

## Manipulation or Censorship in Translating the History of Algeria: *Dhākirat-Al-jasad* as a Case Study

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### Abstract

This paper investigates the translation strategies used by Raphael Cohen in his English translation (2013) and Mohamed Mokeddem in his French translation (2002) of the postcolonial Algerian novel *Dhākirat Al-jasad* (1993) written by Ahlem Mostaghanemi. It tells the story of Algeria's struggle against French colonialism and the socioeconomic crises it faced after independence. We attempt to elucidate how the literature of formerly colonized peoples is translated into Western languages. We apply the concept of Orientalism (Said 1978 1979) from the postcolonial theory, in addition to Gramsci's (1971; 1992) concepts of "cultural hegemony" and "consent". Our goal is to examine whether the two translators resorted to manipulative strategies when rendering the terms that constitute the symbols of the Algerian war of independence used in the novel, such as "shahīd" and "Mujahid". We propose that translating postcolonial literature to a Western hegemonic culture could be used to maintain hegemony, even when the translator belongs to the source culture. Since when historical references are subject to manipulation or censorship, an inaccurate representation of history is created.

**Keywords:** Censorship, Cultural Hegemony, Manipulation, Orientalism, Translating History.

### Introduction

Translation plays a vital role in intercultural communication. It is not only an interlingual activity but a tool for the transmission of other people's culture, ideology, beliefs, and value systems. It is thus powerful in "constructing representations of foreign cultures" (Venuti 1998, 2002, 67).

It also becomes crucial when narrating events throughout history books or literature, allowing us to know more about the history of the "Other" and, at times, the suffering endured. As Valdeón (2011, 232) states, translation conveys "historical narratives to other cultures". It provides more clarifications on the past and gives a voice to different nations.

However, the translation process is not always performed neutrally, beginning with the selection of the source text to the publication. For, it does not stand on its own but is shaped by the social, cultural,

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political, and historical contexts where it occurs, at times leading the translators to make choices that deliberately affect the intended meaning. One prominent factor behind any type of manipulation is that translation is linked to politics and different types of power relations and sometimes serves political objectives. Diaz Cintas (2012, 279) observes that “fundamental decisions based on power, dominance, and ideology” play a crucial role in translating elements of culture.

Similarly, Dai (2016, 504) explains that factors of power, ideology, and history significantly affect the selection of translation strategies, which will considerably impact intercultural communication. In discussing the Catalan-Spanish translation, considered to be a translation from a minority language and culture to a dominant one, Borrell Carreras (2018, 741) views the translated text as a cultural product which “becomes the object of the struggle for dominance”, and the meanings created represent this struggle. Thus, it is necessary to analyze translation “as an act embedded within the power relations at work between countries and their languages” (Sapiro 2014, 32).

As an example, Navarro and Beeby (2010, 56) analyzed four translations of Nitobe Inazo’s book entitled *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* and concluded that cultural references undergo censorship or manipulation, especially in periods of conflict. They observed that in the 1941 translation, the original purpose of writing the book totally disappeared. Valdeón (2011, 244) also suggests that the translation of history might be performed for purposes different from those of the original text. This phenomenon can be explained by the fact that “the skopos of the translatum may be different from that of the source text” (Reiss and Vermeer 1984/2014, 92). In other words, the translator’s goal is inconsistent with the writer’s intentions when it comes to serving his/her interests or those of a specific group, institution, government, or any other entity. Fandi (2005,18) maintains that the translator can “legitimate or even justify the interests and ideologies of a given social group”. Therefore, the translator might implement significant changes to the source text, eliminate the pieces that are conflicting with those interests, and use domesticating strategies that are more compatible with the system of values prevailing in the target culture. Such strategies, according to Venuti (1998, 2002, 67), reproduce the original text in “domestic dialects and discourses” by maintaining specific “domestic values” and ignoring others. This process of manipulation or “subversion” becomes even more prominent when it concerns translating works from formerly colonized countries. According to many scholars and researchers, it is particularly evident in translation from Arabic into Western languages (Faiq 2004, 4; 2005, 57). In line with this, Fandi’s work on media translation has revealed that translators use many linguistic devices like transitivity and lexicalization to “ideologically distort” media texts translated from Arabic into English.

It is in this context that the present paper examines two translations of the postcolonial Algerian novel *DhākiratAl-jasad* (1993), written by Ahlem Mostaghanemi. We will investigate and compare the translation strategies adopted by Raphael Cohen in his English translation published by Bloomsbury in 2013 and Mohamed Mokeddem in his French translation published in 2002 by Albin Michel Grandes Traductions.

This study aims to uncover how the literature of formerly colonized peoples is translated or represented in western languages and cultures. Many postcolonial studies reveal that misrepresentations

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of the Arab world—formerly the land of many European colonies—its cultures, values, and history are quite common in colonial narratives. We rely on “Orientalism”, one of the most influential approaches in the postcolonial theory, used by Edward Said (1978, 1979) to describe Western discourse on the Orient based on demeaning portrayals.

Our analysis will focus on the Algerian war of independence symbols, such as “shahīd” and “Mujahid”, repeatedly used in the novel to recount the trauma experienced by the people and their struggle to restore their freedom and the way they are conveyed by the two translators. Bearing in mind that they address a Western audience (an English one for Cohen and a French one for Mokeddem).

Thus, the paper attempts to answer the following questions: What are the strategies used by the two translators to reproduce the terms related to the Algerian war of independence? Are these terms subject to manipulation by the translators or censorship by the publishing houses involved?

Are there deviations that may lead to the misrepresentation of history as narrated in the original text and that may be related to the orientalist paradigm?

Noteworthy is Mokeddem’s relationship with both the source and the target texts and cultures. Like Cohen, he is translating to a Western country, which is also the former colonizer (France), while he originates from the formerly colonized country (Algeria). We hypothesize that the French (Algerian) translator will show more sensitivity in dealing with this issue and will be inclined to side with one of the parties involved: his homeland (Algeria) or his country of residence (France). This situation is particularly challenging to the translator due to the French colonial past in Algeria and the memories of the devastating war, as he must avoid anything that may “create tensions or justify occupation” (Ettobi 2015, 229).

Moreover, the concept of cultural hegemony as defined by Gramsci (1971, 1992) is also used in this study. He argues that the political society maintains dominance not only through coercion but also through ideology and culture. It makes alliances with the bourgeoisie (the ruling class), which spreads its values with the help of academic institutions, to be viewed by the working class as the norm. In this way, cultural hegemony is a valuable and helpful tool to achieve and preserve power because the order is maintained by people's consent (Gramsci 1971, 1992). We will argue in this paper that the movement of translating postcolonial literature to a hegemonic culture could be part of the agenda of academic institutions to maintain hegemony, *inter alia*, in the political, social, and cultural fields, by the consent of translators.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that although issues of translating postcolonial literature to the West were addressed before, previous research mainly investigates cases where the translators are from the western world. As far as we know, little attention is paid to works in which the translators are from formerly colonized countries. We hope that this paper brings new insights into this area.

### **Translating Arabic Literature to the Western World**

The translation of Arabic works from the precolonial or the postcolonial eras can contribute to a better understanding of the history of Arab Muslim people, their religion(s), and heritage. However, Al-

Mahrooqi and Denman (2016, 5) explain that while translation has the ability to “offer deep insight into various aspects of life” in the Arab region, it may also harm the perception of Arabs and their identities. In addition to many scholars, they indicate that a particular strategy is established to select and represent Arabic works when translated to Western readers. At the level of selection, the works that do not comply with the Western norms are eliminated and ignored (Elboubekri2016, 4). A prime example includes the works of Nawāl al-Sa‘dāwī which are heavily translated in Europe, like *الوجه العاري للمرأة العربية* Al-waġh al-‘ārī lilmar’ati al-‘rabīya (1977) [The Naked Face of the Arab Woman] in which some parts that explain the disadvantages of capitalism for women are deleted, while others which confirm the negative clichés applied to Arab women are conserved (Al-Mahrooqi and Denman 2016, 16).

At the level of representation, some translators convey misrepresentations of Arab people and their cultures by creating unnecessary discrepancies and falsified accounts, which hamper intercultural communication, thus, prohibiting the target Western readers from knowing about the Arab “Other”. In this regard, Faiq (2004, 4) contends that these translators in some way exclude the audience because “they become dictators[...] by altering what a group of readers is allowed to know and read”. This suggests that such translational practices are not arbitrary and that specific structured approaches dictate them. As an example, after thorough consideration of the translated Arabic literature into French, Jacquemond (1992, 2018, 13) concludes that it was greatly affected by the “Orientalist paradigm” at the linguistic and semiotic levels. Indeed, one could say that throughout history, the leading framework within which the translation of Arabic works was realized is “Orientalism,” which will be discussed in detail in the next section.

### **Orientalism as a model of exchange based on power and dominance**

Orientalism is the term used by Edward Said (1978; 1979, 73) to refer to “the discipline by which the Orient was (and is) approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery, and practice”. Nevertheless, this Western approach to discover the Orient was not free from the notions of hegemony and superiority. The kind of exchange it has established is based on creating the core concept of “the Oriental Other,” whereby the first is the dominant and the second is the dominated (Donzé-Magnier 2017, 3).

As a result, the Orientalist discourse came as a reflection of Western domination over the Orient instead of generating an authentic depiction of what it really is (Said 1978, 1979, 6). For, it relies on a one-sided unequal exchange where Orientalists observe and write secretly about people of the Orient who are not allowed the right to represent themselves (Said, 1978, 1979, 160). This potentially stems from the idea that the Orient cannot represent itself, so it needs to be represented (Said 1978, 1979, 21).

Undertaken by scholarly institutions, this discourse claims to be purely academic; however, it is shaped by “political imperialism”. The relationship between Orientalists from British, French, and American empires and political concerns is “a dynamic exchange” (Said 1978, 1979, 14). It could even be described as an “alliance between cultural work, political tendencies, the state, and the specific realities of domination” (Said 1978, 1979, 15).

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Drawing on Gramsci's concept of cultural hegemony (1971, 1992), we can suggest that the Orientalist movement has played a fundamental role as an institution of the civil society in the service of the political society, corresponding here to the Western States, probably to promote and justify colonialism. According to Gramsci, an alliance exists between the capitalist state and the dominant class. The first uses coercion to preserve domination and is also sustained by the second, which relies on culture and ideology to disseminate its hegemonic values, which become common sense. Thus, the remainder of the population spontaneously consents.

Therefore, in order to serve the political society, many Orientalists<sup>1</sup> have ceased to treat the Orient as a field of study to be addressed objectively. Instead, they have established a set of concepts about the Orient, based on their invention and imagination and not supported by objective accounts or empirical research. According to Donzé-Magnier (2017, 1), this representation is "not only diminishing but closer to mythology than reality". Similarly, Sihui (2009, 267) maintains that the Western depiction of the Orient is produced from "imagined constructs that see all 'Oriental' societies as fundamentally the same or similar, all sharing crucial characteristics (generally negative)".

An excellent example of this generalized approach adopted by Orientalists is when Cromer writes (cited in Said: 1978, 1979, 38): "Want of accuracy, which easily degenerates into untruthfulness, is the main characteristic of the Oriental mind". Like Cromer, many Orientalists would establish a theory on the characteristics of the oriental mind, as it is everywhere and at any time, based on just one remark on an Arab poet who lived many centuries ago (Said 1978, 1979, 96).

This generalization process does not consider the many differences between countries and people(s) of what they call "the East" as differentiated from the West. It is an "oversimplification of a multitude of civilizations" (Donzé-Magnier 2017, 1), or it is similar to "forcing it into a mould that does not fit its multiple realities" (Sihui 2009, 267).

It is not surprising then that this approach used in Orientalist writings, paintings, and translation leads to stereotyping the Orient.

### **Translation as part of Orientalism**

Many researchers and scholars argue that translation was an essential part of Orientalism. Moustafa (2010, 5) states that it was a key component in building the Orientalist discourse to assist the colonization movement.

As Said (1978, 1979, 100) explains, colonization requires that interests in different fields (cultural, religious, and military, among others) be established and that translation endeavors be used to enhance them. This implies that translation projects were not undertaken merely for scientific and cultural purposes but were usually shaped by Orientalist ideologies. Bouagada (2005, 5) argues that translation is a central component of a long-standing academic movement that has generated "biased and fragmented images of the orient". This highlights the role of translation in creating and reinforcing stereotypes of the non-Western world.

In this regard, Venuti (1998, 2002, 67) explains that stereotypes might be created for “foreign cultures” to serve domestic interests if specific “translation patterns” are continuously used. As a result, either respect or disgrace will be attributed to certain ethnicities. In line with this view, we can suggest that many translators in the Western world who were either forced to adhere to the Orientalist framework or showed “consent” to it have repeatedly followed the same model so as to form negative clichés to be associated with the Arab Muslim world. With time, they became fixed representations in the Western target readers' minds.

Discussing the translation of Egyptian novels from Arabic into French, Jacquemond (2004, 123) concludes that the selected novels are always those highlighting the modernity of Europe and the backwardness of Egypt, like Taha Hussein's book الأيام al-'ayyām [*The Days*], published in 1929 and translated into French in 1947. Similarly, Gil Bardají (2008, 58) describes the translations of Moroccan literature into Spanish as emanating only “from the self” and not considering the voice of the Moroccan “Other”.

### **Orientalists from the Arab World**

What is surprising about Orientalism is that some Orientalists, such as novelists or translators who have undertaken translation projects under the Orientalist paradigm, are Arabs. Jacquemond (2004, 121) calls an Orientalist anyone who generates knowledge about Arab countries for the French market, whatever the individual's origin is. Discussing the authors who write for the West or “native foreigners”, Faiq (2005, 67) explains that their writings are usually approved by the hegemonic (Western) culture only if they conform to its system of values and the prevailing stereotypical representations of the Arab and Muslim world. According to him, novelists like Tahar ben Jelloun have gained eminence because they facilitate those representations.

Interestingly, in our case study, the French translation was conducted for the French market by a translator from an Arab country. In the following section, we will investigate whether he has followed the same path as those “native foreigners” or adopted a different approach. Moreover, we will examine whether the English translator has conveyed the ideas related to colonialism as narrated in the novel, or if he has embraced the model of Orientalism or what is now called “new orientalism” (Wahyudi 2017) by deviating from the original text.

### **Case study**

The novel *Dhākirat-Al-jasad*, written by the Algerian writer Ahlem Mosteghanemi and published in 1993 at the beginning of “the Black Decade” in Algeria, then reprinted several times, is the focus of our study. It was so successful that the writer was awarded “the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature” in 1998. It was translated into French by Mohamed Mokeddem, published in 2002 as *Mémoires de la chair*, and first translated into English by Baria Ahmar Sreih in 1999 as *Memory in the Flesh*, then by Raphael Cohen in 2013 with the title *The Bridges of Constantine*.

Ahlem's novel is a particularly good example of postcolonial literature from North Africa. Created in a "postcolonial context marked by European guilt and Algerian victimization" (O'Riley 2001, 48), it conveys the struggle of Algerian people against French colonialism between 1830 and 1962 as well as the social and economic crises experienced after independence. The narrator is "Khaled", a war veteran who lost his arm during the revolution, and then became a painter living in exile. The plot revolves around a love affair, but most significantly around the tremendous sacrifices made by the Algerian fighters -for -freedom during the revolution and Khaled's bitter disappointment due to corruption cases within the government of the post-independence period. It is a time when many people do not enjoy prosperity and are deprived of their rights. Hopes and dreams are lost and destroyed in an independent Algeria that did not live up to the revolution's expectations. Jensen (2002) writes: "it is an allegory about the tortured fate of Algeria and perhaps the whole Arab world in its struggle for freedom".

### **Data Analysis and Discussion**

Describing the war of liberation, Ahlem used many words and expressions that refer to the suffering of Algerian people, their fight, and their sacrifices such as *الجبهة* *Al-Jabhah*, *التحرير* *tahrīr*). They represent the traces of colonialism and the struggle for independence. Below we will examine these elements in the Arabic text (ST) and observe how they are translated into English by Raphael Cohen (TT1) and into French by Mohammed Mokeddem (TT2). We aim to assess to what extent these elements are conserved or manipulated and blurred in the English and French translations. In the discussion of examples, we refer whenever possible to the foreignizing and domesticating strategies used by the translators according to the concepts of foreignization and domestication described by Venuti (1995, 2004). Our analysis is based on the assumption that if foreignizing strategies are used to translate the elements of history, they are conserved and visible to the target language readers. Furthermore, if translated by domesticating strategies, they will be blurred and invisible to the target audience. Using the notions of visibility/invisibility of Venuti (1995, 2004) and applying them to the translation of historical references, this paper attempts to establish the link between Orientalism and cultural hegemony and the translation strategies adopted by the translators. It might be suggested that when the translators use strategies that make the historical references mentioned by Ahlem in the source text invisible, by deleting them or attenuating their effects, this might be part of either manipulation or censorship. It may result in an inaccurate representation or misrepresentation of the history of the formerly colonized Algerian people in the western cultures. This could be consistent with the orientalist paradigm and might contribute to the hegemony of western cultures by not giving a voice to those who were oppressed. While the deviations in translation might be imposed on the translators, they might also be their choice. In both cases, they take place with their consent. In the following examples, we will examine whether the translations contain deviations from the source text. To analyze those deviations, if there are any, we also use Farghal's concept of intrinsic and extrinsic managing whenever appropriate. Intrinsic managing is used to help the target readers understand the message by giving "translations that read smoothly and naturally". In contrast, extrinsic managing is an ideological intervention that "aims to reorient and/or delude the TL

reader by presenting thought-worlds that are different at varying degrees from those expounded in the Source Language (SL) text". It occurs at the lexical, syntactic, or discourse/culture level.(Farghal 2018, 39).

All the non-English examples were glossed into English:

Example 1—Revolution and Independence:

Revolution (الثورة al-thawrah) is the nationalist movement started in 1954 to obtain independence. It was translated as “Revolution” by both translators, which is the most direct equivalent and is often used when talking about the history of Algeria. Similarly, (الاستقلال al-istiklāl) was translated as the corresponding terms “independence and indépendance” in English and French, respectively.

Example 2—The Front (*Al-Jabhah* الجبهة):

ST: سنة 1955... وفي شهر أيلول بالذات التحقت بالجبهة. (*Dhākirat al-Jasad*, p.33)

[In 1955... specifically in September, I joined the front] (our translation)

TT1: In 1955, September to be precise, I joined the National Liberation Front, the FLN. (*The Bridges of Constantine*, p.13).

TT2 : J’avais rejoint le maquis en septembre 1955. (*Mémoires de la chair*, p.29)

[I had joined the maquis in September 1955] (our translation)

*Al-Jabhah* (“the front”) is a significant symbol for Algerian people because it represents the nationalist party that has led the revolution. By using “National Liberation Front, the FLN”, the English translator provides the well-known and popular name of this front explicitly, allowing the audience to gain awareness of the pillar of the Algerian revolutionary movement. Conversely, the French translator uses a domesticating strategy and changes it to *le maquis* which is the group of fighters resisting the German occupation of France During the Second World War<sup>2</sup>. It has a positive connotation because it entails the meaning of resistance against occupiers, but the translator could have used the familiar name: *Le Front* or *Le Front de libération Nationale* to inform the French readership about an essential element of history.

Many other instances of the word “Jabhah” are typically rendered in TT1 as “the Front” with capitalized “F” (pp. 11, 23, 29) or are translated as “FLN”(pp. 39, 41, 101), which is the abbreviation of the French name commonly used by Algerian people to refer to this party. This foreignizing strategy may encourage the English audience to search and learn about FLN. As for TT2, it was usually rendered with *le maquis*(pp. 29, 68, 95), as well as *le front*(pp.25, 38), and finally with *le champ de bataille*(“battlefield” p. 52). As previously stated, *le maquis* is not pejorative, but because the equivalent is available, this fluctuation could be avoided to give one point of reference and, thus, a clear mental image to the French readers. We wonder if *le maquis* was only used for the sake of naturalness or as an extrinsic managing at the level of lexis and culture to mislead the readers, as Farghal (2018, 41) explains that lexical choices may be “motivated by the translator’s socio-political commitments”.

Example 3—*Mujāhid/Mujāhidīn* مجاهد / مجاهدين:

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ST: يزهو المجاهد الذي أدرك و هو يرى مولده الأول، أنه لن يموت تماما بعد اليوم. (Dhākirat al-Jasad, pp.45-46)

[With the pride of the Mujahid, who realized when he saw his first baby, that he would not die completely after today] (our translation)

TT1: With the pride of a fighter who, when he sees his firstborn, realises that he will never completely die. (*The Bridges of Constantine*, p.17)

TT2:..la joie du moudjahid qui en voyant son premier bébé réalise son éternité. (*Mémoires de la chair*, p.38)

[the joy of the moudjahid who realizes his eternity when he sees his first baby] (our translation)

The pivotal word “Mujāhidin” is the name used to designate the fighters of the National Liberation Front during the Algerian revolution who can be men or women. Still today, it occupies an important place in Algerian society—many young people know that their grandparents or grandmothers were *mujāhidīn*, meaning they were involved in the resistance movement to end French colonization. It is retained in TT2 through the borrowing of *moudjahidīn* and is sometimes replaced by *hommes* (“men” p.31), *combattants* (“combatants” p.304). In TT1 the name never appears, and the translator has continuously used the more neutral “fighters” probably because it might evoke a negative connotation in the readers’ minds. They may associate it with “Jihad” جهاد which is believed to be synonymous with terrorist attacks, especially after the events of 11 September 2001, which involved large scale explosions and loss of life in New York City and Washington, D.C.

According to the concept of Orientalism (Said 1978, 1979), one can argue that “fighter” is a misrepresentation of *Mujāhid* to the English audience. Or, it was used as a lexical extrinsic managing to make the text more compatible with their expectations, which have a central role in the translator’s decisions according to Farghal (2018, 42). However, we suggest that the English translator could explain with a footnote or a paraphrase that *mujāhidīn* indicates an entirely different meaning in the colonial era in Algeria (1830-1962). In this context, Abbad (2016, 53) argues that translators can significantly eliminate misconceptions about other cultures and religions. Furthermore, Venuti (1998, 2002, 87) observes that the translator can free himself from “ethnocentrism” and still produce a target text that is both clear and significant.

Example 4—The Homeland (*al-watan* الوطن):

ST: ها هو الوطن الذي استبدلته بأمي يوما (Dhākirat al-Jasad, p.289)

[Here is the homeland that I once replaced with my mother.] (our translation)

TT1: Here was the homeland that I had once let take the place of my mother. (*The Bridges of Constantine*, p.102)

TT2 : Voilà le pays que j’aurais substitué un jour à ma mère. (*Mémoires de la chair*, p. 243)

[This is the country that I one day substituted for my mother.] (our translation)

From the beginning to the end of the story, Ahlem extensively uses *Al-watan*[the homeland] to express feelings of love and belonging to her country Algeria using the voice of the protagonist Khaled. This emotional attachment is fully recreated in TT2 with the two words nation and homeland; the country is used only once on page 143.

In the French version, the same feeling is evoked only when *la patrie*[homeland] is employed a few times. Nevertheless, the dominant word used by the translator is *pays*[country]. Here, the emotional feeling attached to the homeland as conveyed by Ahlem vanishes. This is another occurrence of lexical extrinsic managing that we believe is unnecessary to make the text more readable. The meanings of nationalism, loyalty, and attachment to the homeland of the formerly colonized (the author Ahlem and the Algerian people) are distorted to a certain degree.

Example 5—Liberation (*tahrīr* تحرير):

ST:

كان سي مصطفى صديقا مشتركا لي ولسي الشريف منذ أيام التحرير... قضى ثلاثة أشهر في المستشفى عاد بعدها إلى الجبهة، ليبقى حتى الاستقلال في صفوف جيش التحرير. (Dhākirat al-Jasad, p.81)

[Si Mustafa was a mutual friend of mine and Si Sherif since the days of liberation... He spent three months in the hospital, then returned to the front, to remain until independence in the ranks of the Liberation Army] (our translation)

TT1: Si Mustafa was a mutual friend of Si Sharif's and mine from liberation days.... He spent three months in hospital there. Then he returned to the Front, where he remained in the liberation army until independence. (*The Bridges of Constantine*,p.29)

TT2 : Si Mostepha était un ami commun à Si Cherif et à moi depuis la Révolution.... Il avait passé trois mois à l'hôpital avant de retourner au maquis, y était resté jusqu'à l'indépendance. (*Mémoires de la chair*, p.68)

[Si Mostepha was a mutual friend of Si Cherif and me since the Revolution.... He had spent three months in the hospital before he went back to the maquis, and stayed there until independence] (our translation)

*Tahrīr*("liberation") is another word that was frequently used in Algeria prior to independence to describe the constituents of the resistance movement such as the party, the fighters, the war, etc. It indicates that they were all established for liberation, to free the people and the country from the domination of the French colonizers.

We can see from the example that TT1 uses the direct equivalent "liberation," which conveys the intended meaning, and it is maintained in all instances in the English text. Although the same term, *liberation* ("liberation"), is an option in the French language and can be easily used, the translator has opted to use *révolution*("revolution") in the first instance and *le maquis* ("maquis") in the second, which is replaced by the pronoun *y* ("there").

On page 162 of the French translation, *la guerre de Libération* ("war of liberation") explicitly restates حرب التحرير (*ḥarb al-tahrīr*), thus, giving an accurate representation to the readers, but elsewhere in the French text, we find again *Révolution* ("revolution" p.127) and *la lutte armée* ("armed struggle"

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p.269). Drawing on the concept of Orientalism (Said 1978, 1979), it can be suggested that avoiding to use *Libération* is a diminishing representation of the history of a formerly dominated country to a dominant one. It is ignoring the essence of its struggle.

Example 6—The Martyr (*shahīd*الشهيد):

ST:

(*Dhākirat al-Jasad*, p. 31). بعض رفاق الدراسة كانوا ما يزالون ضمن المتغييبين، بين مساجين و شهداء.

[Only some of the classmates were still among the absentees, some were prisoners, and others were *shahīds* (martyrs)] (our translation)

TT1: Some schoolmates were absent, either in jail or shahids. (*The Bridges of Constantine*, p.12)

TT2: L'absence de certains de mes camarades se prolongeait, ils étaient soit morts, soit toujours à l'ombre. (*Mémoires de la chair*, p.28)

[The absence of some of my classmates continued, they were either dead or still in the shade] (our translation)

The (*shahīd*الشهيد), the most cherished symbol in Algeria, is the man or woman who sacrificed his or her life for the nation. Some were killed on the battlefield or in prison, others as defenseless citizens. The example demonstrates that the English translation employs a foreignizing strategy with the borrowing of *shahid*. This word appears approximately 12 times in TT1 and is always italicized. This gives it prominence and may draw the target audience's attention to read about it. The more general term "martyr" is also used but only three times.

The French translation above refers to *shahids* as *morts* ("dead"), a neutral and general word that fails to convey the historical, social, and cultural dimensions implied by the term *shahid*. Khaled explains that his schoolmates who are absent are either in prison or have been killed as *shahids* (martyrs sacrificing their lives for the freedom of Algeria). None of this is indicated in TT2. Indeed, the adjective *morts* ("dead") alone does not provide clues to the reader about the cause of their death. In addition, the expression *toujours à l'ombre* ("still in the shadow") is vague and does not necessarily reveal that they are imprisoned.

In the French version, in most of the cases, "martyr" is utilized, and the italicized borrowing *shahid* appears only on page 90. Possibly, the French translator assumed that this Arabic word might evoke a pejorative meaning due to particular uses in the media. Therefore he complies with the "coherence rule" explained by the skopos theory scholars to make his translation "coherent for the TT receivers, given their circumstances and knowledge" (Munday 2001/2008, 80), or he assumed that it would be considered critical of the French colonizers, especially in the example cited above where these individuals might appear to the reader as an oppressor killing young people. The example presents a lexical extrinsic managing in the French translation which contributes to the falsification of reality.

Example7—Torture (*al-ta'ātib*التعذيب)

In several parts of the novel, Khaled gives accounts of his stay in prison and how prisoners were tortured. This is clearly stated in both TT1 and TT2, but in the French translation, it is sometimes omitted, such as in the following example, which tells the story of Bilal, an activist who showed courage despite what he has endured:

ST:

و لم يمّت بلال حسين كغيره. قضى سنتين في السجن و التعذيب. ترك فيهما جلده على آلات التعذيب. (Dhākirat al-Jasad, p 321)

[And Bilal Hussein did not die like others. He spent two years in prison and torture during which he left his skin on the torture devices] (our translation)

TT1: Bilal Hussein did not die like others. He spent two years under torture in prison, leaving his skin on the implements of torture. (*The Bridges of Constantine*, p.113)

TT2: Il survécut à deux années d'emprisonnement et à la torture. (*Mémoires de la chair*,p. 270)

[He survived two years of imprisonment and torture] (our translation)

When the word *ta' dīb* ("torture") is first mentioned in this example, it is re-expressed in both translations. Then, in the second part of the sentence, the scene of torture is recreated with a graphic description of the skin left on the instruments of torture. Again, it appears in TT1 while it is omitted in TT2. We attempted to locate it in the preceding or following paragraphs; however, we did not identify the description or anything similar. According to Farghal (2018, 49-50), such extrinsic managing that targets the evaluativeness of the source text undermines the effect of the message. This image conveys that the French colonizer horribly and brutally tortured the prisoners for long periods. Perhaps the translator eliminated it to avoid shocking the French audience. Awareness that such acts were committed at that time to control the Algerian people and their land would create an extremely negative representation of the French authorities of that period. However, we think that formerly colonized people deserve a full and objective account of what they have endured to ensure a two-side equal exchange which is, according to Said (1978,1979), usually ignored by orientalists.

Example 8—Slavery:

ST:

و الذين أدركوا، و الحرب العالمية تنتهي لصالح فرنسا و الحلفاء، أن فرنسا استعملت الجزائريين ليخوضوا حربا لم تكن حريهم، و أنهم دفعوا آلاف الموتى في معارك لا تعنيهم، ليعودوا بعد ذلك إلى عبوديتهم (Dhākirat al-Jasad, p.32).

[And those who realized, when the World War was ending for the good of France and the allies, that France used the Algerians to wage a war that was not theirs and that they paid thousands of the dead in battles that do not concern them, to return after that to their slavery] (our translation)

TT1: When World War II ended in victory for France and the Allies, they realised that France had used Algerians to fight someone else's war, sending thousands to their deaths in battles that did not concern them, only for the survivors to return to slavery. (*The Bridges of Constantine*, p.13)

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TT2 : C'étaient déjà eux qui, à la fin de la Deuxième Guerre, avaient dénoncé l'exploitation des Algériens dans une bataille qui n'était pas la leur, les milliers de morts, et la colonisation toujours. (*Mémoires de la chair*, p.29)

[It was they who had denounced the exploitation of the Algerians in a battle which was not theirs at the end of the Second War. There were thousands of dead, but the colonization remained] (our translation)

In this example, Ahlem describes life under colonial rule as slavery (*oubūdīyah* عبودية). This symbolizes oppression and injustice and emphasizes that people are deprived of all their rights and dignity. The English version clearly conveys this idea. Whereas in TT2, the translator refers to slavery as *colonization* ("colonization"). Although "colonization" is usually understood as being unfair, the French version alleviates the intensity of the original meaning through its use. Some people in the West may believe that colonizing another nation is undertaken to make it more civilized or, as Ventura (2017) describes Western intervention in some Arab countries, it takes place for allegedly ending "despotism". Thus, it does not convey the various meanings entailed in the original. This manipulation of the source text is another example of lexical extrinsic managing that distorts the ideology expressed in the original text.

Example 9—the enemy:

In line with the previous example, the author depicts the French occupation as the enemy of the people (العدو *al-'aduwu*):

ST:

لم أخبرها أن المعارك تشتد كل يوم، و أن العدو قرّر أن يطوّق المناطق الجبلية، و يحرق كل الغابات، حتى تتمكن طائراته من مراقبة تحركاتنا. (*Dhākirat al-Jasad*, p.114)

[I did not tell her that the battles were intensifying every day and that the enemy decided to encircle the mountainous areas and burn all the forests so that his planes could control our movements] (our translation)

TT1: I didn't tell her that the battles were intensifying every day, that the enemy had decided to surround the mountains and burn the forests so that their planes could observe our movements. (*The Bridges of Constantine*, p. 41)

TT2 : J'avais vu l'ampleur des batailles, de plus en plus féroces au fil des jours, l'encerclement des montagnes, l'incendie des forêts pour permettre aux avions de repérer nos mouvements. (*Mémoires de la chair*, p.98-99)

[I remained silent on the intensity of the battles, becoming fiercer over the days, the encirclement of the mountains, and the burning of the forests to allow the planes to track our movements] (our translation)

The author Ahlem explicitly establishes a self-other binary, or a colonized-colonizer relationship fraught with conflict and tension. The term "enemy" appears in TT1 but was omitted from TT2, and we

did not find any reference to this meaning in the previous nor the following paragraph in the French translation. This example also shows a syntactic extrinsic managing at the level of agency. Farghal (2018, 47) indicates that the translator may hide the agent although it is explicitly mentioned in the source text (العدو) for ideological reasons.

## Discussion

Data analysis centered on “the symbols of the Algerian revolution” revealed that, except for the word *mujāhidīn* (Example 3), the English translator preserved all of the keywords related to the colonizer and/or the struggle for independence. By using foreignizing strategies, the English version maintains the visibility of the original, offering an opportunity for the readers to gain awareness of some of the main elements in the history of the Algerian people. On this basis, we were unable to establish a link between the English translation and the Orientalist model.

As for the French version, many terms, expressions, and sometimes sentences were modified (Examples 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8) or omitted (Examples 7 and 9). Aside from *Mujahidin*, *révolution*, and *indépendance*, the translator opted to use words that either decrease the intensity of the original text or lead to the invisibility or the neutralization of the revolution’s symbols (such as the Front, *shahid*, liberation, etc.) when he used domesticating strategies (e.g., *le maquis* instead of *le Front*). Deletions and deviations were noticeably systematic, causing a loss of meaning and misrepresentation of the history of Algeria and depriving readers of the opportunity to gain awareness of the story’s core elements. Those deviations appeared in the form of extrinsic managing, especially at the lexical level, and would entail, according to Farghal (2018, 40), “an ideological move whose weight usually far exceeds its size”.

Three possibilities may explain this: 1) The translator, who is Algerian but currently living in France, has manipulated the source text to gain a wider French readership or has resorted to self-censorship to get approval from the publishing house. This is reminiscent of the concept of “native foreigner” as cited in Faiq (2005, 60) and Arab “orientalist,” translating to the “French market” as referred to by Jacquemond (2004, 121).

2) The French publishing house Albin Michel, located in France, and any party involved in the publication process had exercised censorship on the translated work before, during, or after the translation process was conducted. This is related to the “Orientalism” movement as described by Said (1978, 1979) in that some Western publishing houses do not allow for an accurate representation of the history of the Arab world. 3) The translator is caught between two identities. He is aware of the delicate situation—translating the events of the colonial period in his country of origin (the ex-colonized Algeria) to his country of residence (the ex-colonizer France). Therefore, he uses attenuation, domestication, and omission to recount his country’s history by offering a partial account, hiding some references made by Ahlem Mostaghanemi to the guilt of his host country (France). Thus, whenever possible, he avoids using terms and expressions describing the Algerian people as victims of French colonial oppression (the enemy, torture, slavery). This might be shocking to the French readership consisting of French people and Algerian immigrants living in France who can read novels only in French and cannot read the original

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Arabic version of the novel. In the three possible scenarios, the translator's behavior might be attributed to Gramsci's notion of "consent" as he makes the shifts deliberately or responds to the requirements dictated by censorship which leads to maintaining the hegemonic culture represented by the French market.

Whether the French translation was affected by manipulation or censorship, the results validate our hypothesis that the special relationship of the French (Algerian) translator with both the source and the target cultures would affect his selection of translation strategies. The findings related to the French version also confirm that translation is tightly linked to politics, power, and dominance, especially when it comes to telling the history of Arab countries.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has explored the English and French translations of various examples from an Arabic postcolonial novel. Using concepts of Orientalism and cultural hegemony, we attempted to uncover the translation strategies used to translate terms and expressions related to the Algerian war of independence and whether they involved manipulation of the original text. Many deviations were noticed in the French translation. While few of them were possibly used for the sake of clarity, the majority could be attributed to manipulation or censorship, for factors like target readers' expectations or the publishing institution policy and guidelines related to political considerations.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Although an extensive investigation was conducted for all the words related to the Algerian revolution, it would be interesting to analyze other aspects of the novel and to examine the strategies used by the two translators to convey them. In addition, even if we consider foreignization appropriate for reproducing the Algerian revolution symbols in our case study by contributing to their visibility, we do not claim that it is the most efficient strategy in all the situations. It is also advised to investigate translations of postcolonial literature when the translator is a westerner translating to the ex-colonizer country, and when the translator is a non-westerner translating to a western country which is not the ex-colonizer, or finally when the translator is a non-westerner translating to a western country which is not his country of residence.

## التحريف والرقابة في ترجمة تاريخ الجزائر رواية (ذاكرة الجسد) للكاتبة أحلام مستغانمي أنموذجاً

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### الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة في استراتيجيات الترجمة التي استعملها كل من رفائيل كوهان في ترجمته باللغة الانجليزية (2013)، ومحمد مقدم في ترجمته باللغة الفرنسية (2002) لرواية (ذاكرة الجسد) للكاتبة أحلام مستغانمي، وهي تنتمي إلى الأدب الذي كتب خلال فترة ما بعد الاستعمار في الجزائر. وسنحاول باستنادنا إلى المنهج ما بعد الاستعماري تسليط الضوء على ترجمة آداب الشعوب التي كانت مستعمرة في السابق إلى اللغات الغربية. حيث نستخدم مفهوم "الاستشراق" لإدوارد سعيد (1978)، (1979) علاوة على "الهيمنة الثقافية" و"القبول" كما يحيل إليهما أونتونيو غرامشي (1971، 1992). ونركز في التحليل على ترجمة رموز حرب التحرير الجزائرية. ونهدف إلى تقصي مدى لجوء المترجمين إلى استراتيجيات تحريفية مع العلم أنهما يترجمان للمجتمع الغربي لكن محمد مقدم تربطه علاقة مميزة بالنص الأصلي وثقافته من جهة والنص الهدف وثقافته من جهة أخرى. لذا نقترح هذه الدراسة أن ترجمة الأدب ما بعد الاستعماري لثقافة مهيمنة يمكن أن يدعم الهيمنة في المجال السياسي والاجتماعي والثقافي حتى إذا كان المترجم ينتمي إلى ثقافة النص الأصلي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الرقابة، الهيمنة الثقافية، التحريف، الاستشراق، ما بعد الاستعمارية.

### Endnotes

1. Some Orientalists, such as Jacquemond Richard, studied the Orient and wrote about it with good intentions. Furthermore, Humayun Ansari (2011, 92) explains that few of them were against imperialism; however, they were marginalized. According to Elboubekri (2016), Paul Bowles valued the heritage of Morocco and collaborated on the translation of Moroccan literature.
2. <https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/maquis/49319#locution> accessed 8/11/2020.

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