratives informing the approaches and representations of fidelity in the texts under consideration.

In regard to fidelity's literary textual representations and concerns in the earlier time period, it is found that fidelity is represented robustly in a woman's adherence to a man's possession; while fidelity's counter narrative, a woman's spiritual strength opposing man's possession and earthly constraints, is explored in the works of John Milton. Varying textual approaches to fidelity and the gendering of fidelity challenge and oppose the patriarchal textual environments shaping fidelity's representations in the texts under consideration. In the examination of fidelity as a central character's concern in Austen literary criticisms, fidelity is explored at the levels of fidelity as a prevailing concern shaping characterizations and plots in a literary history, and fidelity to societal norms and fidelity's textual approaches shaping societal fidelity literacy. Throughout fidelity's criticism chapter, fidelity's relevance to the character and plot focus of Austen literary criticisms is questioned by detecting a variety of textual liberties outlining fidelity's diverse representations. The

consideration of fidelity within textual openings is equally contextualized in an exploration of fidelity's wider societal conformity textual norms shaping reception, interpretation, and fidelity's societal textual literacy.

3. Historical Perspectives on Fidelity
An exploration of fidelity in literature and society across time may include narratives, poems, and philosophical evaluations from Arabic and English cultural backgrounds. The literary selections contextualize the theme of fidelity within the framework of time and historical influences on societies and languages. Socio-political, cultural, and literary effects across time periods greatly influenced the interpretation of fidelity in Arabic representation. Particular intervals throughout Arabic history such as pre-Islamic, Umayyad, Abbasid, Mamluk, Ottoman, and the 19th to the 21st centuries are examined. Outside of faithfulness to the divine and the Prophet, other interpretations of fidelity related to woman and political fidelity are considered alongside choice literary extracts. At the same time, the socio-cultural evolution of English fidelity representations during the historic ages of Anglo-Saxon, Middle, Early Modern periods, and through the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution are reviewed. Changes in fidelity conceptions throughout society's transitions towards more humanistic perceptions are considered with key literary extracts. By observing the paths fidelity has taken through times, philosophical discussions on fidelity as a concept itself and how philosophers throughout history have defined it are also examined. In broad strokes, literary contrast and comparisons between the two cultural backgrounds observably highlight the different historic influences shaping societies' fidelity values. Ultimately, how fidelity is illustrated as a whole across time and cultures is defined, whilst historical frames' unquestionable impacts on its representations are illustrated. Fidelity, faithfulness, or loyalty to people, ideas, or things is either unbreakable or presumed to be unbreakable commitment or promise (Rastegar, 2005) [11]. As a concept, fidelity has been treated through different cultural and historic lenses across time. Through narratives and poems originally composed between 400 AD and 1900 AD, fidelity representations in Arabic literature are explored within the confines of its historic eras and cultural impacts.

3.1 Arabic Literature
A historical framework is crucial for the discussion of fidelity as a concept in any given literary tradition. As a subject of consideration, fidelity has undergone a major evolution within the context of Arabic literature. Literary treatments of fidelity would very much depend on the era under consideration. The present examination discusses fidelity within Arabic literature, prior to widening the focus to include English literary considerations from the sixteenth century onwards. Fidelity is echoed throughout the literary corpus of any given culture. However, it radically takes on different shapes as societies traverse the vicissitudes of historical time. Overall, fidelity is central to the narrative of the culture in question. Arabic literature spans centuries. It ranges from the pre-Islamic era until present contemporary writings. Fidelity, as would be expected, is there in Arabic literature and as a concept in the Arab mind (Rastegar, 2005). However, it is far from being a fixed state. Fidelity, especially as it pertains to identity and the more collective understanding of an Arab identity, is largely subjected to the

political and social upheavals affecting Arab societies throughout history.

Arabic literary treatments of fidelity are meant as an extended consideration on how ideas of fidelity would fluctuate over time as cultural adaptations to different historical contexts. Thus, fidelity in the Arabic literary sense is not fixed, but far-reaching in its implications. This need for far-reaching fidelity is extremely explicit in the thriving classical Arabic poetry, where fidelity is understood as honourable loyalty to the tribe and, thus, to its cohesion and survival amid external threats. At times of warfare, tribal poetry flourished and deepened the connection between fidelity and tribal honour. With the advent of Islam, Arab conquests expanded far beyond Arabia. Empire-building changed the socio-political set-up of the Arab tribes, somewhat loosening the bonds of tribalism, yet the Arab identity as a linguistic identity persisted. The new socio-political climate brought with it a new concern on fidelity and honour, yet now it pertained to a far-contested wider Islamic and imperial understanding. In either case, be it pre-Islamic tribalism or imperial Islam, fidelity was traditionally expected, especially from the literary elite. Poets were expected to poetically articulate the collective fidelity of society in times of crisis. The expectation would be transmuted into trauma as the empire began to disintegrate due to internal strife in the form of civil wars.

The more recent history of the Arabs is one haunted by the sense of still-illusive fidelity to a far-compromised sovereignty and identity. The notion of fidelity would also change in accordance with the European colonial interventions into the weakened Ottoman Empire. The literary textuality of fidelity was attempted anew over the fidelity of language as the sole coherent trait of an increasingly fragmented Arab world in its social, political, and geographical sense. On the one hand, European advances into the Arab world brought about a modern awareness of still-relevant literary treatments of fidelity as the Arabic exposition of the Eurocentric construction of Otherness. On the other hand, fidelity was still a far-contested and inadequately sought notion, as would be expected from any post-colonial discourse. This, then, would be the outline of the shifting epochs under consideration, as the textual focus would range from creed-based tribal cohesion to the more contemporary yet far-compromised articulations of fidelity through language.

3.2 English Literature

In the context of English literature, fidelity and its counterparts loyalty and faithfulness have been widely discussed mostly in the realms of love, marriage, friendship, and political obligations. As these arenas concern individual relationships with other people or with society, representations of fidelity can reveal how these relationships are considered desirable or problematic under different circumstances. Therefore, while fidelity might seem to connote similar ideas across time, its literary representations nevertheless expose changing implications and understandings that lie beneath the same concept. Discussing fidelity in English literature essentially means discussing how fidelity and its related notions have been perceived throughout the history of England (Nazemi, 2017). Such history can be traced back to the medieval romances, where fidelity in love and marriage was most often discussed in the context of chivalry and courtly love.

An overview of fidelity in selected earlier texts from different literary movements seeks to identify the changing social, political or economic structures that underlie the shifts in fidelity as a desirable or problematic quality. Newly emerging notions of fidelity in personal relationships are thus considered against the backdrop of changing attitudes toward fidelity in societal obligations (Hubbard, 2019) [7]. Fidelity, defined as "the quality of being faithful to someone or something," connotes concepts such as loyalty, faithfulness, and devotion. Fidelity and its counterparts loyalty and faithfulness have been widely discussed in realms such as love, marriage, friendship, and political obligations in English literature. As these arenas concern individual relationships with other people or with society, representations of fidelity can reveal how these relationships are considered desirable or problematic under different circumstances. Accordingly, while fidelity might seem to connote similar ideas across time, its literary representations nevertheless expose changing implications and understandings that lie beneath the same concept. In the context of English literature, fidelity and its counterparts loyalty and faithfulness have been widely discussed mostly in the realms of love, marriage, friendship, and political obligations. As these arenas concern individual relationships with other people or with society, representations of fidelity can reveal how these relationships are considered desirable or problematic under different circumstances. Therefore, while fidelity might seem to connote similar ideas across time, its literary representations nevertheless expose changing implications and understandings that lie beneath the same concept.

4. Fidelity in Religious Texts

An introduction to fidelity in religious texts will be approached by closely examining the fidelity-related textual passages of two of the world's largest religions-Islam and Christianity. The aim is to focus on the fidelity motif as it is understood within the framework of the moral and ethical tenets of two sacred texts-the Quran and the Bible. The focus will be primarily on fidelity as loyalty to God, but also on fidelity as commitments between people and to society. The meaning of fidelity is closer to the Greek term 'pistis' or 'faith' and the Hebrew term 'ancin' (Asyraf Zulkffli *et al*., 2022) [2]. Although fidelity has been interpreted differently in different passages, its outlay points to three core themes: fidelity to God, fidelity to interpersonal commitments, and fidelity to society. The first textual readings argue that while fidelity is elaborated through varying narratives and commandments, both traditions generally emphasize fidelity. In this sense, Christianity and Islam are comparable. The second textual readings focus on interpretative challenges that arise from fidelity-related texts. In this respect, Christianity and Islam are divergent. These readings are foundational in framing the discussions of fidelity in cultural contexts and literature. Faithfulness (or fidelity) is a central theme of religious texts. The term 'faith' comprises the connotations of 'fidelity.' As such, religious texts devote part of their discourse to the implications of faithfulness (or fidelity) for followers. In religious texts, fidelity is explicated as a means of shaping religious identity and community while ensuring social order (Bonfert *et al*., 2024) [3].

4.1. Fidelity in Quran and Bible

In a comparative analysis between the Quran and the Bible,

fidelity is depicted both as a broad concept and as a specific action. The general meaning of fidelity is "faithfulness to a person, cause, or belief, demonstrated by continuing loyalty and support." In the Quran and Bible, fidelity to God is a salient topic; however, the expectations of the two texts from their believers differ (Asyraf Zulkffli *et al*., 2022) [2]. While the Quran expects total fidelity regarding the concept of commitment, the Bible depicts fidelity in a more loose manner, exhibiting it along the lines of loyalty. These somewhat opposing expectations can be illustrated by parables or stories from each text. In the Quran, Allah (God) refers to a covenant (known as mithaq in Arabic) that humanity has made to Him and warns those who turn away from Him. In contrast, in the Bible, fidelity is depicted in parables that recall stories from everyday life among the people, such as commitment in marriage and the faithfulness of a shepherd to his flock.

God's fidelity is represented as a commitment in the Quran, while fidelity in the Bible is portrayed as a loyalty. This difference in fidelity treatment also relates to the concept of contracts in each text. While the concept of contracts is absent in the Bible, it is essential in the Quran, which defines a covenant with terms and expectations. As a result of this contractual nature, the punishment for breaking fidelity regarding a covenant in the Quran is death, while in the Bible, the consequences fall short of death. Textual analyses of selected narratives or parables regarding fidelity from each text are conducted in this section. Historical and cultural background supporting each text's approach is also taken into account (Fathi *et al*., 2017) [4]. In addition to God and mankind, fidelity among individuals and communities, and its impact, are included in the analysis. How the believers of each text encounter difficulties in interpreting these treatments of fidelity and applying them in social life is also covered in this section. Through this comparative analysis, fidelity is explored as a broader concept and as a specific action, in parallels as well as in differences. Insights can be drawn from the contrasts, while the discussion directs toward the universality of fidelity from a broader perspective.

5. Fidelity in Cultural Contexts

Fidelity, or concepts of 'faithfulness', is culturally situated. Ethos and societal configurations of values affect the way fidelity is understood and represented within literature and everyday life. Throughout history, each culture has shared or differed conceptions and representations of fidelity. Yet no shared notion of fidelity has existed, as cultural norms add a specificity to the understanding of faithfulness. Fidelity, or the lack thereof, is literary, social and religious ground on which societies celebrate or challenge one another. As an example, in Arabic culture fidelity is understood as something that is not only tied to individual, romantic feelings, but something much broader that intertwines family ties, social obligations, and religious adherence. Fidelity thus holds more profound implications than the English configuration of values, in which the abovementioned are left to individual choice and personal interpretation. Still, the art of the Western world abounds with examples of celebrated Arabic fidelity and its literary representations, as do Arabic narratives challenged by modes of English faithfulness. Even within the same cultural context and literary tradition, fidelity is variously understood through the influence of historical events, social

changes and the relativity of time itself. As societies change, so too do cultural understandings of fidelity. In the age of globalization cultural boundaries are blurred, and fidelity to one culture may mean the abandoning of another. Thus notions of faithfulness can be understood in conflicting ways; one's fidelity may be perceived as an infidelity by others. In the literary world, cultural exchange can enrich the art of portraying fidelity, but it can also endanger the very existence of some faithfulness concepts. Texts from both literary traditions are analysed elaborating on the cultural specificities of fidelity and how these have been challenged or upheld within societal narratives. Ultimately, fidelity is argued as being broadly and abstractly modern; fidelity to one idea, faith or cause often means a simultaneous denial of or opposition to another (Rastegar, 2005) [11]. The modern, conceptual use of faithfulness stresses that which is broader than a simple adherence to dogmas or fixed notions, and raises contemporary questions about the implications of globally shared ideas or faiths.

5.1. Arabic Culture

Arabic culture does not view fidelity with ambiguity or confusion. Fidelity is understood and interpreted through various dimensions, familial, social, and religious. The cultural chain in the Arabic language reveals that generally, fidelity is loyalty to something, due to which someone is committed to that thing. Accordingly, the cultural values prioritize the commitment to family and community, often above the individual desires. In broader terms, loyalty or fidelity is a pivotal notion in any kind or form of interpersonal relationships. The group solidarity is fostered by a narrow interpretation of the community membership which encourages close ties among the community members and emphasizes the importance of honor and reputation (Khalid Hammad Usama Khalid Hammad, 2018) [8]. The historical perspective of fidelity or loyalty can be found in the modern interpretation of the word. Thus, a new or revised understanding of the term fidelity might contradict or clash with the traditional or historical perceptions. The intellectual discourse about fidelity is often restricted within the framework of the literary text. However, an emphasis is placed on the analysis of how fidelity is manifested in the socio-cultural domain beyond its literary interpretation. In Arabic culture, fidelity is viewed as a commitment to one's family, clan, and community. In the writings, fidelity is often a concern with issues of devotion and commitment.

In Arabic literature and media, fidelity is often portrayed in a manner that reinforces the cultural values and narratives. As such, fidelity in friendship is a commitment to one's friend, and any expectations or arrangements that contravene that commitment is considered a breach of fidelity. Similarly, fidelity in marriage is viewed as a commitment to one's spouse, and any infringement, commonly understood as infidelity or adultery, is severely condemned. Outside the literary framework, fidelity in friendship and marriage is analysed as social norms. Generally, social norms regarding friendship and marriage are tightly and closely defined, and so are the expectations that oftentimes impose bounds on loyalty or fidelity. In contexts where cultural or political changes transpired, fidelity is an examined discourse often questioned. Considered as an Ottoman legacy, the fidelity of the provincial notables is frequently interrogated in the Arab Revolt. In the debate regarding the fidelity of the provincial

notables, the discontent with the Empire is often read as challenges against the local authorities or pashas. Thus, it is referred to as a fidelity crisis on the part of the notables. The fidelity is interrogated regarding the political choices or reforms of the notables, which implied a shift away from Ottoman or imperial frames. On either account, the implications of fidelity are far-reaching and the cultural perceptions generally interrogated. Therefore, the portrayal of fidelity in Arabian literature and the depiction of fidelity in life cannot be viewed in the same frame. Fidelity, as a cultural concept, is significant in shaping the individual and collective identities but equally crucial in fragmenting and defining the boundaries of the communities. Globalization and the resultant cross-cultural encounters often challenge the notions and perceptions of fidelity.

5.2 English Culture
Fidelity (or infidelity) can be understood as a choice made individually or in the context of social pressure. Although widely accepted cultural narratives on loyalty and commitment exist, stranger personal relationships are shaped by individual deliberations (Hubbard, 2019) [7]. The distribution of fictional narratives across various media reveals cultural environments; some frames may be consensual, while others oppose or ignore the common frames. In English literature and society, fidelity is treated in dialogues between prevalent cultural narratives, personal integrity, and ethical considerations. Fidelity's wider cultural frames are commonly understood but depicting a personal relationship is often a contest over how to frame it. The concern is primarily with English culture but comparisons to Arabic culture, particularly on society's pressure, are noted. Some choices characterizing fidelity in a contemporary context may have been under miscellaneous societal values in the past. The same choice may today be understood as a question of personal integrity and conscience while being a matter of social honor in other cultures. Globally spreading modernity, along with technological and geographical connectivity, may polish social distinctions but differing societal pressures are still at play.

English fidelity narratives are often interpreted as modern in the sense of textually framing individual choices outside of social honor. Still, social honor narratives persist, especially among the working class. Historical narratives explore past frames having become mythical, possibly as a romantic reconciliation of tradition and modernity. Yet, personal narratives are rarely found outside of social honor cultures. Fidelity's textual treatments in prose fiction, plays, and films explore how fidelity may be represented in various cultural contexts. Literary and artistic works exemplify history's and choices' textual intersections. Fidelity's wider cultural frames are presupposed, illustrating how fidelity's opposing narratives may coexist in social and historical contexts. Myths, the oral tradition's fidelity narratives, literary romanticism's treatment of social honor, and infidelity's tragic fate in the high culture context illuminate the artistic angle. Fidelity's textual treatments in the playhouse and film provide an avenue into modernity's challenges to fidelity, questioning the sufficiency of either choice in contemporary society. Fidelity's cultural fluidity in social honor cultures is outlined, but the difficulty in

representing fidelity in textual cultures is also noted.

6. Fidelity in Relationships
Fidelity, as a concept, can be viewed in multiple ways, depending on the type of relationship being considered. For any relationship, be it romantic, platonic or professional, fidelity is intrinsically linked to faith, trust, belief and commitment. However, the social and personal interpretations of fidelity, as the concept is viewed in literature, can differ vastly, on the basis of cultural context. Despite cultural narratives addressing the same issues of commitment and betrayal, fidelity is governed by the relativity of personal desires or just animal instincts, in contrast to the societal framework and view on the relationship (Rokach & H. Chan, 2023) [12].

Fidelity in marriages is a topic that is widely researched and debated. The reasons might range from curiosity about different cultures to personal dilemma or societal involvement. Nevertheless, the understanding of fidelity is based on the definition of marriage, which differs across cultures. Arabic culture, in general, defines marriage as a sacred commitment between spouses to coexist for betterment of themselves and their children. This idealisation of the bond creates a sense of jealousy and ownership towards the partner. A breach of this contract is looked upon as unforgivable, and the partner at loss is expected to take immediate action. On the other hand, marriage in English culture is primarily viewed as a legal contract, wherein from the very outset, there are multiple exit points devised. Hence, fidelity is understood differently, with infidelity being looked upon as a mere mishap rather than a deliberate effort. The literary analysis of marriages highlights how the ideologies of fidelity across Arabic and English cultures affect individual decisions, and the course of their lives thereafter. Alongside fidelity in marriages, fidelity in friendship, as it is viewed across the two cultures will be explored. In the basic sense, friendship is a bond built upon loyalty and support, and hence fidelity in friendship stems from loyalty. However, the meanings of loyalty differ across cultures. Arabic culture dictates that a friend must be completely transparent and honest, and disclose any wrongdoing, even at the cost of ruining a relationship, whilst in English culture, a friend must remain loyal and supportive, no matter what the circumstance.

6.1 Marriage
Fidelity is commonly perceived as a constituent of marriage, and thus, this discussion begins with fidelity in marriage. Just like in the general concept of fidelity, Arabic and English literary and social concepts of fidelity in marriage are similar but with cultural differences. Fidelity is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as "the fact of being faithful to your husband, wife, or sexual partner." This definition, however, does not suffice, as fidelity can have various dimensions. Therefore, in this context, fidelity in marriage is explained and examined based on Arabic and English literature and societal traditions. While definitions of fidelity in marriage are as varied as the definitions of fidelity in general, most of these definitions include a sense of loyalty, commitment, and trustworthiness to something or someone. Further, fidelity in marriage is considered through these definitions. Cultural and religious teachings have always emphasized the importance of fidelity in marriage (Fathi *et al*., 2017) [4]. A good marriage requires fidelity, and fidelity in marriage is expected from both partners.

Naturally, partnership in marriage is emphasized, thus expecting mutual understanding and cooperation of both partners in maintaining fidelity. Nonetheless, many marriages fail to remain faithful, as societal norms and expectations often take precedence over the concept of fidelity in marriage. What is naturally viewed as an emotional bond between two people is often considered a matter of propriety and honor, thus leading to societal rather than emotional crises. Society often watches over men and women's fidelity differently, holding one to a stricter standard than the other. Still, a man's fidelity is often ignored despite many marriages failing or considering the cause of marriage disputes. Arabic literature mostly views fidelity in marriage from a woman's perspective, examining a woman's betrayal through jealousy and rage, while English literature comparatively considers fidelity in marriage from a man's perspective, focusing on a man's betrayal and viewing it through disappointment and sorrow. In either case, fidelity is regarded as a priority in marriage, and a breach in fidelity is interpreted as a betrayal or backstabbing, resulting in either social or emotional despair.

6.2 Friendship

An important aspect of fidelity is related to friendship. Friends are regarded as those with whom one shares a bond that is expected to endure. Fidelity, in its simplest sense, underscores the significance of trust or loyalty within friendship. Considered in this light, such bonds take on an unusually heightened significance, akin to romantic or familial attachments, regardless of the amount of time one has known a given friend. However, as with most things in life, cultures differ in the manner they are defined, as well as in the expectations surrounding fidelity.

Friendship is daft in Arabic as an attribute of a good friend, as one who possesses "fidelity, loyalty, sworn allegiance and faithfulness." In pre-Islamic Arab culture, its meaning was invested with a profound sense of loyalty. There, tribes were seen as the basic social unit, and alliances between tribes determined the socio-political landscape. Thus, the fusion of tribal identity with one's community entailed the need to safeguard the collective's honour and rights. As such, transgressions were dealt with in a way that vindicated the community as a whole, and the punishment of individual wrong-doers was secondary. One poetic narrative recounts a chieftain's dilemma upon learning that his brother had killed a member of a rival tribe. Even though he loved his brother dearly, it was only after lengthy deliberation that he resolved to have him killed, declaring an "oath is a tribe's bond" and chastising that "the tribe's fidelity is past a brother's love" (M. Doucerain *et al*., 2018) [9]. Given that tribal bonds transcended familial ties, friends are likewise depicted as those from whom loyalty is expected above all else. In Arabic, one who betrays such loyalty is a khā'in, a term that doubles as a descriptor for both treachery and infidelity, as well as disloyalty in romance. While indisputably present in English, fidelity's cultural accoutrements are arguably different. In English, friendships are construed as bonds between individuals who have chosen to enter into an association, in and often simply defined as an emotional tie. In such a light, broader community connections are rendered peripheral and thus friendships become personal choices, with fidelity additionally rendered a matter of individual discretion. Sure enough, there are narratives in both traditions where the concepts of fidelity in friendship are illustrated, though they are also very much at odds in their representation.

7. The Role of Fidelity in Literary Criticism

The concept of fidelity will now be examined within the practice of literary criticism. Fairness, in its basic definition, pertains to a quality of being faithful or loyal; however, it is often understood in a variety of ways. Issues of fidelity are central to keeping faith with an interpretation, misreading a text, how one might faithfully reconstruct the context of its production, and so on. Fidelity to the text, or textual fidelity, is often thought to be the touchstone of literary criticism (Frashëri & Hyso Kastrati, 2013) [5]. But fidelity to the text presents philosophical difficulties. Fidelity, conventionally, is understood as a relation between a person and a thing, in which the person is obliged to respect the thing's integrity (Nazemi, 2017) [10]. To be faithful to a text is, typically, understood as respecting the proprieties that constitute it as that particular sort of text. Fidelity critiques ask how the text might be evaluated in terms of its authenticity, even if an index of authenticity cannot be given.

Consider some of the key critics who have contributed to this understanding of fidelity. Whether fidelity be thought of as a good or bad thing, it helps focus attention on how a text should be approached. There is an additional problem with these discussions of fidelity, tenderness to the text's particularity notwithstanding. It is not clear how fidelity should operate in approaching texts from different cultural backgrounds. The problem is especially acute when considering Arabic texts as opposed to English ones. Fidelity becomes particularly problematic in those expectations that are placed on the author rather than the work, where on occasion the implied author's fidelity to the cultural and stylistic norms of the Arabic writing tradition is under question. Fidelity at one level is about the expectations placed on the work, but at another it is about the expectations placed on the author. The strategy of this chapter is to indicate where fidelity has become complicated in these expectations on the author as opposed to the text. At the same time, fidelity as a familiar literary critical concept in Arabic considerations of literary translation will be traced. Concerns with fidelity are widely documented in the critical tradition of Arabic poetics and therefore it will be claimed that where fidelity is troubled in the passage from one tradition to another, it is nevertheless a foundational concept that can be profitably worked with. Consideration will also be given to how fidelity operates differently amidst this poetic tradition, where fidelity is also understood in terms of its opposite with reference to the difference between imitating style and inventing style.

Conclusion

In this study, we examined the concept of fidelity in Arabic and English literature and society. It has become clear in both societies that fidelity is a multifaceted concept. While remaining loyal and following a way of life is important in the concept of fidelity, it also involves many things. The meanings and the importance of the concept have varied in both languages and societies throughout history. Intercultural relationships increase the importance of the concept. The evolution of the meaning of this concept in both languages and societies has led to the development of the understanding of the concept of fidelity between individuals and society.

Fidelity provides physical and spiritual continuity. The multidimensional characteristics of fidelity should hence be recognized and developed through the education of diverse cultural perspectives. When the masculine and feminine aspects of fidelity are properly developed in women and men, the end of the road and the journey become values that contribute to mutual development and growth. The fidelity spectrum represents a source of knowledge for human connection, adaptability, and vivacity. Despite one's position in the prevailing social order, he or she yearns to dive into the adventure of the fidelity spectrum as represented in literary works. The possibilities to explore and understand life are countless. The evolution of trust in fidelity provides hope that the intercultural dialogue between these two communities will continue to expand. The realization and development of the concept of fidelity, dating back centuries ago, is essential for the true progress of Arabic and English societies.

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