

## Abstract

The present work focuses on the main themes that appear in different Hebrew translations from different periods to the book *Uncle Tom's Cabin* written by Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1852 and examines whether and in what manner these themes comply with the educational and translation norms that were prevalent during these periods. The four main themes in the book are slavery, violence and sexuality, the mother figure and Christianity. Out of these themes different secondary themes emerge, organized in sub-categories. The passages that were chosen, subject of the present work, are the ones that best represent the secondary themes. Out of the four themes specified hereinabove, two are perceived in a positive manner in the translations (slavery and the figures of the mother and the woman) while the other two are considered a taboo in Hebrew children literature (Christianity, violence and sexuality).

The main contention of the work is that the translation of the book posed a challenge to translators. The book unravels the story of the black slaves prior to the eruption of the American Civil War and contains displays of violence (whether verbal or physical) and sexual innuendos, and is filled with Christian symbolism that probably proved to be a problem for translators engaged in translation for children and youth. Nevertheless, the choice to translate the book time and again despite its aforementioned problematic nature (even though American literature occupied a marginal position up to the mid 20th century) is not incomprehensible in light of the book's educational qualities dealing with issues such as the desire for liberty and the ability to demonstrate human solidarity in times of adversity.

The present work examines 11 translations, the first, published by "A. Zukermanen," was made by Avraham Zinger already in 1896 and the last, made by Ada Zarfati and published by "Dani Books." Most translations are aimed at children and teenagers. The considerable time difference between the

first and last translations provided an opportunity to follow changes that were made in the translated books and learn about the different norms that were prevalent at the time of publication. Using Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory (Even-Zohar, 1990), Gideon Toury's norm theory (Toury, 1995) and Gabriel Zoran's division to periods (Zoran, 1990), the work categorizes the different norms that were dominant in each period and examines whether translators complied with these norms and in what manner this compliance was manifested in the strategies they practiced. Some translations contain illustrations that were examined in light of the division to themes and secondary themes for the purpose of establishing whether the norms that apply to the written word also apply to illustrations. For that purpose, the work relied on the essays of Ariel Ofek (1978) and Shosh Waxman and Orna Davidi-Bareli (2000).

The work finds that translation and educational norms are generally maintained and when translators come across issues that are considered a taboo the tendency is to omit, shorten or simplify the words of the origin. If the translation does not abide by the norm, this is usually followed by an explanation (for example, if violent acts were translated they are accompanied by criticism of the person committing the violent act). Some of the illustrations enabled translators to convey information they could not convey as literally (such as violence and sexuality).