

Speech of Dr.  
**MUHAMMAD MUSTAFA BADAWI**

Co-Winner of the 1992 King Faisal International Prize  
For Arabic Literature  
(Translations into Arabic of Literary and Critical Studies)

Your Royal Highnesses,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Gentlemen,

I should like first of all to thank you for the award of the King Faisal International Prize in Arabic Literature, a prize which is regarded, with justice, as the highest honour to which a scholar can aspire in the field of Arabic literary studies anywhere in the world. I am indeed proud to have won this prize and to see that my modest endeavour has met such recognition. I am also grateful to the University of Alexandria for having nominated me and to the University of Oxford for having provided additional support to my nomination.

The choice by the Selection Committee for Arabic Literature of "Translations into Arabic of Literary and Critical Studies" as this year's subject is an eloquent testimony to the importance of this type of translation, not only as an example of the art of translation, but also as an account of its great usefulness to thought in general and to critical thought in particular. It is a choice marked by width of outlook and depth of insight, for the effect of literary and critical studies is not limited to the light they shed on actual literary works in verse and prose. Such studies contribute to the development of cultural consciousness in general; they sharpen the critical sense and hence increase clarity in our emotional attitudes to things, aiding us to view them more rationally in our own society and in the broader human society, that is to say humanity at large. Literary criticism deals initially with certain literary works in a certain language and within the context of a certain heritage, but it is based upon principles and rules relating to the human mind; hence it passes through the local to the universal. That is why it is a cultural necessity to translate literary criticism from one language into another. The ancient Arabs realized this when they set out to translate Greek literary criticism into Arabic, just as Europeans have done since the Renaissance, when they translated

works of criticism first from Greek and Latin and subsequently from each other's languages, thereby benefitting from each other's critical thought.

Inspired by this firm belief in the value of such translation, I have endeavoured for many years to make accessible to the Arab reader who has not mastered the English language some of the more important works of literary criticism published in this century. I have deliberately chosen works which represent different approaches, and have provided necessary comments and explanations. I hope thereby to have discharged some of my duty to Arabic Literature in the field of literary criticism. It gives me great pleasure indeed to see my effort so richly rewarded.

Once more I should like to offer my thanks and deep appreciation of the role played by the King Faisal Foundation in promoting culture and seeking the betterment of mankind.